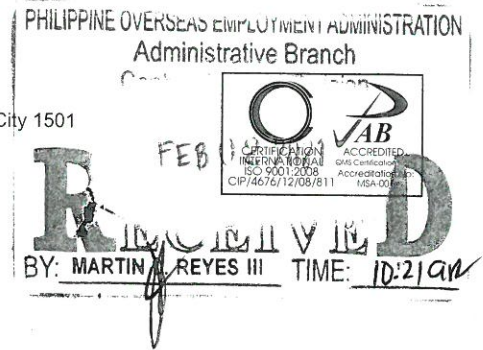




Philippine  
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**ADVISORY NO. 20**  
Series of 2021

**USE OF DIGITAL SIGNATURES IN VIRTUAL HEARING**

Given the Covid-19 pandemic which we now all operate, we are bound to do most of our transactions online. The use of digital signatures has increased given that it has the same effect as with the written signature where the requirements of identity, reliability, and consent has been identified.

*The Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) and Commission on Audit (CoA) gave the go ahead to government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to use the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT)'s digital signatures through the Philippine National Public Key Infrastructure (PNPKI).*

*In a recent statement on December 21, 2020, ARTA confirmed that PNPKI digital signatures and electronic signatures may be validly used for government permits and licenses, provided that there is compliance with the requirements as set forth in the Electronic Commerce Act or R.A. No. 8792. The COA reminded users that improper use of digital and electronic signatures may subject them to applicable penalties.*  
[https://dict.gov.ph/govt-to-honor-dicts-pnpki-digital-signatures-for-faster-transactions/?fbclid=IwAR2LnTrCt-Lic9Zo4zab2vSJF3UWa3fP\\_rpv0J-kKShbfySWRenrw1Zf7YU](https://dict.gov.ph/govt-to-honor-dicts-pnpki-digital-signatures-for-faster-transactions/?fbclid=IwAR2LnTrCt-Lic9Zo4zab2vSJF3UWa3fP_rpv0J-kKShbfySWRenrw1Zf7YU)

Public and private sectors are adapting this new norm in order to not disrupt their services, operations, and purpose. The legal field is also no exception to this.

Thus, in the conduct of virtual hearings, the minutes thereof may be signed electronically provided that the e-signature must be registered under the Philippine National Public Key Infrastructure (PNPKI) of the DICT. Once registered to the DICT, it will become a *Digital Signature*. A digital signature is a secure form of e-signature because it is *asymmetrically encrypted* using a *hash function* and certified by an authority to be authentic and can be verified.

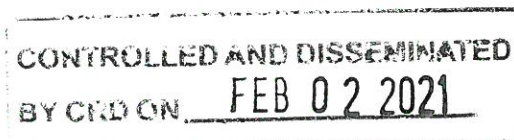
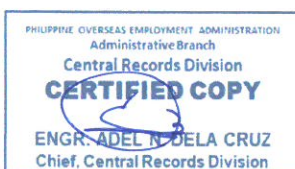
Per PNPKI Team, those who are interested may apply individually in order to vet your identity. The DICT issued Department Circular 006, which provides the guidelines on alternative means of applying and issuance of the PNPKI's digital certificates for external clients during the declared state of public health emergency. *Video calls with the Registration Authority Officer or a PNPKI personnel will be performed in lieu of face-to-face verification.* To know more about the application process during community quarantine, please check this link: <https://dict.gov.ph/dict-provides-secure-digital-certificates-to-the-public/>

Here are the requirements for individual certificates:

1. Duly accomplished PNPKI application form <https://dict.gov.ph/pnpki-individual-certificate/> in **original pdf fillable format**;
2. Unified Multi-Purpose Identification (UMID) compliant card; (scanned) \*

\* If UMID-compliant card is not available, ANY TWO (2) valid government-issued IDs are accepted.

Please check this link for the list - <https://dict.gov.ph/pnpki-individual-certificate/>



3. Birth Certificate or valid Philippine Passport; (scanned)
4. 1 passport-size ID picture;
5. Tax Identification Number (TIN); and
6. Valid and working email address.

For applications outside Metro Manila, please check PNPKI Cluster Team Offices email addresses at this link - <https://dict.gov.ph/pnpki-where-to-submit/>

For the complete PNPKI online application process, please watch the tutorial video at this link - <https://www.youtube.com/PNPKI>

Once registered, ICT will facilitate the installation of the digital signatures in your machines. ICT will record your digital signatures' assigned control numbers and expiry date thereof to create a library of digital signatures that our systems shall use as a reference for authorized digital signatures/online transactions.

For your guidance and compliance.



**BERNARD P. OLALIA**  
Administrator

