

Use of Electronic Signatures & Submissions

Applies to: Department of Enterprise Services transactions

Information contact: Chief Information Officer, Enterprise Technology Services

Effective date: May 1, 2016

Last update: N/A

Sunset review date: May 30, 2020

Approved by: _____/s/_____ Chris Liu, Director

Background

The use of electronic records and electronic signatures can significantly reduce costs, simplify transactions, and speed up transaction time. Recent changes to law (see [chapter 19.360 RCW](#)) have made it clear that state agencies are encouraged and allowed to use and accept electronic signatures to authenticate electronic transactions.

Unless otherwise provided by law or agency rule, electronic signatures have the same force and effect as that of a handwritten signature. However, state agencies must first meet the following two requirements in order to use and accept electronic signatures or electronic submissions:

1. State agencies are required to put in place by policy or rule, the methods and process for using or accepting electronic submissions or electronic signatures; and
 2. Electronic records and signatures must be consistent with policy, standards, and guidelines provided by the state's chief information officer.
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Reason for Policy

This policy will:

- Provide reasonable assurance for the integrity, authenticity, and nonrepudiation of electronic documents when electronic signatures and submissions are used and accepted;
 - Promote the use of electronic signatures and submissions across the agency.
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Policy Statement

Fully allowed by law, the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) encourages electronic transactions and recognizes electronic records and signatures.

Policy

- A. The use and acceptance of electronic signatures and electronic submissions/records shall be consistent with the guidance and requirements put in place by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).

- B. The DES Chief Information Officer (CIO) in consultation with the agency Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the Asst. Director of Contracts and Procurement shall approve in advance specific methods and processes (solutions). The CIO may further delegate these approval authorities.
- C. The approval of solutions shall be coordinated through the CIO. The CIO will determine a suitable review and approval process when determining which solution(s) are suitable for a particular type of record or transaction. Where appropriate, a team approach shall be used.
- Appendix A to this policy lists approved solutions.
- D. With prior approval of the CIO and the requesting division head, a program may pilot the use of a solution for a specific transaction. Information learned during the pilot project should be widely shared and, where appropriate, improve this policy.
- E. This policy and changes to this policy shall be available on the [OCIO website](#) and the [DES policy and rules website](#).
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Procedures

DES Administrative Procedure – [ITS.01.01.P1 Approval of Electronic Signature Solutions](#)

Appendices

Appendix A: – [Approved Electronic Signature Methods & Processes Table](#)

Related Information

Statewide Guidance – [OCIO Electronic Signature Guidelines](#)

History

First effective date

May 1, 2016

Amended

January 9, 2019: This amendment makes several administrative changes:

- The format transitioned to an accessible format;
- The sunset date extended to May 30, 2020 to all sufficient time for the selection of a single provider for the agency;
- The policy number transitioned from ITS.01.01 to ETS.01.01 to reflect a change to the owning division's name;
- The Contracts, Procurement, and Risk Management division name changed to Contracts and Procurement;
- Grammar and punctuation errors corrected.

This amendment makes no changes to the policy content.

Need a copy of a prior version of this policy? E-mail jack.zeigler@des.wa.gov