



**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Notice

No. 1-012-1

Aug/2023

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

**SUBJECT: Acceptance of Electronic or Digital Transmissions, Copies, and Signatures;
Notarizations of Digitally Signed Documents**

Reference: (a) RMI [Maritime Act 1990](#), §119
(b) RMI [Maritime Regulations](#) (MI-108), §1.12

PURPOSE

This Marine Notice (MN) outlines the types and format of electronic and digital transmissions, copies, acknowledgements and notarizations, and signatures that are accepted by the Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”).

BACKGROUND

On 10 April 2023, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) [Maritime Act](#) 1990 (the “Maritime Act”) was amended to allow for the acceptance of electronic or digital transmissions, copies, and signatures as the equivalent of an “original” transmission, copy, or signature for any instrument or document which may be registered, filed, recorded, or otherwise submitted to the Administrator.

APPLICABILITY

This Notice applies to all instruments or documents which are presented to the Administrator to be registered, filed, recorded, or are otherwise submitted to the Administrator for another purpose.

DEFINITIONS

As stated in RMI [Maritime Regulations](#), §1.03:

A “**digital signature**” means a signature that is attached to a document by a person with the intent to sign the document where the signature is generated by software using a digital certificate issued by a Trust Service Provider or similar authority.

An “**electronic or digital copy**” means (a) a scan or facsimile of a document that bears a handwritten or electronic signature or (b) a document that has been converted into a

computer file, such as a portable document format (PDF) file, that bears a handwritten or electronic signature or (c) a document bearing a digital signature.

An “**electronic or digital transmission**” means the transfer of data or information in an electronic or digital format.

An “**electronic signature**” means a legible scan or facsimile of a handwritten signature, or an image thereof, attached to a document by a person with the intent to sign the document and does not include digital signatures.

A “**Trust Service Provider**” is a certificate authority issuing digital certificates for signers of digitally signed documents and instruments.

REQUIREMENTS

1.0 Electronic or Digital Transmissions or Copies

1.1 Originals

Any instrument or document which is required by the [Maritime Act](#), [Maritime Regulations](#), a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator to be submitted to the Administrator may be submitted as an electronic or digital transmission or copy. Such electronic or digital transmissions or copies are deemed the equivalent of an original document or instrument.

1.2 Submission of Duplicate Copies

Where multiple duplicate copies of a document are required by the Maritime Act, Maritime Regulations, a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator, the submission of one electronic or digital transmission or copy as the original will be deemed to have met the requirement to provide multiple copies.

1.3 Dissemination of Duplicates

Where an electronic or digital transmission or copy is submitted to the Administrator and copies are to be returned or disseminated by the Administrator, such copies will be disseminated only in electronic form.

1.4 Certificates and Other Documents Issued by the Administrator

Any instrument or document which is required by the Maritime Act, Maritime Regulations, a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator to be issued by the Administrator may be issued as an electronic or digital transmission or copy. Such electronic or digital transmissions or copies are deemed the equivalent of an original document or instrument.

2.0 Electronic and Digital Signatures

2.1 Electronic Signatures

Electronic signatures are accepted on any document or instrument required by the [Maritime Act](#), [Maritime Regulations](#), a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator, including on any document or instrument required to be registered, filed, recorded, or otherwise submitted to the Administrator.

2.2 Digital Signatures

.1 Digital signatures will be accepted on any document or instrument required by the Maritime Act, Maritime Regulations, a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator, including on any document or instrument required to be registered, filed, recorded, or otherwise submitted to the Administrator, if the digital signature is added to the document or instrument through one of the following platforms:

- a. Adobe Acrobat;
- b. Adobe Acrobat Sign;
- c. DocuSign; or
- d. Dropbox Sign.

.2 Other digital signature platforms will be accepted by the Administrator provided that:

- a. the platform provides a level of verification and security in accordance with one of the following:
 - i. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market (eIDAS Regulation);
 - ii. United States Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 186-4, Digital Signature Standard (DSS); or
 - iii. Switzerland Federal Law on Certification Services in the Area of the Electronic Signature (ZertES); and
- b. the digital signature platform produces a PDF output which allows the Administrator to verify the authenticity of the signature within the PDF signature verification panel and without the requirement to log in to a separate platform.

.3 In all such cases, the digital signature must meet the definition of a digital signature and the platform must meet the above requirements.

3.0 Notarizations and Acknowledgements on Digitally Signed Documents

- 3.1 Instruments and documents that are digitally signed are not exempt from any requirement to have such document notarized or acknowledged.
- 3.2 Where a mortgage, instrument, or other document is required to be acknowledged or notarized under the [Maritime Act](#), [Maritime Regulations](#), a Marine Notice, or any other publication of the Administrator, this requirement may be satisfied by use of electronic means or processes as approved by the Administrator.

4.0 Acknowledgment by a Lawyer in Good Standing

If the above options are not possible, and based on prior notice to and approval by the Administrator, a lawyer in good standing with his or her applicable bar association, law society, or similar association, may acknowledge a signature using the applicable acknowledgement form in RMI Maritime Regulations, §3.30.1. On it, they must state the bar association, law society, or similar association of which they are in good standing along with their identifying credentials such as a bar number or similar evidence.