



Mark Speakman
Attorney General

MEDIA RELEASE

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VIDEO TECH SIGNING OF LEGAL FORMS HERE TO STAY

The remote witnessing of important legal documents such as wills, statutory declarations and affidavits over video will become a permanent feature of the NSW legal landscape.

Attorney General Mark Speakman said legislation to cement temporary measures into law has passed both Houses of NSW Parliament.

“The NSW Government introduced the [remote witnessing scheme](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help keep the wheels of commerce moving and allow people to manage personal legal arrangements safely,” Mr Speakman said.

“After a successful trial period of 18 months, we’re pleased to be extending these effective and secure provisions to make life easier for people in the future.”

The [Electronic Transactions Amendment \(Remote Witnessing\) Bill 2021](#) will permanently allow documents to be witnessed in real time over an audio-visual link (AVL) when the legislation receives assent. For an additional 12 months, the list of people who can witness NSW statutory declarations will also be extended to the expanded list of witnesses permitted to do so by the relevant [Commonwealth legislation](#).

Mr Speakman said many people who have been using remote witnessing for personal, business and legal documents (such as powers of attorney, deeds and agreements) have found it convenient and efficient, saving both time and money.

“Safeguards are in place designed to address the risk of fraud. For example, signing must be witnessed in real time and the witness must be reasonably satisfied they’re signing the same document or an exact copy. The witness must also endorse the document with a statement that they have complied with these requirements and specify the method used to witness the signature,” Mr Speakman said.

“Continuing these measures will benefit people living in rural, regional and remote areas. It will also improve access to justice for vulnerable members of the community including older people, people suffering from illness or people with a disability.”

Remote witnessing provides greater choice and flexibility for individuals and businesses, however traditional methods of signing and witnessing documents will remain available.

People outside of NSW may also use the remote witnessing provisions for documents required to be signed under or governed by NSW law, which will assist with ongoing disruption to physical movement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.