Arkansas Secretary of State
John Thurston

eNotary Public Frequently Asked Questions
December 2020 Edition

1. **How does eNotary (electronic notarization) differ from regular notary?**

   a. eNotary abides by all of the same rules and regulations as those that apply to "traditional" notaries. The only difference is the way in which the signature of the client and notary are applied to the document. eNotary uses a digital form of signature capture (keyboard, touchscreen, signature pad, etc.) rather than an ink pen.

2. **What is electronic notarization?**

   a. Notarizing a document while it is in an electronic format.

3. **How does eNotary work?**

   a. Electronic notarizations will take place through a web portal hosted by an approved solution provider. Any document to be electronically notarized will need to be in a digital format such as a PDF, Word Document, etc. If a hard copy is presented to the eNotary, the eNotary may scan in the document to create the digital document. The signatures applied to the digital document will be done through an electronic means such as a keyboard, touchscreen, or touchpad.

4. **How do I electronically notarize a document?**

   a. This will depend upon the solution provider the eNotary chooses to use. Some solutions work across multiple platforms such as PCs, tablets and smart phones, while others are limited to a certain type of hardware and/or software.

      - The basic process is:

        - The notary and the document signer gather around the notary's computer.

        - The eNotary logs into the web portal of the solution provider's system. This is much like logging into your email account with a password that is attributable to only the eNotary.

        - The document to be electronically notarized is accessed in its digital form (flashdrive, email, document on hard drive, scanned document, etc.) and is uploaded into the system.

        - The notary verifies the identity of the signer(s).

        - The signer signs the document on the device using the means of

signature capture associated with the solution provider.

- The notary properly completes the certificate attached to the document. Certificates may be added through the solution provider's web portal if one is not already part of the document.

- The notary signs and affixes their digital, encrypted stamp to the document – this is akin to the rubber stamp step on a paper notarization.

- The eNotary then instructs the client on how they may access their electronically signed documents. This will vary by solution provider.

- In many instances, an electronic journal entry is automatically created as a part of the notarization process.

5. **Who is eligible to become an eNotary?**

   a. All Arkansas notaries public in "good standing" are eligible to become an eNotary.

6. **How long does an eNotary commission last?**

   a. The eNotary commission is tied to and runs concurrently with your traditional paper commission. Your traditional and eNotary commission will expire on the same day.

7. **What are the steps to apply to become an eNotary?**

   a. Step 1: Complete the online eNotary Application Filing **www.bcs.sos.arkansas.gov.** The filing fee is $20 (plus $5 convenience fee) payable by credit card only. You may need to create an online account if you don't have one.
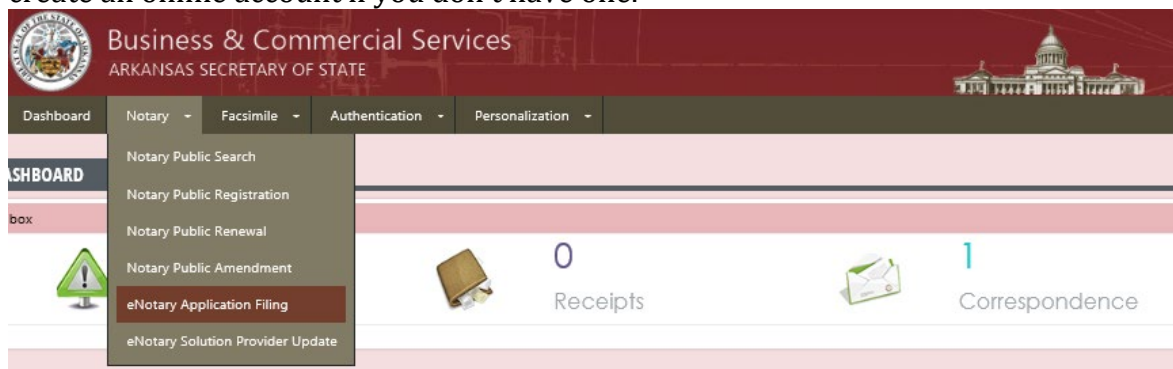
   b. Step 2: Upon email notification of acceptance of the application, complete the required training and examination ($30) through the American Society of Notaries **https://www.asnnotary.org/?form=courseinfo&cid=33**. There is free training to help you prepare https://www.sos.arkansas.gov/business-commercial-services-bcs/notary-e-notary.

    c. Step 3: Pass the exam with at least an 80% score.

