

DRAFT  
FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

# AUTHENTICATION AND PRESERVATION OF STATE ELECTRONIC LEGAL MATERIALS ACT

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF COMMISSIONERS  
ON UNIFORM STATE LAWS

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December 2009 Interim Draft

*Without Prefatory Note or Comments*

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September 23, 2009

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**AUTHENTICATION AND PRESERVATION OF STATE ELECTRONIC LEGAL  
MATERIALS ACT<sup>[bb1]</sup>**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.....	1
SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS.....	1
SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY.....	3
SECTION 4. AUTHENTICATION OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS.....	3
SECTION 5. PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE.....	4
SECTION 6. PRESERVATION AND PERMANENT ACCESS.....	4
SECTION 8. RELATION TO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES IN GLOBAL AND NATIONAL COMMERCE ACT.....	6
SECTION 9. EFFECTIVE DATE.....	6

**ALTERNATIVE VERSION**

SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY.....	6
SECTION 5. AUTHENTICATION OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS.....	7
SECTION 7. PRESERVATION AND PERMANENT ACCESS.....	7

1 AUTHENTICATION AND PRESERVATION OF STATE ELECTRONIC LEGAL  
2 MATERIALS ACT

3  
4 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE. This [act] may be cited as the Authentication and  
5 Preservation of State Electronic Legal Materials Act.

6 SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS. ~~For the purposes of this [act], In this [act]:~~

7 (1) “Authenticate” means to verify that the content of a document is complete and  
8 unaltered from the version published by the official publisher.

9 (2) “Chain of custody” means a chronological documentation, or paper trail, showing the  
10 official control and transfer(s) of a document, whether physical or electronic;

11 (3) “Document” means the following primary law materials published by or under the  
12 authority of the government<sup>[bb2]</sup> of this state: state-level legal material, including:

13 (A) laws or statutes passed by the state legislature ~~in each legislative session; of~~  
14 ~~this state at a particular legislative session;~~

15 (B) codified laws or statutes ~~of this state;~~

16 (C) state administrative rules ~~of this state~~ that have the force and effect of law,

17 ~~and;~~

18 [(D) decisions of state administrative agencies<sup>[bb3]</sup> that have precedential effect;]

19 [(E) appellate judicial decisions<sup>[bb4]</sup> and other judicial decisions of this state that  
20 have precedential value;]

21 [(F) primary law materials of local governments or political subdivisions of the  
22 state<sup>[bb5]</sup>;]

23 [(G) other items as specified.]

24 (24) “Electronic” means relating to technology having electrical, digital, magnetic,  
25 wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities<sup>[bb6]</sup>;

1 (35) “Electronic document” means a document created, generated, sent,  
2 communicated, or stored by electronic means, and readable online<sup>[bb7]</sup>;

3 (6) “Official”<sup>[bb8]</sup> means governmentally mandated or approved by statute or rule;

4 (7) “Official Publisher” means an agency, department, board, commission, authority,  
5 institution, or instrumentality of state government, whether in the legislative, executive, or  
6 judicial branch, with the responsibility to publish a document pursuant to governmental mandate  
7 or as approved by statute or rule.

8 (8) “Permanent public access” means current, continuous and future public use;

9 (49) “Person” means an individual, corporation, business trust, estate, trust,  
10 partnership, limited liability company, association, joint venture, public corporation,  
11 government, or governmental subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, or any other legal or  
12 commercial entity.

13 (5) ~~“Official Publisher” means an executive, legislative, or judicial agency, department,~~  
14 ~~board, commission, authority, institution, or instrumentality of a state government with the~~  
15 ~~responsibility to publish a document, or a person designated under contract with the responsible~~  
16 ~~agency or instrumentality of state government to publish a document.~~

17 (10) “Preservation” means providing for permanent, uninterrupted access to the  
18 intellectual content of a document, either in its original publication form or as reformatted by the  
19 official publisher;

20 (11) “Publish” means to produce or release for general distribution;

21 (612) “State” means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto  
22 Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the  
23 jurisdiction of the United States.

1 (13) [Other definitions to be added?]

2 **SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY.** This [act] applies to an electronic document that is  
3 published on the Internet.

4 *Alternate Version*

5 **[SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY.** This [act] applies to an electronic document that is  
6 published only on the ~~i~~Internet, or is published on the ~~I~~Internet and is designated official.

7 (1) If the electronic document is the only version of the document readily accessible to  
8 the public, it must be designated official and must meet the requirements of Sections 4, 6, and 7  
9 of this [act].

