

PROPERTY CODE

TITLE 3. PUBLIC RECORDS

CHAPTER 12. RECORDING OF INSTRUMENTS

Sec. 12.001. INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING PROPERTY. (a) An instrument concerning real or personal property may be recorded if it has been acknowledged, sworn to with a proper jurat, or proved according to law.

(b) An instrument conveying real property may not be recorded unless:

(1) it is signed and acknowledged or sworn to by the grantor in the presence of two or more credible subscribing witnesses or acknowledged or sworn to before and certified by an officer authorized to take acknowledgements or oaths, as applicable; and

(2) any individual presenting the instrument in person for recording presents a photo identification to the county clerk as required by Section [191.010](#), Local Government Code.

(c) This section does not require the acknowledgement or swearing or prohibit the recording of a financing statement, a security agreement filed as a financing statement, or a continuation statement filed for record under the Business & Commerce Code.

(d) The failure of a notary public to attach an official seal to an acknowledgment, a jurat, or other proof taken outside this state but inside the United States or its territories renders the acknowledgment, jurat, or other proof invalid only if the jurisdiction in which the acknowledgment, jurat, or other proof is taken requires the notary public to attach the seal.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3489, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 162, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 603, Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., 2nd C.S., Ch. 16 (S.B. [16](#)), Sec. 11, eff. December 4, 2025.

Sec. 12.0011. INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING PROPERTY: ORIGINAL

SIGNATURE REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN INSTRUMENTS. (a) For the purposes of this section, "paper document" means a document received by a county clerk in a form that is not electronic.

(b) A paper document concerning real or personal property may not be recorded or serve as notice of the paper document unless:

(1) the paper document contains an original signature or signatures that are acknowledged, sworn to with a jurat, or proved according to law;

(2) the paper document is attached as an exhibit to a paper affidavit or other document that has an original signature or signatures that are acknowledged, sworn to with a jurat, or proved according to law; or

(3) the paper document is a tangible copy of an electronic record that has been declared to be a true and correct copy of the electronic record as provided by Section 12.0013 by a notary public or other officer who may take an acknowledgment or proof of a written instrument under Section 121.001, Civil Practice and Remedies Code.

(c) An original signature may not be required for an electronic instrument or other document that complies with the requirements of Chapter 15 of this code, Chapter 195, Local Government Code, Chapter 322, Business & Commerce Code, or other applicable law.

(d) This section does not apply to a child support lien notice or release of child support lien issued by the Title IV-D agency under Chapter 157, Family Code. For purposes of this subsection, "Title IV-D agency" has the meaning assigned by Section 101.033, Family Code.

(e) This section does not apply to a notice of sale under Section 51.065, Natural Resources Code, or a land award under Section 51.066, Natural Resources Code.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 213 (H.B. 732), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. 1969), Sec. 20.003, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 767 (S.B. 865), Sec. 33, eff.

June 19, 2009.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 370 (H.B. 3423), Sec. 4, eff. September 1, 2017.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 678 (S.B. 2128), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2019.

Acts 2023, 88th Leg., R.S., Ch. 152 (S.B. 870), Sec. 23, eff. September 1, 2023.

Sec. 12.0012. INSTRUMENTS CONCERNING REAL PROPERTY SUBJECT TO A FORECLOSURE SALE. (a) Notwithstanding Section 12.0011(b), the following documents received by the county clerk in the manner provided by Subsection (b) shall be recorded by the clerk and serve as notice of the matter document:

(1) an instrument appointing or authorizing a trustee or substitute trustee to exercise the power of sale in a security instrument;

(2) a notice of sale pursuant to which the sale under a power of sale occurred;

(3) a notice of default on which the sale evidenced by a deed conveying title from a trustee or substitute trustee to a purchaser occurred;

(4) documentation from the United States Department of Defense indicating that a debtor was not on active duty military service on the date of a foreclosure sale;

(5) a statement of facts regarding a foreclosure sale prepared by an attorney representing the trustee, substitute trustee, or mortgage servicer; or

(6) proof of service of the mailing of any notice related to a foreclosure sale.

(b) A document described by Subsection (a) shall be accepted for recording pursuant to Subsection (a) if it is attached as an exhibit to:

(1) a deed that conveys title from a trustee or substitute trustee to a purchaser at a foreclosure sale and that meets the requirements for recording under Section 12.0011(b); or

(2) an affidavit of a trustee or substitute trustee that meets the requirements for recording under Section 12.0011(b)

and relates to a foreclosure sale.

(c) This section does not prevent the recording of documents in any other manner allowed by law.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 653 (H.B. 2063), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 12.0013. RECORDATION OF PAPER OR TANGIBLE COPY OF ELECTRONIC RECORD. (a) In this section:

(1) "Document" means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in perceivable form.

(2) "Electronic," "electronic record," and "electronic signature" have the meanings assigned by Section 322.002, Business & Commerce Code.

