

# Remote Notarization: What You Need To Know

By Michael Lewis on June 27, 2018 in Notary News

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As more states consider passing laws authorizing remote notarizations, the practice continues to raise questions among Notaries and signers alike. What is remote notarization? Where can it be performed? Who can request it? Can I perform it? What technology is needed?

Here are answers to the most common questions.

## What is remote notarization?

With remote notarization, a signer personally appears before the Notary at the time of the notarization using audio-visual technology over the internet instead of being physically present in the same room. Remote notarization is also called webcam notarization or online notarization.



## Is remote notarization the same as electronic notarization?

Many people confuse electronic notarization with remote notarization, believing they are the same. They are not.

Electronic notarization, or eNotarization, involves documents that are notarized in electronic form, and the Notary and document signer sign with an electronic signature. But all other elements of a traditional, paper notarization apply to electronic notarization, including the requirement for the signer to physically appear before the Notary.

## Where can remote notarizations be performed?

Today, only Notaries in two states are able to perform remote notarizations: Virginia and Montana.

Virginia in 2011 became the first state to enact a law allowing its duly commissioned electronic Notaries to perform remote notarizations.

In 2015, Montana became the second state to allow the practice but with a number of restrictions. For the most part, remote notarizations are restricted to documents involving Montana residents and certain in-state transactions. Montana also is the only state that allows a paper document to be notarized when the signer and Notary appear online.

## States Authorizing Remote Notarization

Indiana

Nevada

Michigan

Tennessee

Minnesota

Texas

Montana

Vermont

Virginia

### Will other states permit remote notarizations in the near future?

As of July 1 this year, laws authorizing remote notarization in Texas and Nevada went into effect. Both laws require their respective Secretary of State's offices to create rules governing remote notarizations.

Texas is in the process of finalizing its rules, and the earliest they can take effect is July 29. It is not clear when the state will begin to commission online Notaries. Nevada has yet to publish rules.

So far in 2018, five more states have enacted remote notarization laws, but they do not go into effect until next year:

- Michigan (effective September 26, 2018, but approval of technology providers does not start until March 30, 2019)
- Minnesota, effective on January 1, 2019
- Indiana, effective July 1, 2019
- Tennessee, effective July 1, 2019
- Vermont, effective July 1, 2019

Several other states currently are considering remote notarization measures but have not yet enacted them.

### How do I prepare for remote notarization?

If you live in a state that has authorized remote notarization, simply follow the requirements of that state. So far, for example, every state that authorizes remote notarization but Montana requires Notaries to either obtain a separate electronic Notary commission or register to perform remote notarizations. Montana requires the Secretary of State to be notified if the Notary is using remote notarization to notarize electronic records.

To find out what your state requires, visit your Secretary of State's website or check the [NNA's Notary Law database](#) for details of each of the laws mentioned above. The NNA also will continue to publish information as the states put their remote notarization programs into effect.

### What kind of technology will I need to perform remote notarizations?

Each state that authorizes remote notarizations may establish its own technology standards and requirements.

There are a number of technology companies that offer end-to-end remote notarization systems. They include:

- [DocVerify](#)
- [Notarize](#)

- [NotaryCam](#)
- [Pavaso](#)
- [Safedocs](#)
- [SIGNiX](#)

In practical terms, signing up with one or more of these companies will provide most online Notaries with the technology they need.

## What training do I need to perform remote notarizations?

So far, only Nevada has a training requirement for prospective online Notaries.

To learn how to use remote notarization technology, each online notarization company will provide training for their respective systems.

## Will being a remote Notary increase my market value?

If you are a mobile Notary, adding services to your business offerings may increase your value, but it depends on the market and customers you serve.

## How will clients know I am a remote Notary?

Some remote notarization system companies market their services directly to the public, so you don't have to. A couple of the companies also have apps in the Apple App Store and on Google Play. A person who needs to have a document remotely notarized downloads the app, pays the fee and is connected to a remote Notary who can help them.

In these cases, companies function like signing services. Customers come to them for a notarization, and they schedule a remote Notary through their system. Typically, when you sign up, they will ask you when you are available to perform remote notarizations. You'll be paid a portion of the maximum fee for the remote notarization that the company collects from the signer through the app.

If you use a technology company that doesn't market directly to the public, you will need to market yourself to potential clients just like you do today for paper notarizations.

## Can I list that I perform remote notarizations on my SigningAgent.com profile?

Yes. Every profile has an "Additional Information" section where you can put other qualifications and services. Go ahead and list it there.

*Michael Lewis is Managing Editor of member publications for the National Notary Association.*

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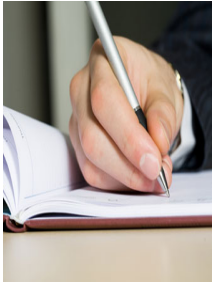
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