



IMPORTANT UPDATE on RON Legislation in CA

Governor Newsom on Saturday, September 30, 2023 signed Senate Bill 696 (Portantino) into law, marking the culmination of a years-long effort to enact RON legislation in California. Supported by the California Land Title Association, SB 696 benefited from widespread bipartisan support prior to being signed.

Though the bill has an effective date of January 1, 2024, many of its provisions, including the commissioning of California notaries as remote online notaries able to provide online notarization services, have a delayed implementation tied to the completion of a technology project by the Secretary of State's office that is necessary for it to oversee a RON program. As of now, that technology project is estimated to be completed by January 1, 2030. However, the bill does immediately provide, commensurate with its effective date of January 1, 2024, for the recognition of remote notarial acts duly performed by notaries in other states.

The law represents a comprehensive online notarization proposal that will:

- Allow California's notaries to deliver services online, with modern technologies designed to prevent fraud – protecting both the notary and the signer.
- Ensure consistency of notary standards across in-person notarizations and RON, clarifying existing laws to provide consumers with certainty and confidence that their notarized documents are valid.
- Provide a clear standard so counties and other officials can more effectively verify documents.
- Enhance consumer choice by improving access and affordability for notary services that would otherwise be constrained by location, disability, time availability, or language barriers.
- Enact specific privacy protections over the sensitive data created during the notarization process and maintain the state's existing privacy laws.
- Create first-of-its-kind consumer protections to help ensure a responsible vendor ecosystem.

For More Information, please visit: <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB696/id/2797537>

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