

Electronic Notarization Initiative

The Eight Steps to Becoming an Electronic Notary in Pennsylvania

- Step 1. The duly appointed and commissioned notary public in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who holds a current and unrestricted commission completes the Electronic Notary Public Application and submits it with a non-refundable \$40.00 application fee (check payable to the “Commonwealth of Pennsylvania”) to the Department of State’s Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation. The electronic notary application form is available from BCEL upon request or on the Department’s website at <http://www.dos.state.pa.us> (link to Notaries).
- Step 2. The Department of State processes the electronic notary application and either approves or rejects the application in writing. If approved to act as an electronic notary, the applicant will receive an Electronic Notary Approval Letter from the Department of State. The letter will be sent to the business office of record of the notary public and will authorize the notary to participate in Phase I of the Department’s Electronic Notarization Initiative until the end of the Electronic Notarization Initiative or the end of the notary’s current four-year commission as a notary public, whichever occurs first. The notary has 45 days from the date the Approval Letter is issued to complete the process for downloading an electronic notary seal or the approval becomes null and void.
- Step 3. The Department of State informs the selected digital certificate issuer (National Notary Association) that the Pennsylvania notary is authorized to receive an Electronic Notary Seal and the notary contact information is communicated to NNA.
- Step 4. The approved electronic notary is contacted by the National Notary Association via email with instructions on how to obtain a digital certificate in the form of an electronic notary seal.
- Step 5. The approved electronic notary completes payment of a \$24.95 fee to the National Notary Association for issuance of the electronic notary seal, either online or by phone.
- Step 6. The approved electronic notary appears in-person before a participating county Recorder of Deeds and presents the Electronic Notary Approval Letter and satisfactory evidence of identity to the Recorder. Satisfactory evidence of identity consists of a current state or federal government-issued photo identification document. The Recorder of Deeds enters the identification information for the notary into the shared Electronic Notary Seal database.
- Step 7. The National Notary Association releases the Electronic Notary Seal and notifies the approved electronic notary by email how to complete the final step.
- Step 8. The approved electronic notary authenticates to the Electronic Seal Program online and downloads the Electronic Notary Seal, which is valid for one year or until the expiration of the notary’s current commission, whichever occurs first.

The notary may now use his/her digital certificate/Electronic Notary Seal to notarize documents as part of Phase I of the Electronic Notarization Initiative and in accordance with the Notary Public Law. An approved electronic notary will be required to obtain a new Electronic Notary Seal annually for subsequent phases of the Initiative.