

Electronic Signatures Policy

NOTE: Council regularly reviews and updates its policies. The latest controlled version can be obtained from the Policy Register on Council's intranet or by contacting Council's Corporate Services Branch. **A hard copy of this electronic document is considered uncontrolled when printed.**

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

South Burnett Regional Council ('Council') has developed this policy to provide guidance and responsibilities for Council representatives when using electronic signatures.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council representatives and includes entities over which Council has direct ownership, management and/or financial control.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework that:

- recognises the importance of the information economy to the future economic and social prosperity of Queensland;
- facilitates the use of electronic transactions;
- promotes business and community confidence in the use of electronic transactions; and
- enables business and the community to use electronic communications in their dealings with government.

3.1. Electronic Signatures

Electronic signatures are a method of authenticating a person as the source of a digital message and indicates their approval of the information contained in the message.

Council approved electronic signatures include:

- digitised signatures – a scanned handwritten signature inserted as an image; use of signature blocks;
- adobe forms; and
- workflow approvals in applications.

3.2. Legal requirements

Pursuant to the *Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act 2001* ('Act'), the use of electronic signatures is appropriate, if the following three (3) criteria is met:

- the signature identifies a person and indicates the person's intention;

- the signature is appropriate (reliable) for its purpose (noting that electronic signatures offer greater security than digitised signatures); and
- the person receiving the document consents to receiving a signature in electronic form.

3.3. Exemptions

There are several exemptions that exist where electronic signatures must not be used. Pursuant to *Schedule 1* of the Act, these exemptions include a requirement or permission for:

- a person to file a document with a court or tribunal for a proceeding;
- a document to be served personally or by post; and
- a document to be attested, authenticated, verified, or witnessed by a person other than the author of a document.

4. DEFINITIONS

Council means South Burnett Regional Council.

Council representative means all Councillors and Council employees including permanent, casual and temporary employees, apprentices, trainees, contractors, volunteers, and work experience students.

5. LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE

Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act 2001 (Qld)

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

South Burnett Regional Council Electronic Signature Procedure – Procedure136

7. NEXT REVIEW

As prescribed by legislation or July 2025

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Revision Description	Adopted Date	ECM Reference
1	Development of policy	19 July 2023	3036234


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