



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) The Use of e-Signatures

### Introduction

This FAQ has been developed by the Alberta College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (ACSLPA) to support understanding of the use of electronic or e-signatures, which are governed under the [Electronic Transactions Act](#). Electronic signatures are defined in the *ETA* as “electronic information that a person creates or adopts in order to sign a record and that is in, attached to, or associated with the record”.

The use of e-signatures has become more common in recent years and having the option to electronically sign documents can be more efficient and convenient, as well as less costly to clinicians.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. Can I use e-Signatures in my documentation and record keeping?

ACSLPA regulated members can use electronic signatures in their documentation and record keeping. Under the *ETA*, documents that are signed electronically are recognized as having proper and valid signatures. Documents can be signed electronically by clinicians (e.g., client progress notes, reports), or by clients (e.g., intake forms, informed consent for services forms).

#### 2. What are some examples of e-signatures?

Examples of electronic signatures include:

- Scanned copies of physically signed documents,
- Scanned or electronic signatures applied or pasted to an electronic document,
- Typed names or signature blocks,
- Electronic images of handwritten signatures,
- Electronic drawings of signatures created using a stylus or finger on touchscreens, and
- Clicking an electronic confirmation or acknowledgement on a website.

### 3. Are there any requirements for an e-signature to be valid?

The following must be considered when using e-signatures in your practice:

- Information or records in electronic form **cannot be used, provided, or accepted without the person's consent**. Members should consider including a provision in their electronic documents that states that the parties have consented to the use of electronic signatures.
- The electronic signature should link the person, through their signature, to the document to show their acceptance of its contents.
- Electronic signatures must be reliable for the purpose of identifying the person signing.
- Records must be able to be retained and must be accessible for use for future reference.

### 4. Are there any other security measures that I should consider?

Members can consider additional measures to ensure the privacy and security of electronic information when using electronic signatures:

- Authentication methods to verify signer identity (e.g., email address or PIN #), and/or
- Generation of an audit trail when documents are signed.

Questions about the use of e-signatures can be directed to your Practice Advisor (SLP – [slp@acslpa.ca](mailto:slp@acslpa.ca) or Audiology – [audiology@acslpa.ca](mailto:audiology@acslpa.ca)).