10 (2) If the official publisher provides a print version of the electronic document, the  
11 official publisher may designate the electronic version as official provided that the requirements  
12 of Sections 4, 6, and 7 of this [act] are met.

13 (3) If the official publisher provides a print version of the electronic document and  
14 designates only the print version as official, the electronic version must, at a minimum, be  
15 identified clearly as unofficial on its online display. The online display must also explain the  
16 procedure by which the public can obtain a certified copy of the official version of the document.

17 **I**

18 **SECTION 4. AUTHENTICATION OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS.** (1) The  
19 official publisher of an electronic document subject to this [act] must authenticate ~~it~~ the  
20 document. At a minimum, authentication must include:

21 (1A) ~~documentation~~ certification that establishes a chain of custody for the  
22 document from its official publication to the computer system in which it is stored permanently;  
23 and ~~that the computer system used to create and store the document contains security measures~~

1 ~~designed to minimize corruption of or tampering with the document, and establishes a chain of~~  
2 ~~custody for the document;~~

3 ~~(2B) protection of the transmission of the document by security measures~~  
4 ~~designed to prevent corruption of or tampering with the document from the computer system in~~  
5 ~~which it is stored permanently to the computer system of the user.~~  
6 ~~from the computer system in which it was created to the web site on which it is displayed, with~~  
7 ~~an appropriate indicator of web site authentication; and~~

8 ~~——(3) assurance that the document displayed on the web site is the document it purports to~~  
9 ~~be and is complete, with an appropriate indicator of document authentication.~~

10 ~~(2) An authenticated electronic document must display clearly an indicator of its~~  
11 ~~authenticity.~~

12 ~~(3) If an official publisher enters into a contract with a person to publish a document, the~~  
13 ~~official publisher must require compliance with this [act] as a term of the contract.~~

14 **SECTION 5. PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE.** ~~If the publication of an electronic~~  
15 ~~document meets the requirements in section 4 the electronic document is prima facie evidence~~  
16 ~~that it is the complete document that it purports to be.—An electronic document authenticated~~  
17 ~~under Section 4 is prima facie evidence of the content of the original document.~~

18 **SECTION 6. PRESERVATION ~~AND PERMANENT ACCESS.~~** The official  
19 publisher of an electronic document subject to this [act] must provide for preservation of the  
20 document, including the current text and all amendments, changes, and superseded versions. At  
21 a minimum, preservation must include: establish a plan ~~[bb9]~~ both for  
22 preservation of the document and for permanent public access to the document. At a minimum,  
23 the plan must include:

1           (4A) documentation of the data format used in the original document creation;  
2           (2B) periodic archiving of the data, in paper or electronic form or both; and  
3           (3C) periodic updating of the document in new electronic formats, as necessary to  
4 provide ~~long-term continuing permanent~~ public access to the document.

5           **SECTION 7. PERMANENT PUBLIC ACCESS.** The official publisher must provide  
6 for continuing permanent public access to the document, including the forms of the document  
7 preserved as required by Section 6. If a document is made available exclusively electronically, it  
8 must remain available electronically permanently, either in its original location or in an archived  
9 location. The official publisher must ensure that all amended, changed, or superseded documents  
10 shall remain available on conditions of access similar to those in effect for then-current  
11 documents.

12           **SECTION 8. UNIFORMITY OF STANDARDS.**

13           (a) This [act] must be applied and construed to promote uniformity of the law with  
14 respect to its subject matter among the states that enact it.

15           (b) In implementing the requirements of this [act], the official publisher must consider:

- 16                   (1) standards and practices of other jurisdictions;  
17                   (2) any standards on authentication and preservation of documents adopted by  
18 national standard-setting bodies; and  
19                   (3) the needs of electronic document users.

20           **SECTION 9. DOCUMENTS FROM OTHER STATES.** A document from another  
21 state that is authenticated by that state consistent with Section 4 of this [act] is prima facie  
22 evidence of the content of that document.





1 ~~SECTION 5. AUTHENTICATION OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS. The~~  
2 ~~official publisher of an electronic document which meets the criteria in section 4 (a) or (b) must~~  
3 ~~authenticate it...~~

4 ~~SECTION 7. PRESERVATION AND PERMANENT ACCESS. The official~~  
5 ~~publisher of an electronic document which meets the criteria in section 4 (a) or (b) must establish~~  
6 ~~a plan...~~