(b) A county clerk shall record a paper or tangible copy of an electronic record that is otherwise eligible under state law to be recorded in the real property records if the paper or tangible copy of the electronic record:

(1) contains an image of an electronic signature or signatures that are acknowledged, sworn to with a jurat, or proved according to law; and

(2) has been declared by a notary public or other officer who may take an acknowledgment or proof under Section 121.001, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, to be a true and correct copy of the electronic record as provided by Subsection (d).

(c) A document that is a paper or tangible copy of an electronic record and is printed and declared to be a true and correct copy as provided by Subsection (d) satisfies any requirement of law that, as a condition for recording, the document:

(1) be an original or be in writing;

(2) be signed or contain an original signature, if the document contains an image of an electronic signature of the person required to sign the document; and

(3) be notarized, acknowledged, verified, witnessed, made under oath, sworn to with a jurat, or proved according to law, if the document contains an image of an electronic signature of the

person authorized to perform that act and all other information required to be included.

(d) A notary public or other officer who may take an acknowledgment or proof under Section [121.001](#), Civil Practice and Remedies Code, may declare that a paper or tangible copy of an electronic record is a true and correct copy of an electronic record by:

(1) executing and attaching an official seal to a tangible paper declaration under penalty of perjury; and

(2) affixing or attaching the declaration to the printed paper or tangible copy of an electronic record.

(e) The form of declaration required under Subsection (d) must be substantially as follows:

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

State of _____

County of _____

The attached document, _____(insert title), dated _____ and containing ____ pages, is a true and correct copy of an electronic record printed by me or under my supervision. At the time of printing, no security features present on the electronic record indicated any changes or errors in an electronic signature or other information in the electronic record after the electronic record's creation or execution. This declaration is made under penalty of perjury.

Signed this ____ day of _____, ____.

_____(signature of notary public or other officer)

(seal of office)

_____(printed name of notary public or other officer)

My commission expires: _____

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 678 (S.B. [2128](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 12.002. SUBDIVISION PLAT; PENALTY. (a) The county clerk or a deputy of the clerk with whom a plat or replat of a subdivision of real property is filed for recording shall determine whether the plat or replat is required by law to be approved by a county or municipal authority or both. The clerk or deputy may not

record a plat or replat unless it is approved as provided by law by the appropriate authority and unless the plat or replat has attached to it the documents required by Subsection (e) or by Section 212.0105 or 232.023, Local Government Code, if applicable. If a plat or replat does not indicate whether land covered by the plat or replat is in the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the municipality, the county clerk may require the person filing the plat or replat for recording to file with the clerk an affidavit stating that information.

(b) A person may not file for record or have recorded in the county clerk's office a plat or replat of a subdivision of real property unless it is approved as provided by law by the appropriate authority and unless the plat or replat has attached to it the documents required by Section 212.0105 or 232.023, Local Government Code, if applicable.

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), a person who subdivides real property may not use the subdivision's description in a deed of conveyance, a contract for a deed, or a contract of sale or other executory contract to convey that is delivered to a purchaser unless the plat or replat of the subdivision is approved and is filed for record with the county clerk of the county in which the property is located and unless the plat or replat has attached to it the documents required by Subsection (e) or by Section 212.0105 or 232.023, Local Government Code, if applicable.

(d) Except in the case of a subdivision located in a county to which Subchapter B or G, Chapter 232, Local Government Code, applies, Subsection (c) does not apply to using a subdivision's description in a contract to convey real property before the plat or replat of the subdivision is approved and is filed for record with the county clerk if:

(1) the conveyance is expressly contingent on approval and recording of the final plat; and

(2) the purchaser is not given use or occupancy of the real property conveyed before the recording of the final plat.

(e) A person may not file for record or have recorded in the county clerk's office a plat, replat, or amended plat or replat of a subdivision of real property unless the plat, replat, or amended

plat or replat has attached to it an original tax certificate from each taxing unit with jurisdiction of the real property indicating that no delinquent ad valorem taxes are owed on the real property. If the tax certificate for a taxing unit does not cover the preceding year, the plat, replat, or amended plat or replat must also have attached to it a tax receipt issued by the collector for the taxing unit indicating that the taxes imposed by the taxing unit for the preceding year have been paid. This subsection does not apply if:

(1) more than one person acquired the real property from a decedent under a will or by inheritance and those persons owning an undivided interest in the property obtained approval to subdivide the property to provide each person with a divided interest and a separate title to the property; or

(2) a taxing unit acquired the real property for public use through eminent domain proceedings or voluntary sale.

(f) A person commits an offense if the person violates Subsection (b), (c), or (e). An offense under this subsection is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$10 or more than \$1,000, by confinement in the county jail for a term not to exceed 90 days, or by both the fine and confinement. Each violation constitutes a separate offense and also constitutes prima facie evidence of an attempt to defraud.

