



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res. 2021-088, **Version:** 2

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**City Council Meeting Date:** September 21, 2021

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
City Administrator

**From:** Lynette Peterson, City Clerk  
Chris Hood, City Attorney

Consider Motion Adopting Electronic Signature Policy.

**Action Requested:**

The City Council is asked to adopt the Electronic Signature Policy.

**Summary Report:**

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the work environment has been changing and adapting to employees working remotely, virtual meetings, etc., and cities are finding themselves reliant on electronic records and signatures to validate a host of documents, including but not limited to contracts, resolutions, ordinances, building permits, and business licenses, just to name a few. Minnesota law generally states that a signature may not be denied legal effect simply because they are in electronic form. (Minn. Stat. § 325L.07) However, cities are specifically tasked with determining whether, and to what extent, they will rely on and accept electronic signatures in their official operations. (Minn. Stat. § 325L.18)

The City has been using electronic signatures for many years on a more limited basis for many agreements. To formalize its determination, a proposed policy for the City of Northfield is attached that clearly describes the extent to which electronic signatures will be accepted. This policy applies to City Staff and elected officials.

The Council is asked to adopt a motion to approve the Electronic Signature Policy as presented. Adopting this policy will help execute documents in a timely manner rather than slower processing times for individuals to be in person to sign. Additionally, this automate the sending and saving of documents that will also increase efficiency in our operations. As per the policy, signatures will be authenticated by the software program being used to provide the electronic signature. The technology is now well proven as secure and safe. For these reasons, electronic signatures are becoming the norm in many private and public organizations.

**Alternative Options:**

Revisions could be made to the policy or the policy is not adopted.

**Financial Impacts:**

N/A

**Tentative Timelines:**

Not applicable.

