



Mark Speakman

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

Victor Dominello

Minister for Customer Service

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 15 September 2020

COVID 19: VIDEO TECH SIGNING OF LEGAL FORMS TO CONTINUE

The witnessing of important legal documents such as wills, powers of attorney and statutory declarations over video conference will continue under new legislation to be introduced into NSW Parliament.

Attorney General Mark Speakman and Minister for Customer Service Victor Dominello said the new legislation seeks to continue arrangements [introduced](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic to reduce non-essential personal contact.

These arrangements allow a witness to see the signatory signing a document in real time over an audio-visual link (AVL).

“The safety and wellbeing of NSW residents is a priority which is why we changed the way these documents can be witnessed,” Mr Speakman said.

“Countless legal documents are signed every day in front of one or more witnesses but video conferencing technology enables these important forms to be completed efficiently and without the risk of face-to-face interaction. Extending remote witnessing arrangements will also allow us to assess whether these reforms should be continued in the longer term.”

The legislation will enable the remote witnessing of documents via AVL to continue until the end of 2021. Arrangements enabling remote witnessing would have otherwise terminated in September 2020.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us all how to deliver services differently while ensuring customers still enjoy the same high standard of efficiency,” Mr Dominello said.

“Video conferencing technology provides an effective and secure way to witness documents remotely.”

Under the extension, a witness will be able to sign a document, or a copy of the document, to confirm they witnessed the signatory’s signature via AVL. This could be done on a hard copy which is scanned and sent to the witness or on an identical counterpart of the document the signatory signs.

Traditional methods of signing and witnessing these documents will remain in place.