

Signing and Sealing Guidelines

Fundamental principles of professional reliance are that all agrology professionals meet high professional standards when carrying out their work. This includes signing off, sealing and using a signature or signature block with their professional title/designation of professional document(s) and communication(s).

Registrants with more than one designation /professional title, need to ensure they clearly identify and communicate which professional title and area(s) of expertise is associated with the professional document(s) and communication that they are signing off, sealing and/or using a signature on.

Signing off

Only practicing Professional Agrologists (PAGs), Technical Agrologists (TAGs), and Limited License Agrologists (LLAGs) have been granted the authority by the BC Institute of Agrologists to signoff professional documents and communications.

PAGs, TAGs and LLAGs:

- Should signoff all professional documents and communications with their professional title in a clear and legible manner.
- Are responsible for the content of all professional documents and communications that they prepare or oversee whether or not they are signed.
- Must be working within their area of expertise or in the capacity as a manager or decision-maker.

Signature or Signature Block

All practicing Professional Agrologists (PAGs), Technical Agrologists (TAGs) and Limited License Agrologists (LLAG):

- Should use a signature or signature block on professional documents and communications with their professional title in a clear and legible manner.
- Are responsible for the content of all professional documents and communications that they prepare or oversee whether or not they are signed.
- Must be working within their area of expertise.

All Articling Agrologists (AAGs) and Articling Technical Agrologists (ATAGs):

- Can and should sign all professional documents and communications with their articling title in a clear and legible manner.
- Are not entitled to obtain or use a seal however they may utilize a digital form of their signature on documents for purposes of convenience only.

Seals

BCIA's Bylaw 80-82 outlines the requirements for the issuance and use of a seal for registrants.

Only practicing Professional Agrologists (PAGs), Technical Agrologists (TAGs), and Limited License Agrologists (LLAGs) have been granted the authority by the BC Institute of Agrologists to seal (physical and/or electronic) professional documents and communications. All seals remain the property of BCIA even if the seal was not obtained or purchased for by BCIA. Only the registrant should affix the seal. Please initial or sign, and date the fresh imprint. Normal and routine communications require only the designation PAG or TAG or LLAG after the surname. The seal can be applied to publications, monographs, reports, special letters, plans and drawings representing projects on which the registrant has worked and/or for which are directly responsible.

PAGs, TAGs, LLAGs:

When affixing a seal registrants need to ensure the seal is affixed in an appropriate location on a professional document or communications such as, beneath the signature block or in the designated area, if there is a clearly identified area for a seal.

Non-practicing registrants:

Non-practicing registrants includes all on leave, retired registrants. Non practicing registrants cannot affix their professional title of Professional Agrologist (PAG) or Technical Agrologist (TAG) or Limited License Agrologist (LLAg) to a signature (signature block), signoff and/or seal to any professional documents and/or communications.

Resigned registrants:

Upon resignation from the BC Institute of Agrologists, registrants:

- Issued a physical seal will be required to return the seal, only upon direction from the Registrar.
- Issued an electronic seal will have access to their electronic seal terminated upon their resignation. This would include access to the digital signature subscription with Notarius.

You are reminded that **whether or not** you include your PAG, TAG or LLAG designation on a report or correspondence, **you are accountable** for your actions as a registrant of the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists (BCIA).

The omission of your seal or professional designation is **not** a way to avoid accountability to BCIA or to the public.

The seal remains the property of BCIA; its safe custody and appropriate use is the responsibility of the seal holder. The use of your seal does not, in any manner whatsoever indicate, signify, symbolize or should be interpreted as agreement by BCIA as the contents, conclusions, or recommendations within any documentation on which you place your seal.

Digital Seals and Signatures

For electronic documents BCIA has implemented a digital signature standard. To be compliant with BCIA requirements, the registrant may use the BCIA digital signature and the electronic impression of the seal when required. This can be done either through the provided software with a BCIA digital subscription with Notarius at <https://www.notarius.com/en/certifio/pro/bcia> **OR** a PDF electronic version provided directly by BCIA.

TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION WITH NOTARIUS

Digital Signature/Digital Signing Certificate: Cryptographically protected information in which the veracity of the certificate details is certified by a Certificate Authority (CA).

BCIA Digital Signature: Digital signatures that includes additional information regarding the professional affiliation of the registrant which is cryptographically asserted and controlled by BCIA.

Electronic Impression, Electronic Seal, or Image of a Stamp: The visual reproduction of a physical seal resulting from scanning an imprint of the seal that may also contain the visual image of the hand-written signature of a PAG and TAG and LLAG, the date and the time. **This process is not endorsed by the Board.**

The signature and stamp must be original with fresh ink in order to be scanned and placed in a document each time. Electronic copies of these items are prohibited. The Notarius subscription service that BCIA has partnered with is strongly encouraged for security and verification of the user OR using a PDF version provided directly by BCIA is acceptable.