



FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL LEGAL ADVICE FACE TO FACE OR OVER THE PHONE

### COVID-19 AND WITNESSING DOCUMENTS OVER AVL

#### **Amendments to Electronic Transactions Amendments**

As the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to keep us all at a distance, we take this opportunity to remind everyone of the ability to now have documents witnessed remotely under the *Electronic Transactions Amendment (COVID -19 Witnessing of Documents) regulations 2020*.

The amendments that came into effect on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, were designed to reduce face to face contact where possible, by allowing important documents such as Wills, Powers of Attorney, Enduring Guardianship, Affidavits and Statutory Declarations to be signed and witnessed over Audio Visual Link.

#### **What is an Audio Visual Link?**

Audio visual link is any service that allows continuous and contemporaneous visual and audio communication between persons. Some common examples include Facetime, Zoom and Skype. To use these methods of communication a client would need access to a smartphone with a camera, or a computer with a webcam; both with a reliable internet connection.

These welcome amendments have meant that our Service has been able to witness documents all over New South Wales, not only reducing unnecessary contact, ensuring the safety of our clients and staff, but also ensuring the Service remains free, by not rely on third parties to witness the acceptance of the documents.

#### **Sunset Clause**

These amendments have a Sunset Clause of the **26<sup>th</sup> of September 2020** unless the government makes a further amendment. This means that unless the Government makes changes, this form of witnessing will cease in late September and face to face witnessing will be the only option.

If you have not already considered having a Will, Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship drafted, now is a great time to do so. Contact our office for a free and confidential appointment with one of our experienced Solicitors.

The North & North West Community Legal Service provides these services free of charge. We can also assist with a number of varied legal matters, to explore how we may be able to assist you visit our website [www.nnwcls.org.au](http://www.nnwcls.org.au) or call our office on 1800 687 687 or 02 6772 8100.

North and North West Community Legal Service

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