(g) This section does not apply to a partition by a court.
Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3489, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.
Amended by Acts 1987, 70th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 22, eff. Sept. 1, 1987; Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 624, Sec. 3.09, eff. Sept. 1, 1989; Acts 1991, 72nd Leg., ch. 570, Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 1991; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 583, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 404, Sec. 27, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 812, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1382, Sec. 8, eff. June 19, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1126 (H.B. [2491](#)), Sec. 26, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1154 (H.B. [3101](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 289 (H.B. 989), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 526 (H.B. 3680), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2025.

Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 574 (H.B. 2025), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.

Sec. 12.003. INSTRUMENT IN GENERAL LAND OFFICE OR ARCHIVES.

(a) If written evidence of title to land has been filed according to law in the General Land Office or is in the public archives, a copy of the written evidence may be recorded if:

(1) the original was properly executed under the law in effect at the time of execution; and

(2) the copy is certified by the officer having custody of the original and attested with the seal of the General Land Office.

(b) A court may not admit a title to land that was filed in the General Land Office as evidence of superior title against a location or survey of the same land that was made under a valid land warrant or certificate prior to the filing of the title in the General Land Office unless prior to the location or survey:

(1) the older title had been recorded with the county clerk of the county in which the land is located; or

(2) the person who had the location or survey made had actual notice of the older title.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3490, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.004. FOREIGN DEED. If written evidence of title to land has been filed outside the county in which the land is located or outside the state, a copy of the written evidence may be recorded in the county in which the land is located if:

(1) the original was properly executed and recorded under the law governing the recording; and

(2) the copy is certified by the officer having legal custody of the original.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3490, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.005. PARTITION. (a) A court order partitioning or allowing recovery of title to land must be recorded with the county clerk of the county in which the land is located in order to be admitted as evidence to support a right claimed under the order.

(b) A record of an order is sufficient under this section if it consists of a brief statement by the clerk of the court that made the order, signed and sealed by the clerk, that includes:

(1) the identity of the case in which the partition or judgment was made;

(2) the date of the case;

(3) the names of the parties to the case;

(4) a description of the land involved that is located in the county of the recording; and

(5) the name of the party to whom the land is decreed.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3490, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.006. GRANT FROM GOVERNMENT. A grant from this state or the United States that is executed and authenticated under the law in effect at the time the grant is made may be recorded without further acknowledgement or proof.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3491, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.007. LIS PENDENS. (a) After the plaintiff's statement in an eminent domain proceeding is filed or during the pendency of an action involving title to real property, the establishment of an interest in real property, or the enforcement of an encumbrance against real property, a party to the action who is seeking affirmative relief may file for record with the county clerk of each county where a part of the property is located a notice that the action is pending.

(b) The party filing a lis pendens or the party's agent or attorney shall sign the lis pendens, which must state:

(1) the style and number, if any, of the proceeding;

(2) the court in which the proceeding is pending;

(3) the names of the parties;

(4) the kind of proceeding; and

(5) a description of the property affected.

(c) The county clerk shall record the notice in a lis pendens record. The clerk shall index the record in a direct and reverse index under the name of each party to the proceeding.

(d) Not later than the third day after the date a person files a notice for record under this section, the person must serve a copy of the notice on each party to the action who has an interest in the real property affected by the notice.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3491, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 297 (H.B. 396), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 12.0071. MOTION TO EXPUNGE LIS PENDENS. (a) A party to an action in connection with which a notice of lis pendens has been filed may:

- (1) apply to the court to expunge the notice; and
- (2) file evidence, including declarations, with the motion to expunge the notice.

(b) The court may:

- (1) permit evidence on the motion to be received in the form of oral testimony; and
- (2) make any orders the court considers just to provide for discovery by a party affected by the motion.

(c) The court shall order the notice of lis pendens expunged if the court determines that:

- (1) the pleading on which the notice is based does not contain a real property claim;
- (2) the claimant fails to establish by a preponderance of the evidence the probable validity of the real property claim; or
- (3) the person who filed the notice for record did not serve a copy of the notice on each party entitled to a copy under Section 12.007(d).

(d) Notice of a motion to expunge under Subsection (a) must be served on each affected party on or before the 20th day before the date of the hearing on the motion.

(e) The court shall rule on the motion for expunction based on the affidavits and counteraffidavits on file and on any other

proof the court allows.

(f) After a certified copy of an order expunging a notice of lis pendens has been recorded:

(1) the notice of lis pendens and any information derived or that could be derived from the notice:

(A) does not:

(i) constitute constructive or actual notice of any matter contained in the notice or of any matter relating to the action in connection with which the notice was filed;

(ii) create any duty of inquiry in a person with respect to the property described in the notice; or

(iii) affect the validity of a conveyance to a purchaser for value or of a mortgage to a lender for value; and

(B) is not enforceable against a purchaser or lender described by Paragraph (A)(iii), regardless of whether the purchaser or lender knew of the lis pendens action; and

(2) an interest in the real property may be transferred or encumbered free of all matters asserted or disclosed in the notice and all claims or other matters asserted or disclosed in the action in connection with which the notice was filed.

