

## Understanding Digital Signatures at NASA

As most of NASA is now working remotely, some of our workforce is asking about how to sign documents using digital tools. The good news is that you probably already have the tools you need!

- (1) Adobe Acrobat Reader is already installed on most NASA computers as part of the standard load. This free application includes the ability to digitally sign documents, so there is no need to buy anything additional to allow NASA people to use digital signatures.
- (2) To enable secure digital signatures, digital signature “certificates” are already installed on each person’s badge (PIV card.) One of the digital certificates on the PIV card includes what is known as a “non-repudiation certificate”, which is a legally binding signature per Office of General Counsel (OGC)determination.

To add your digital signature to a PDF document, all you must do is open the Certificate/Signature tool in Adobe Reader then select “Digitally Sign” and indicate where you want to place the signature. After validating the signature certificate on your PIV card, you will see an indication of your digital signature, including the time stamp, embedded in your document.

For non-NASA processes and forms, it is ultimately the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)that guides the use of digital signatures, so NASA cannot implement digital signatures on non-NASA forms and documents. As part of the ongoing COVID-19 response, the NASA Chief Information Officer(CIO) has been working with the Federal CIO and OPM to expand the use of digital signatures across the federal government.

If you have additional questions about NASA forms or digital signatures, please contact the [NASA Forms Manager within OCIO, Jennifer Rosenberger](#).