



DEPARTMENTAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

TITLE: Electronic Signatures
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 18, 2020
CANCELLATION: none
DIVISION: BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS (BAA)
CATEGORY: General Business and Administrative Affairs (A)
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENTS: Business and Administrative Affairs Units

POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute 9:2607, electronic signatures are valid wherever a traditional ink signature by the same signer would be valid, *except in cases where another authority governs another aspect of the transaction, and such authority does not accept electronic signatures*. All units under the auspices of Delgado Community College Business and Administrative Affairs accept, execute, and route valid electronic signatures in accordance with the requirements and procedures outlined in this policy.

PROCEDURES & SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. **Purpose**

To publish the Delgado Community College's Business and Administrative Affairs units' procedures for accepting, executing, and routing electronic signatures.

2. **Applicability**

This policy and its procedures apply to all units under the auspices of Delgado Community College Business and Administrative Affairs.

3. **Electronic Signature Requirements**

- A. Electronic signatures are valid wherever a traditional ink signature by the same signer would be valid, *except in cases where another authority governs another aspect of the transaction, and such authority does not accept electronic signatures.*
- B. Electronic signatures may take the form of:
 - (1) A scanned ink signature;
 - (2) A signature captured using a digital pen or pad;
 - (3) An image of a prior signature applied by software (such as Adobe);
 - (4) An encrypted certificate with a signature and additional information;
 - (5) A signature applied by a third-party web platform (such as VeriSign); or
 - (6) Any other form deemed acceptable by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Administrative Affairs on a case-by-case basis.

Stamped signatures are *not* acceptable signatures, and will not be accepted by Business and Administrative Affairs' units.

If a Department Head has granted signature authority to a designee under his or her supervision, documentation providing justification to support this and information regarding the extent of the authority and documents impacted must be submitted and approved by the Vice Chancellor for Business and Administrative Affairs prior to implementation. Signature authority signatures accepted must include the full name of the Department Head accompanied by either the initials or full signature of the authorized designee.

- C. Delgado Business and Administrative Affairs' units:
 - (1) can use electronic signatures, *except in cases where another authority governs another aspect of the transaction, and such authority does not accept electronic signatures* (known examples of such exceptions include Clerk of Court recordations and Construction desk recordations); and
 - (2) will accept electronic signatures interchangeably and consistently with how traditional ink signatures are accepted.

4. **Procedures**

When electronic signatures are used by Delgado Business and Administrative Affairs units, the following steps will apply:

- (1) The Department Head or designee reviews the content of the document (contract, amendment, etc.) with the same level of attention as would normally apply to a traditional paper routing sheet.
- (2) The Department Head or designee verifies that the vendor or external entity has submitted, if applicable, appropriate signature authorization (such as a board resolution).

- (3) The Department Head or designee ensures that the document is in PDF format by scanning paper to PDF or printing/exporting other file types to PDF as needed. Other attachments that are not to be signed and that would normally be provided to the public in non-PDF formats do not have to be converted.
- (4) If the Department Head or designee recommends that the document be signed by the appropriate Delgado official, the Department Head or designee attaches the document, supporting documentation, and any other attachments to an email (either a new email or preferably the original thread from the vendor or external entity).
- (5) The Department Head or designee provides in the body of the email the same type and level of detailed recommendation and information that would typically accompany a traditional paper routing sheet.
- (6) The Department Head or designee sends the email to the reviewers to whom a traditional paper routing sheet is typically routed.
- (7) The first-level reviewer reviews and then forwards the email with the document and attachments to the appropriate next-level reviewer with any notes and recommendation in the email body, copying the originating Department Head or designee on the email.
- (8) All emails must remain in the same email chain.
- (9) The designated signer affixes his or her signature to the Document PDF using any authorized means, most commonly:
 - a. Open the PDF in Adobe
 - b. Click "Sign" or "Fill & Sign" in the upper-right corner.
 - c. "Place Signature" from an image (pre-scanned ink signature)
 - d. "Add Text" to specify date
 - e. Save file to Desktop or another temporary location.
- (10) The signer then attaches the signed document in a reply email to the originator and copies everyone in the approval chain.
- (11) The Department Head or Designee distributes the signed document as appropriate
- (12) The Department Head or designee electronically saves and copies the signed document, and the approval email chain, for the department's official file.

Reference:

Memorandum Office of State Purchasing (OSP) 20-03, *Electronic Signatures*,
10/8/2019

Louisiana Revised Statute 9:2618, *Acceptance and Distribution of Distribution
of Electronic Records by Governmental Agencies in this State*

Review Process:

Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Signatures Policy 2/4/2020

Assistant Vice Chancellor/Controller 2/4/2020

Business and Administrative Affairs Council 2/11/2020

Approved:

Vice Chancellor for Business and Administrative Affairs 2/18/2020