(g) The court in its discretion may require that the party prevailing in the expunction hearing submit an undertaking to the court in an amount determined by the court.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 297 (H.B. [396](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 47 (S.B. [1955](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 12.008. CANCELLATION OF LIS PENDENS. (a) On the motion of a party or other person interested in the result of or in property affected by a proceeding in which a lis pendens has been recorded and after notice to each affected party, the court hearing the action may cancel the lis pendens at any time during the proceeding, whether in term time or vacation, if the court determines that the party seeking affirmative relief can be

adequately protected by the deposit of money into court or by the giving of an undertaking.

(b) If the cancellation of a lis pendens is conditioned on the payment of money, the court may order the cancellation when the party seeking the cancellation pays into the court an amount equal to the total of:

- (1) the judgment sought;
- (2) the interest the court considers likely to accrue during the proceeding; and
- (3) costs.

(c) If the cancellation of a lis pendens is conditioned on the giving of an undertaking, the court may order the cancellation when the party seeking the cancellation gives a guarantee of payment of a judgment, plus interest and costs, in favor of the party who recorded the lis pendens. The guarantee must equal twice the amount of the judgment sought and have two sufficient sureties approved by the court. Not less than two days before the day the guarantee is submitted to the court for approval, the party seeking the cancellation shall serve the attorney for the party who recorded the lis pendens a copy of the guarantee and notice of its submission to the court.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3491, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.009. MORTGAGE OR DEED OF TRUST MASTER FORM. (a) A master form of a mortgage or deed of trust may be recorded in any county without acknowledgement or proof. The master form must contain on its face the designation: "Master form recorded by (name of person causing the recording)."

(b) The county clerk shall index a master form under the name of the person causing the recording and indicate in the index and records that the document is a master mortgage.

(c) The parties to an instrument may incorporate by reference a provision of a recorded master form with the same effect as if the provision were set out in full in the instrument. The reference must state:

- (1) that the master form is recorded in the county in which the instrument is offered for record;

(2) the numbers of the book or volume and first page of the records in which the master form is recorded; and

(3) a definite identification of each provision being incorporated.

(d) If a mortgage or deed of trust incorporates by reference a provision of a master form, the mortgagee shall give the mortgagor a copy of the master form at the time the instrument is executed. A statement in the mortgage or deed of trust or in a separate instrument signed by the mortgagor that the mortgagor received a copy of the master form is conclusive evidence of its receipt. On written request the mortgagee shall give a copy of the master form without charge to the mortgagor, the mortgagor's successors in interest, or the mortgagor's or a successor's agent.

(e) The provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code prevail over this section.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3492, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.011. CERTIFICATE OF REDEMPTION. An instrument issued by the United States that redeems or evidences redemption of real property from a judicial sale or from a nonjudicial sale under foreclosure of a lien, mortgage, or deed of trust may be recorded in records of conveyances in each county in which the property is located if the instrument has been issued according to the laws of the United States.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3493, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.012. ATTACHMENT. (a) If an officer files a writ of attachment on real property with a county clerk, the clerk shall record the name of each plaintiff and defendant in attachment, the amount of the debt, and the officer's return in full.

(b) A county clerk who receives a certified copy of an order quashing or vacating a writ of attachment shall record the order and the name of each plaintiff and defendant.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3494, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.013. JUDGMENT. A judgment of a court may be recorded if:

(1) the judgment is of a court:

(A) expressly created or established under the constitution or laws of this state or of the United States;

(B) that is a court of a foreign country and that is recognized by an Act of congress or a treaty or other international convention to which the United States is a party; or

(C) of any other jurisdiction, territory, or protectorate entitled to full faith and credit in this state under the Constitution of the United States; and

(2) the judgment is attested under the signature and seal of the clerk of the court that rendered the judgment.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3494, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.
Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 189, Sec. 15, eff. May 21, 1997; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 668, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 12.014. TRANSFER OF JUDGMENT OR CAUSE OF ACTION. (a) A judgment or part of a judgment of a court of record or an interest in a cause of action on which suit has been filed may be sold, regardless of whether the judgment or cause of action is assignable in law or equity, if the transfer is in writing.

(b) A transfer under this section may be filed with the papers of the suit if the transfer is acknowledged or sworn to in the form and manner required by law for acknowledgement or swearing of deeds.

(c) If a transfer of a judgment is filed, the clerk shall record the transfer appropriately. If a transfer of a cause of action in which a judgment has not been rendered is filed, the clerk shall note and briefly state the substance of the transfer on the court docket at the place where the suit is entered.

(d) A transfer filed under this section is notice to and is binding on a person subsequently dealing with the judgment or cause of action.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3494, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.
Amended by Acts 1989, 71st Leg., ch. 162, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1989.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 628 (H.B. [587](#)), Sec. 4, eff.

September 1, 2007.

