

The Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia

PRESS RELEASE

May 19, 2020

The Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, the Hon. Mike Farnsworth, has made Ministerial Orders under the *Emergency Program Act* to allow for the remote witnessing of Wills, Enduring Powers of Attorney, and Representation Agreements by B.C. Notaries Public and Lawyers.

Ministerial Orders [2020_M161](#) and [2020_M162](#) can found at [BC Laws.ca](#)

The Society of Notaries Public strongly endorses these important temporary changes to the laws in B.C. that regulate the making of Wills, Enduring Powers of Attorney, and Representation Agreements.

While BC's Notaries have taken extraordinary steps to respond to the needs of BC residents to make effective and lawful estate and personal planning documents, the requirement to witness the signing of these documents in person has often been impossible or extremely difficult.

This initiative of the BC Government will allow our members to more fully respond to the public interest in safely making legally effective personal planning documents that will govern their estates and financial affairs as well as their health and personal care needs. Future costly burdens on families and the court system will now be avoided.

The Society will be immediately providing education and support for our members so that new practice procedures can be in place without delay. Our member's clients want the peace of mind that comes from getting their personal legal affairs in order, and now that will be possible without the extraordinary stress of the need to endanger themselves, our members and their staff.



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