

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

**SESSION LAW 2002-115
HOUSE BILL 1581**

AN ACT AFFECTING ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES AND ELECTRONIC RECORDS FILED WITH THE CABARRUS COUNTY AND MECKLENBURG COUNTY REGISTERS OF DEEDS AND AUTHORIZING RESIDENT OR SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES AND DISTRICT COURT JUDGES TO PERFORM MARRIAGE CEREMONIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 66-58.4 reads as rewritten:

"§ 66-58.4. Use of electronic signatures.

- (a) All public agencies may accept electronic signatures.
- (b) ~~Signatures that require attestation by a notary public may not be in the form of an electronic signature.~~ If a law requires a signature or record relating to a transaction subject to the provisions of this Article to be notarized, acknowledged, verified, or made under oath, the requirement is satisfied if the electronic signature of the person authorized to perform those acts, together with all other information required to be included by other applicable law, is attached to or logically associated with the signature or record.

SECTION 2. G.S. 47-30(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Plats to Be Reproducible. – Each plat presented for recording shall be a reproducible plat, either original ink on polyester film (mylar), or a reproduced drawing, transparent and archival (as defined by the American National Standards Institute), or an electronic record as defined in G.S. 66-213(8), and submitted in this form. The recorded plat must be such that the public may obtain legible copies. A direct or photographic copy of each recorded plat shall be placed in the plat book or plat file maintained for that purpose and properly indexed for use. In those counties in which the register has made a security copy of the plat from which legible copies can be made, the original may be returned to the person indicated on the plat."

SECTION 3. G.S. 161-14 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(b1) The register of deeds is authorized to accept electronic records as defined in G.S. 66-312(8) for filing in accordance with the provisions of this section. The fees for recording of an electronic record shall be based on the number of pages and formatting of the electronic record if it were printed by the register of deeds following recording."

SECTION 4. Sections 1 through 3 of this act applies to documents filed with the Cabarrus County and Mecklenburg County Registers of Deeds only.

SECTION 5. G.S. 51-1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 51-1. Requisites of marriage; solemnization.

A valid and sufficient marriage is created by the consent of a male and female person who may lawfully marry, presently to take each other as husband and wife, freely, seriously and plainly expressed by each in the presence of the other, either:

- (1) a. In the presence of an ordained minister of any religious denomination, a minister authorized by a church, a resident superior court judge, or an emergency superior court judge of this State, or a magistrate; and

- b. With [the consequent declaration by] the [~~minister~~ minister, judge or] magistrate [that] the [persons are husband and] wife;
or
- (2) In accordance with any mode of solemnization recognized by any religious denomination, or federally or State recognized Indian Nation or Tribe.

Marriages solemnized before March 9, 1909, by ministers of the gospel licensed, but not ordained, are validated from their consummation."

SECTION 6. G.S. 51-1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 51-1. Requisites of marriage; solemnization.

A valid and sufficient marriage is created by the consent of a male and female person who may lawfully marry, presently to take each other as husband and wife, freely, seriously and plainly expressed by each in the presence of the other, either:

- (1) a. In the presence of an ordained minister of any religious denomination, a minister authorized by a church, a district court judge, or a magistrate; and
- b. With [the consequent declaration by] the [~~minister~~ minister, judge or] magistrate [that] the [persons are husband and] wife;
or
- (2) In accordance with any mode of solemnization recognized by any religious denomination, or federally or State recognized Indian Nation or Tribe.

Marriages solemnized before March 9, 1909, by ministers of the gospel licensed, but not ordained, are validated from their consummation."

SECTION 7. Section 5 of this act becomes effective November 25, 2002, and expires December 1, 2002. Section 6 of this act becomes effective September 19, 2002, and expires September 22, 2002. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 5th day of September, 2002.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 3:43 p.m. this 16th day of September, 2002