

**Sam Houston State University**  
**A Member of The Texas State University System**

**President's Office Policy PRE-18**  
**Signatures for Internal Transactions**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To improve services and reduce costs, Sam Houston State University (SHSU) authorizes, accepts, and encourages the use of electronic signatures for internal transactions when the use of such technology complies with acceptable forms of signatures described below and improves efficiency.
- 1.2 To ensure internal transactions are authorized with either a manual or electronic signature, as designated by the process owner.
- 1.3 To ensure the appropriate use, validity, safety, and uniformity of signatures for internal transactions.

**2. Definitions**

- 2.1 “**Electronic signature** means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.”<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 “**Digital signature** means an electronic identifier intended by the person using it to have the same force and effect as the use of a manual signature.”<sup>2</sup> References in this policy to electronic signatures include digital signatures.
- 2.3 **Manual signature** means a signature handwritten by a person with the intent to sign. Initials, stamps, or substitute signatures of another party are not acceptable manual signatures.
- 2.4 **Internal transaction** refers to matters involving SHSU employees or students and the institution. Internal transactions may include, but are not limited to purchase orders, travel reimbursements, housing agreements or financial aid documents.

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<sup>1</sup> Tex. Bus. & Com. Code § 322.02

<sup>2</sup> Tex. Gov. Code § 2054.060

### 3. Use and User Responsibilities

- 3.1 Electronic signatures are legally binding and the equivalent of a manual signature.
- 3.2 The Texas State University System Rules and Regulations, Chap III, §§ 6.(17) and 8 outline specific transactions SHSU may conduct electronically.
- 3.3 SHSU will designate internal transactions requiring electronic signatures and the acceptable form of signature. SHSU will develop electronic signature methods for transactions between employees commensurate with the available technologies, risks of transaction, and costs of implementation. SHSU employees must follow all protocols and procedures developed to ensure the security of their electronic signatures and passwords.
- 3.4 Individuals are accountable for their signatures, whether manual or electronic. Any suspected or fraudulent use of signatures should be reported immediately to the Vice President for Finance and Operations and Vice President for Information Technology, or their designees. Falsification or inappropriate use of signatures may result in disciplinary action by SHSU along with any applicable punishment provided under Texas Penal Code.

### 4. Use of Signatures for External Transactions

This policy does not approve or govern the use of manual or electronic signatures for **external transactions** involving SHSU and third parties. Use of an electronic signature for an external transaction must include protections required by law. With the exception of the President's Office use of electronic transactions, all other departmental electronic signatures must be approved by the Vice President of Information Technology and the Vice President of Finance and Operations.

*See generally,*  
Tex. Bus. & Com. Code § 322  
1Tex. Admin. Code Chapters 202 and 203  
Tex. Educ. Code § 51.9336

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