Sec. 12.015. JUDGMENT IN JUSTICE COURT. (a) On the application of a party interested in land that has been sold under an execution issued by a justice court, the justice of the peace having custody of the execution and the judgment under which it was issued shall make a certified transcript of the judgment, the execution, and the levy and return of the executing officer.

(b) A certified transcript under this section may be recorded in the same manner as a deed.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3495, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.016. POWER OF ATTORNEY. A power of attorney may be recorded.

Acts 1983, 68th Leg., p. 3495, ch. 576, Sec. 1, eff. Jan. 1, 1984.

Sec. 12.017. TITLE INSURANCE COMPANY AFFIDAVIT AS RELEASE OF LIEN; CIVIL PENALTY. (a) In this section:

(1) "Mortgage" means a deed of trust or other contract lien on an interest in real property.

(2) "Mortgagee" means:

(A) the grantee of a mortgage;

(B) if a mortgage has been assigned of record, the last person to whom the mortgage has been assigned of record; or

(C) if a mortgage is serviced by a mortgage servicer, the mortgage servicer.

(3) "Mortgage servicer" means the last person to whom a mortgagor has been instructed by a mortgagee to send payments for the loan secured by a mortgage. A person transmitting a payoff statement is considered the mortgage servicer for the mortgage described in the payoff statement.

(4) "Mortgagor" means the grantor of a mortgage.

(5) "Payoff statement" means a statement of the amount of:

(A) the unpaid balance of a loan secured by a mortgage, including principal, interest, and other charges

properly assessed under the loan documentation of the mortgage;
and

(B) interest on a per diem basis for the unpaid balance.

(6) "Title insurance company" means a corporation or other business entity authorized to engage in the business of insuring titles to interests in real property in this state.

(7) "Authorized title insurance agent," with respect to an Affidavit as Release of Lien under this section, means a person licensed as a title insurance agent under Chapter 2651, Insurance Code, and authorized in writing by a title insurance company by instrument recorded in the real property records in the county in which the property to which the affidavit relates is located to execute one or more Affidavits as Release of Lien in compliance with this section, subject to any terms, limitations, and conditions that are set forth in the instrument executed by the title insurance company.

(b) This section applies only to a mortgage on:

(1) property consisting exclusively of a one-to-four-family residence, including a residential unit in a condominium regime; or

(2) property other than property described by Subdivision (1), if the original face amount of the indebtedness secured by the mortgage on the property is less than \$1.5 million.

(c) An authorized officer of a title insurance company or an authorized title insurance agent may, on behalf of the mortgagor or a transferee of the mortgagor who acquired title to the property described in the mortgage, execute an affidavit that complies with the requirements of this section and record the affidavit in the real property records of each county in which the mortgage was recorded.

(d) An affidavit executed under Subsection (c) must be in substantially the following form:

AFFIDAVIT AS RELEASE OF LIEN

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared (insert name of affiant) ("Affiant") who, being first duly sworn, upon his/her oath states:

1. My name is (insert name of Affiant), and I am an authorized officer of (insert name of title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent) ("Title Company").

2. This affidavit is made on behalf of the mortgagor or a transferee of the mortgagor who acquired title to the property described in the following mortgage:

(describe mortgage, the name of the mortgagor, and the property described in the mortgage)

3. (Insert name of Mortgagee) ("Mortgagee") provided a payoff statement with respect to the loan secured by the mortgage.

4. Affiant has ascertained that Title Company delivered to Mortgagee payment of the loan secured by the mortgage in the amount and time and to the location required by the payoff statement.

5. The mortgage relates to:

(A) property consisting exclusively of a one-to-four-family residence, which may include a residential unit in a condominium regime; or

(B) property, other than property described by Paragraph (A) above, for which the original face amount of the indebtedness secured by the mortgage on the property is less than \$1.5 million.

6. Pursuant to Section [12.017](#), Texas Property Code, this affidavit constitutes a full and final release of the mortgage from the property.

Signed this____ day of _____, ____.

_____ (signature of affiant)

State of _____

County of _____

Sworn to and subscribed to before me on _____ (date) by _____ (insert name of affiant).

_____ (signature of notarial officer)

(Seal, if any, of notary) _____

_____ (printed name)

My commission expires:

(e) An affidavit filed under Subsection (c) or (f) must

include the names of the mortgagor and the mortgagee, the date of the mortgage, and the volume and page or clerk's file number of the real property records where the mortgage is recorded, together with similar information for a recorded assignment of the mortgage.

(f) On or after the date of the payment to which the affidavit relates, the title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent must notify the mortgagee at the location to which the payment is sent that the title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent may file for record at any time the affidavit as a release of lien. If notice required by this section is not provided to the mortgagee, the title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent may not file for record the affidavit as a release of lien. The mortgagee may file a separate affidavit describing the mortgage and property and controverting the affidavit by the title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent as a release of lien on or before the 45th day after the date the mortgagee receives the notice if the mortgagee mails a copy of the mortgagee's affidavit to the title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent within that 45-day period.

