

Date of Hearing: June 3, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, Chair

SB 1080 (Valladares) – As Introduced February 13, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 37-0

SUBJECT: County clerks: certification of records: signature

SUMMARY: Authorizes county clerks to use a printed, stamped, or digital signature in certifying to a record. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Authorizes the county clerk to use a printed, stamped, photographically reproduced facsimile, electronic, or otherwise digitally created signature in certifying to a record in the county clerk's office, provided that the certification includes the official seal of the county clerk's office affixed thereto.
- 2) Makes clarifying and technical changes.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Provides that there are 24 county officers, including the county clerk and the county recorder. [Government Code (GOV) 24000]
- 2) Requires the county clerk to act as the clerk of the board of supervisors, except as otherwise provided. (GOV 26801)
- 3) Requires a county clerk to keep an official seal with specified characteristics for use when performing their official duties. (GOV 26807)
- 4) Allows county boards of supervisors to consolidate offices in specified combinations, including combining the offices of county clerk and county recorder into a clerk-recorder. (GOV 24300-24308)
- 5) Allows the county recorder to use a printed, stamped, photographically reproduced facsimile, electronic, or otherwise digitally created signature in certifying to a record in the recorder's office provided that the certification has the seal of the recorder's office affixed thereto. (GOV 27210)
- 6) Allows a clerk of the board of supervisors to use digital signatures on records, books, minutes, and ordinances of the board of supervisors. (GOV 25103)

FISCAL EFFECT: None

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Bill Summary and Author's Statement.** This bill allows county clerks to use a printed, stamped, photographically reproduced facsimile, electronic, or otherwise digitally created

signature in certifying to a record in the county clerk's office, provided that the certification includes the official seal of the county clerk's office.

This bill is sponsored by the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials.

According to the author, "Senate Bill 1080 will explicitly authorize county clerks to use electronic, digital, or facsimile signatures and seals when certifying records, similar to the authority already granted to county recorders. This proposal will provide statutory clarity and consistency across departments while enhancing public access to certified filed documents without compromising authenticity or legal validity. SB 1080 will also enable more efficient, secure, and accessible delivery of County Clerk services throughout California, allowing many procedures and interactions between the public and counties to be conducted entirely online."

2) **Background.** Existing law lists 24 county officers, including the county clerk. The responsibilities of the county clerk include:

- Issuing public and confidential marriage licenses;
- Performing civil ceremonies;
- Filing Fictitious Business Name Statements;
- Administering loyalty oaths of office to county employees and elected officials;
- Filing powers of attorney for surety companies;
- Filing and posting public notices and environmental impact reports under the California Environmental Quality Act;
- Filing oaths of office for county officials and notaries within the county; and
- Filing conflict of interest statements for county officials.

In addition to these duties, county clerks act as the ex-officio clerk of the board of supervisors, unless the board appoints a separate clerk. In the role of clerk of the board, county clerks operate as the chief administrator of legislation for the county, fulfilling a variety of responsibilities that ensure that local ordinances and other actions by the county comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. These laws include the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Public Records Act, and other laws that mandate transparency and public access for county actions and disseminate information on those actions. In all, California law mandates more than 30 specific duties for the clerk of the board. County clerks also act ex-officio as the registrar of voters, unless a separate registrar is appointed by the board of supervisors, as many have done.

County boards of supervisors can adopt ordinances to consolidate certain other offices with the county clerk in various combinations, some of which are only available to medium and small counties. 53 of the 58 counties consolidate the office of the county clerk with the office of the recorder into a clerk-recorder. County recorders are responsible for examining and recording all documents dealing with the ownership of land in counties. State law also allows the clerk to be combined with the auditor, the public administrator, or, in smaller counties, the tax collector, assessor, or treasurer.

3) **Digital Signatures.** A county clerk must sign and affix a seal to documents when performing their official duties. State law allows a clerk of the board of supervisors to use digital

signatures on record, books, minutes, and ordinances of the board of supervisors (SB 858, Committee on Local Government, 2025). County recorders may also use a printed, stamped, photographically reproduced facsimile, electronic, or otherwise digitally created signature in certifying to a record, as long as it has the recorders seal affixed to it (SB 882, Committee on Governance and Finance, 2023). However, state law doesn't explicitly authorize the use of digital signatures for county clerks. As a result, county clerks have been reluctant to adopt digital signatures in the course of their duties, even though the same official who holds a consolidated office (such as a clerk-recorder) may use them when carrying out other responsibilities.

- 4) **Arguments in Support.** The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO), sponsor of this bill, writes, "Current law-- GC Section 26807--outlines the physical specifications and use of a County Clerk's seal but lacks explicit authorization for electronic certification methods. In contrast, Government Code section 27210 grants this authority to County Recorders, allowing them to electronically or digitally certify recorded documents as long as the official seal is affixed.

"Authorizing electronic certification by County Clerks is a necessary and timely modernization that reflects both technological advancements and the evolving public service expectations, saving the time-consuming and laborious steps of creating physical copies to house wet signatures and physical seals currently required by law.

"This proposal will ensure statutory clarity and consistency across departments while enhancing public access to certified filed documents without compromising authenticity or legal validity by providing an electronic, digital or facsimile option for utilization by county clerks, and will enable more efficient, secure, and accessible delivery of County Clerk services across California and allow these interactions between the public and counties to remain entirely online."

- 5) **Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Association of Clerks and Election Officials [SPONSOR]

Opposition

None on file

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