

March 16, 2020

Dear Members:

**The Society office is now operating on limited staff. Please read the entire memo below. Processing authenticated documents is affected.**

I know that many of you are anxious about the ongoing situation and wondering what you can do and what the Society is doing.

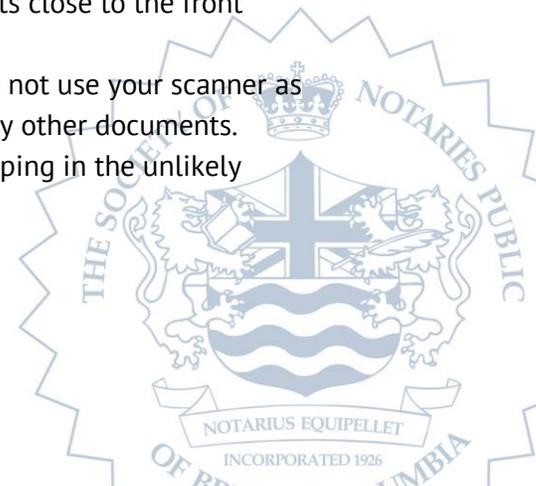
Everyone is under stress and will need to be forward thinking and flexible. We are hearing situations in which staffing shortages are resulting in problems processing mortgages and filing documents. Please communicate with clients, parties, and other legal practitioners early so as to avoid adding to the panic by attempting to avoid last minute problems. I recognize that this will not be easy.

We have been working today and communicating with the Law Society and with LTSA. I expect that there will be an announcement from LTSA in the morning and that both the Law Society and the Society of Notaries Public will communicate further practice guidance to you.

All indications are that prohibitions on remote signing and the remote verification of identification will not be changed. These are statutory provisions that may only be changed by an act of government.

There are however steps that Notaries can take to reduce the risk of transmission.

- Prepare a clean, separate table or area for signing documents close to the front door of your office.
- Reduce your paper handling by taking photos of papers. Do not use your scanner as you run the risk of contaminating the scanner, users, and any other documents. Please slide any documents into a plastic sleeve for safekeeping in the unlikely event that you are requested to produce the documents.



- Do not share pens. If you need to re-use ensure that they are wiped clean after every use.
- Take photos of Identification for storage and printing. ID can still be verified as authentic using UV light without touching the specimen.

The PAL line will be in full operation however I strongly recommend that you email and not phone as your first point of contact.

Staff at the Society have been ordered to work from home. This will affect authentications. The Victoria office for authentications has advised that they are on a day to day schedule. Therefore, the Society office is currently advising that we are not processing authentications. If you have an urgent matter, please email [info@snpbc.ca](mailto:info@snpbc.ca) or directly to me at [jmayr@snpbc.ca](mailto:jmayr@snpbc.ca).

I would like to strongly encourage any member who is not feeling well, suspects that they have been infected, or are in self isolation to contact me in the office. Your Society wants to support any member through this process while protecting the profession's reputation.

Thank you,

Executive Director  
John Mayr