(g) An affidavit under Subsection (c) operates as a release of the mortgage described in the affidavit if the affidavit, as provided by this section:

- (1) is executed;
- (2) is recorded; and
- (3) is not controverted by a separate affidavit by the mortgagee in accordance with the requirements of Subsection (f).

(h) The county clerk shall index an affidavit filed under this section in the names of the original mortgagee and the last assignee of the mortgage appearing of record as the grantors and in the name of the mortgagor as grantee.

(i) A person who knowingly causes an affidavit with false information to be executed and recorded under this section is liable for the penalties for filing a false affidavit, including the penalties for commission of offenses under Section [37.02](#) of the Penal Code. The attorney general may sue to collect the penalty. A person who negligently causes an affidavit with false information to be executed and recorded under this section is

liable to a party injured by the affidavit for actual damages. If the attorney general or an injured party bringing suit substantially prevails in an action under this subsection, the court may award reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to the prevailing party.

(j) A title insurance company or authorized title insurance agent that, at any time after payment of the mortgage, files for record an affidavit executed under Subsection (c) may use any recording fee collected for the recording of a release of the mortgage for the purpose of filing the affidavit.

(k) This section does not affect any agreement or obligation of a mortgagee to execute and deliver a release of mortgage.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 1003, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 997 (H.B. [3945](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 997 (H.B. [3945](#)), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 12.018. TRANSFER BY RECEIVER OR CONSERVATOR OF FAILED DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION. If a bank, savings and loan association, savings bank, or other depository institution is placed in receivership or conservatorship by a state or federal agency, instrumentality, or institution, including the Banking Department of Texas, Department of Savings and Mortgage Lending of Texas, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Resolution Trust Corporation, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, or their successors, a person at any time may record an affidavit or memorandum of a sale, transfer, purchase, or acquisition agreement between the receiver or conservator of the failed depository institution and another depository institution. If the sale, transfer, purchase, or acquisition agreement transfers or sells an interest in land or in a mortgage or other lien vested according to the real property records in the failed depository institution, a recorded affidavit or memorandum under this section is constructive notice of the transfer or sale. The failure of the affidavit or memorandum to be

executed by the record owner or of the affidavit, memorandum, or agreement to contain language of conveyance does not create a defect in title to the land or the lien.

Added by Acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 1004, Sec. 1, eff. Aug. 30, 1993.

Renumbered from Property Code Sec. 12.017 by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 76, Sec. 17.01(43), eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 921 (H.B. [3167](#)), Sec. 6.064, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 12.019. AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER. (a) In this section:

(1) "Domestic entity," "foreign entity," "jurisdiction of formation," and "nonprofit entity" have the meanings assigned by Section [1.002](#), Business Organizations Code.

(2) "Transfer" means a transaction to sell, exchange, convey with or without covenants, quitclaim, release, surrender, mortgage, encumber, partition or consent to partitioning, subdivide, apply for zoning, rezoning, or other governmental permits, plat or consent to platting, develop, grant options concerning, lease or sublet, or otherwise dispose of an estate or interest in real property or a right incident to real property.

(b) This section does not apply to:

(1) a domestic nonprofit entity or a foreign entity that is:

(A) exempt from federal taxation under Section 501(a), Internal Revenue Code of 1986, by being listed as an exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of that code; or

(B) described by Section 170(c)(1) or (2), Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

(2) a transaction involving the transfer of an estate or interest in real property in an amount that exceeds \$1 million.

(c) A domestic entity or foreign entity may execute and record an affidavit identifying one or more individuals with authority to transfer on behalf of the entity an estate or interest in real property in the name of the entity if the entity is:

(1) a limited liability company, a limited

partnership, or a professional entity as defined by Section 301.003, Business Organizations Code; and

(2) active or in good standing under the laws of the entity's jurisdiction of formation.

(d) An estate or interest in real property in the name of a domestic entity or foreign entity may be transferred on behalf of the entity by one or more individuals identified as authorized to do so in an affidavit described by Subsection (c).

(e) Subject to Subsection (f), an affidavit described by Subsection (c) must:

(1) be executed under penalty of perjury by an individual who swears that the individual:

(A) is at least 18 years of age;

(B) is authorized to execute and deliver the affidavit on behalf of the entity;

(C) is fully competent to execute the affidavit;
and

(D) understands that:

(i) third parties will rely on the truthfulness of the statements made in the affidavit; and

(ii) the affidavit is made under penalty of perjury; and

(2) state:

(A) the name of the domestic entity or foreign entity that holds title to the real property and that the entity is active or in good standing under the laws of the entity's jurisdiction of formation;

(B) the address, including street address, of the domestic entity's or foreign entity's principal place of business in this state or, if the entity does not have a principal place of business in this state, the address of the entity's principal place of business in the state or country that is the entity's jurisdiction of formation;

(C) the legal description of the real property an estate or interest in which is to be transferred and specify the nature of the transfer authorized; and

(D) the name and title of one or more individuals

authorized to transfer on the entity's behalf an estate or interest in the real property described in the affidavit.

