

Illinoisians Can Now Get Documents Notarized Electronically

by Erin Henkel
April 17 2024 8:42 AM



Illinois residents will no longer have to notarize documents in person under a new Electronic-Notary system administered by Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias' office.

Electronic Notarization, or "E-Notary," will radically change the way people use notary services, Giannoulias predicted. Without leaving the home or office, an individual or business can have their documents notarized and signed electronically within minutes.

"In keeping with our ongoing effort to modernize the Secretary of State's office, E-Notary serves as a game-changer for Illinoisians by now providing a convenient way to

notarize documents without leaving their home or office,” Giannoulas said. “Enabling commissioned notaries to work virtually makes the process faster and more secure for individuals and businesses alike.”

E-Notary allows both the customer and notary to sign with an electronic signature, and to electronically attach both the notarial certificate and notary seal to a document.

In 2021, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation to allow the Secretary of State to implement electronic notarization.

Upon taking office last year, Giannoulas made it a priority to gain state approval of administrative rules, create a new application reflecting the E-Notary requirements, review and approve E-Notary technology platform providers, and train staff to process the new E-Notary applications.

Illinois now joins 47 other states that allow electronic notaries to operate.

Although Illinois had allowed remote notarization, it required all parties, (the notaries, signers, and witnesses) to be located in Illinois. Additionally, while someone could sign the document remotely by audio-video communication, the notary had to sign the notarized paper document and apply the notary seal in ink. With E-Notary, the document, signing, and seal are all electronically applied, dramatically reducing the time it takes to notarize a document. Additionally, while the notary must be present in Illinois, the other parties may be located outside the state.

To find a notary who offers electronic notarization, customers can visit ilsos.gov/notarysearch. Customers will need a computer, phone or other device that supports audio-video communication and a valid form of identification to complete the notarization electronically.

When getting a document notarized, the notary public or electronic notary will:

- Require the customer to personally appear before them via an audio-video communication platform during the notarization.
- Check over the document to ensure its complete and verify the name on the document matches the customer’s ID.
- Confirm the identity of the customer by examining their ID.
- Once steps 1 through 3 are done, the customer will be permitted to sign the document electronically.
- The Notary Public will then complete the notarial certificate and affix their seal.

Fees for services vary by provider but are capped by state law at \$5 for any notarial act and \$25 for any electronic notarial act. All Notaries Public are required to provide receipts and keep records of the fees they charged for services provided.