



ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES POLICY

Technology Services

Policy Number: 6030

1.0 PURPOSE

Columbia Basin College is committed to utilizing tools which promote operational efficiency while reducing organizational costs. The purpose of this policy is to provide for the use of electronic signatures and submissions to facilitate College business functions, while providing reasonable assurance of the integrity, authenticity, and non-repudiation of electronic documents and records when electronic signatures and submissions are used and accepted.

2.0 AUTHORITY & SCOPE

2.1 Authority: Chapter 1.80 RCW; RCW 28B.50.140.

2.2 Scope: All campus.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Electronic means relating to technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities.

3.2 Electronic signature or e-signature means a symbol, or process attached to, or logically associated with, a contract or other record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

3.3 Electronic signature vendor means the vendor with which the College has contracted to administer electronic signatures.

3.4 Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is the office within Washington State Consolidated Technology Services Agency that establishes standards and policies for the consistent and efficient operation of information technology services throughout state government, including the policies, standards, and guidance for the use of electronic signatures.

3.5 Record means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in perceivable form, except as otherwise defined for the purpose of College record retention, preservation, or disclosure.

3.6 A certification authority (CA) is a trusted entity that issues digital certificates. These certificates validate the identity of the signer and ensure that the signature is authentic, secure, and legally recognized. The CA provides assurance that the electronic signature has not been tampered with and is associated with the correct individual or entity.

3.7 Subscriber and content integrity:

3.7.1 Subscriber Integrity – ensures that the individual or entity signing the document (the subscriber) is correctly identified and their identity

is securely linked to the electronic signature. It confirms that the subscriber is who they claim to be.

3.7.2 Content Integrity – ensures that the content of the document has not been altered or tampered with after it has been signed. It guarantees that the signature remains valid only if the content remains unchanged, providing assurance that the document's integrity is preserved throughout the signing process.

3.8 Availability refers to the assurance that the electronic signature system, including its tools, processes, and certificates, is accessible and operational when needed. It ensures that the necessary components are reliably available to all parties involved in the transaction, without interruption, to support the signing and validation of documents.

4.0 USE AND ACCEPTANCE OF ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

4.1 This policy is designed to provide reasonable assurance for the integrity, authenticity, and nonrepudiation of electronic documents when electronic signatures and submissions are used and accepted; and to promote the use of electronic signatures and submissions throughout Columbia Basin College (CBC).

The use of electronic records and electronic signatures can significantly reduce costs, simplify transactions, increase equity, remove barriers, and speed up transaction time. To the fullest extent allowed by law, CBC encourages electronic transactions and recognizes electronic records and electronic signatures. In accordance with the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA), when CBC utilizes electronic signatures, the application's verification processes will ensure that the signatures meet all requirements of the law including certification authority, subscriber and content integrity, and availability.

The use and acceptance of electronic signatures and electronic submissions/records shall be consistent with the guidance and requirements put in place by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), if any (Office of the Chief Information Officer Electronic Signature Guidelines).

The Vice President for Administrative Services, in consultation with the Director for Technology Services and the Director for Accounting Services/Controller, shall approve specific methods and processes for electronic signatures and submissions. These approval authorities may be delegated at the discretion of the VP for Administrative Services.

An electronically signed document shall be deemed an original of the document (RCW 1.80.060).

Employees or students who falsify electronic signatures or otherwise violate this procedure may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination of employment or potential criminal prosecution under applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Records of a transaction that was signed electronically need to be kept for the same length of time as if the transaction were signed in ink. The retention requirements are based on the function and content of the records rather than its format.

4.2 Policy Review

The VP for Administrative Services will consult with the Director for Technology Services and the Legal Affairs Office to annually review and update this policy as necessary.

5.0 FORMS & OTHER RESOURCES

[CBC Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy](#)

[Data Governance Policy](#)

[Data Security – Acceptable Use Matrix](#)

[Office of the Chief Information Officer Electronic Signature Guidelines](#)

[Uniform Electronic Transactions Act \(UETA\)](#)

[State Board CTC Data Classification Data Brief](#)

[Chapter 1.80 RCW](#)

[RCW 28B.50.140](#)

[Senate Bill 6028, Chapter 57](#)

6.0 HISTORY & POLICY CONTACT

6.1 Originated: 06/2025.

6.2 Revised: N/A.

6.3 Proposal Date: 03/24/2025.

6.4 Policy Review: N/A.

6.5 Promulgation Date: 06/2025.

6.6 Responsible Administrator: Director for Technology Services.