- You have two attempts at the exam in a 12-month period

    d. Step 4: Upon successful completion of the training & exam email the certificate to **notary@sos.arkansas.gov.**

    e. Evaluate and register with one of the five approved solution providers. Please indicate your choice to the Secretary of State by completing the "eNotary Solution Provider Update" on your online notary account.

8. **Why am I required to list two email addresses on my application?**

    a. Since eNotary is an electronic method, communication with eNotaries will most often be by email. Having a primary and secondary email address ensures we can reach you.

9. **How will I be notified if my application has been accepted or rejected?**

    a. If your application is accepted you will be notified by email. It will remind you to complete the eNotary training and exam.

10. **How do I update changes to my personal information such as my name, address, and/or email address?**

    a. Updating your eNotary record is done the same way as updating your traditional notary record. Complete an amendment through your online account on the web portal at www.bcs.sos.arkansas.gov and send the signed, original form to the Secretary of State's Office. If you're changing your name, make sure to also include a certified copy of the marriage license, divorce decree or other court order listing the new name.

    b. Your solution provider will also need you to update your information with them. If the record on file with us and the record on file with the solution provider don't match, you may be temporarily suspended from access to your eNotary seal until all information has been updated.

11. **Does eNotary allow the remote online notarization (RON) of documents such as those witnessed being signed over a webcam?**

    a. eNotary **does not allow remote online notarization** of documents. All of the same rules and regulations that apply to a traditional, paper notarization also apply to electronically signed documents including a personal appearance before the notary and establishing identity.

12. **Can I submit an application to become an eNotary at the same time as my application to become a regular notary?**

a. No. You will need to wait until your regular notary commission has been fully processed before you can submit your eNotary application. Once your traditional notary status shows "good standing" on our website, you may proceed with the eNotary application.

13. **Benefits of eNotarization:**

   a. Reduces paper, printing, and postage costs .

   b. Ensures the integrity of documents since electronically notarized documents are less prone to unauthorized alterations and include an audit trail.

   c. Electronically notarized documents may be transmitted more efficiently.

14. **Who is eligible to provide eNotary electronic solutions?**

   a. Only companies who are Approved Electronic Solution Providers are eligible to provide eNotary services to Arkansas eNotaries. You may find information about the five approved solution providers here: https://www.sos.arkansas.gov/business-commercial-services-bcs/notary-public-and-enotary/approved-electronic-solution-providers

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15. What is the cost to become an eNotary?

a. The eNotary application requires an online filing fee of $20 (plus $5 convenience fee). The online training and exam is $30. Refresher training is required every two years ($30). The traditional notary filing fee is $20 for ten years.

b. The fees associated with registering with the solution provider will vary depending on the provider selected. Research each company to see which solution best fits your needs.

16. What continuing education is required?

a. eNotaries are required to complete online refresher training every two years. You will receive an email reminder. Training is done through American Society of Notaries at a cost of $30. **https://www.asnnotary.org/?form=courseinfo&cid=33**

17. Where can I find an eNotary?

a. A searchable database for eNotaries is found at bcs.sos.arkansas.gov. Click the "search notaries" box and make sure to enable the check box next to "eNotary" in the search fields. Some eNotaries have made their email addresses public.

18. Where is the Arkansas eNotary Law located?

a. In the *Arkansas Notary Public & eNotary Handbook* available at https://www.sos.arkansas.gov/business-commercial-services-bcs/notary-e-notary.