(f) An individual is authorized to execute an affidavit described by Subsection (c) on behalf of a domestic entity that files a franchise tax public information report under Section [171.203](#), Tax Code, if, on the date the affidavit is executed, the individual:

(1) in the case of a limited liability company, is a manager or member of the limited liability company;

(2) in the case of a limited partnership, is a general partner of the limited partnership; or

(3) in the case of a professional entity, is a director or officer of the applicable professional entity.

(g) Except as provided by Subsection (h), the individual executing an affidavit described by Subsection (c) may not be the individual identified in the affidavit as authorized to transfer an estate or interest in the real property described in the affidavit.

(h) The individual executing the affidavit described by Subsection (c) may be the individual identified in the affidavit as authorized to transfer an estate or interest in the real property described in the affidavit if:

(1) the entity is a limited liability company and the affidavit includes a representation by the affiant that the affiant is the sole member and manager of the limited liability company;

(2) the entity is a limited partnership and the affidavit includes a representation by the affiant that the affiant is the sole general partner of the limited partnership;

(3) the entity is a professional entity and the affidavit includes a representation by the affiant that the affiant is the sole director and officer of the applicable professional entity; or

(4) the most recent franchise tax public information report of the entity under Section [171.203](#), Tax Code, available on the date the affidavit is executed identifies only the affiant and no other person as an officer, director, member, manager, or general partner of the entity.

(i) The affidavit must be recorded with the county clerk in

the county in which the real property is located. The county clerk may collect a fee for recording an affidavit under this section in the amount authorized for recording a transfer of real property.

(j) A person who in good faith acts in reliance on an affidavit that complies with this section and that contains transfer authority that has not been terminated under Subsection (n) or has not expired under Subsection (o) is not liable to any person for that act and may assume without inquiry the existence of the facts contained in the affidavit if the person does not have actual knowledge that any material representations contained in the affidavit are incorrect.

(k) A person who in good faith enters into a transaction involving the transfer of an estate or interest in real property described in an affidavit that is described by Subsection (c) and who relies on the affidavit, without actual knowledge that any material representations contained in the affidavit are incorrect, may enforce the transaction against the entity and the real property described in the affidavit as if the representations contained in the affidavit are correct if:

(1) the affidavit complies with this section; and

(2) the transfer authority specified in the affidavit has not been terminated under Subsection (n) or has not expired under Subsection (o).

(l) With respect to an affidavit described by Subsection (c), this section does not limit the rights of an owner of an interest in the entity against the affiant, the entity, or any individual identified in the affidavit with authority to transfer on behalf of the entity an estate or interest in real property in the name of the entity.

(m) Nothing in this section:

(1) requires an individual to rely on an affidavit described by Subsection (c);

(2) requires an entity to deliver an affidavit that complies with this section in order for a transfer of an estate or interest in real property on behalf of the entity to take effect;

(3) prohibits an entity from authorizing an individual to transfer an estate or interest in real property on behalf of the

entity by a means other than an affidavit described by Subsection (c); or

(4) shall be construed to validate a transfer of an estate or interest in real property that is void by other law.

(n) An entity that executes and records an affidavit described by Subsection (c) may terminate the transfer authority specified in the affidavit at any time by recording a written termination of the authority specified in the affidavit with the county clerk in the county in which the real property is located. The written termination must be in the form of an affidavit that:

(1) satisfies the requirements of Subsection (e) other than Subsection (e)(2)(D);

(2) provides the recording information for the affidavit that specifies the transfer authority being terminated; and

(3) states that the authority to transfer an estate or interest in real property as contained in the previously recorded affidavit is terminated.

(o) The transfer authority contained in an affidavit that complies with this section and that has not been terminated as provided by Subsection (n) expires on the first anniversary of the date on which the affidavit was recorded under Subsection (i).

(p) The transfer authority or the termination of the transfer authority specified in an affidavit that is recorded under Subsection (i) or (n) is effective on the date the county clerk indexes the affidavit.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1081 (H.B. [1833](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 12.020. FILING AND RELEASE OF UNILATERAL MEMORANDUM OF CONTRACT CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY. (a) In this section:

(1) "Residential property" means the real property and existing improvements for a single-family house, duplex, triplex, or quadruplex or a unit in a multiunit structure used for residential purposes in which title to the individual units is transferred to the owners under a condominium system.

(2) "Unilateral memorandum of contract" means a written document that is signed only by a person who is not an owner of the residential property and asserts that the person has entered into a contract with an owner of residential property for the purchase of an interest in the property, for an option to purchase an interest in the property, for a right of first refusal or first offer to purchase an interest in the property, or for a right to match any offer to purchase an interest in the property. The term does not include a deed or a document granting a right of first refusal pursuant to a condominium declaration.

(b) A person who files for recording a unilateral memorandum of contract concerning residential property shall:

(1) provide to the county clerk the person's mailing address and a certificate of mailing that substantially complies with Subsection (h) for recording with the unilateral memorandum of contract; and

(2) not later than the date the person files the memorandum with the county clerk, send a copy of the filed memorandum and a letter notifying the owner of the property of the filing of the memorandum by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to:

(A) the address of the property; and

(B) any mailing address shown for the owner on the filed memorandum, in the real property records for the property, or in the records of the relevant appraisal district with respect to the property.

(c) An owner of residential property who receives a letter described by Subsection (b) or otherwise has notice of a recorded unilateral memorandum of contract concerning the property may file for recording in the real property records of the county in which the property is located:

(1) an affidavit that substantially complies with Subsection (i); and

(2) a certificate of mailing that substantially complies with Subsection (j).

(d) An owner of residential property who files an affidavit under Subsection (c) shall send a copy of the filed affidavit and a

letter notifying the person who filed the unilateral memorandum of contract of the filing of the affidavit. The letter and the copy of the affidavit must be sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to:

(1) the address provided to the county clerk by the person who filed the memorandum; and

(2) the address of any other person referenced in the memorandum other than the property owner.

(e) Subject to Subsection (f) and except as provided by Subsection (g):

(1) an affidavit filed under Subsection (c) serves as a release of record of a contract, option, or right asserted to exist by the unilateral memorandum of contract referenced in the affidavit; and

(2) after the affidavit is recorded:

(A) the memorandum and any information derived or that could be derived from the memorandum does not:

(i) constitute constructive or actual notice of any contract, option, or right concerning the residential property that is asserted to exist by the memorandum;

(ii) create any duty of inquiry in a person with respect to the residential property described in the memorandum; or

(iii) affect the validity of a conveyance to a purchaser for value or of a mortgage to a lender for value;

(B) a contract, option, or right asserted to exist by the memorandum is not enforceable against a purchaser or lender described by Paragraph (A)(iii), regardless of whether the purchaser or lender knew of the memorandum; and

(C) an interest in the residential property may be transferred or encumbered free of all interests asserted in the memorandum.

(f) If an owner of residential property has filed an affidavit and certificate of mailing under Subsection (c) and a contradicting affidavit is not filed under Subsection (g):

(1) a bona fide purchaser or a mortgagee for value or a successor or assign of a bona fide purchaser or mortgagee for value

may rely conclusively on the affidavit filed by the owner under Subsection (c) on and after the 45th day after the date the certificate of mailing was recorded; and

(2) the sole remedy available in an action brought to enforce a person's rights asserted under the unilateral memorandum of contract referenced in the affidavit is money damages.

(g) An affidavit filed under Subsection (c) does not serve as a release of record of a contract, option, or right asserted to exist by a unilateral memorandum of contract filed for recording under this section with respect to a purchaser or mortgagee of the residential property that acquires the purchaser's or mortgagee's interest from the owner if, not later than the 45th day after the date a certificate of mailing was recorded under Subsection (c), the person who filed the memorandum files for recording in the real property records of the county in which the residential property is located a contradicting affidavit asserting that:

(1) the affidavit or certificate of mailing filed by the owner under Subsection (c) is untrue; or

(2) another reason exists as to why the memorandum serves as a valid notice of record of a contract for the purchase of an interest in residential property, for an option to purchase an interest in the property, for a right of first refusal or first offer to purchase an interest in the property, or for a right to match any offer to purchase an interest in the property.

(h) A certificate of mailing filed under Subsection (b) must be in substantially the following form:

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING OF NOTICE OF FILED UNILATERAL MEMORANDUM OF
CONTRACT

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____ ("Affiant(s)") (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)) who, being first duly sworn, upon oath state(s):

(1) My name is/Our names are _____ (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)).

(2) On the ____ day of _____, 20__, Affiant(s) caused a Unilateral Memorandum of Contract asserting the existence of a contract for the purchase of an interest in residential property, for an option to purchase an interest in residential

property, for a right of first refusal or first offer to purchase an interest in residential property, or for a right to match any offer for the purchase of an interest in residential property ("Property") to be recorded in _____ (refer to affidavit recording information) ("Memorandum").

(3) On the ____ day of _____, 20__, Affiant(s) sent a copy of the Memorandum and a letter notifying the owner of the residential property referenced in the Memorandum ("Property") of the filing of the Memorandum, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to:

(A) the address of the Property; and

(B) any mailing address shown for the owner of the Property on the Memorandum, in the real property records for the Property, or in the records of the relevant appraisal district with respect to the Property.

(4) Attached to this certificate are:

(A) a true and correct copy of the letter described by Subdivision (3) of this certificate; and

(B) proof of mailing of the letter as described by Subdivision (3) of this certificate.

Signed on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

(Signature of Affiant(s))

State of _____

County of _____

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

My commission expires:

Notary Public, State of Texas

Notary's printed name:

(i) An affidavit filed under Subsection (c) must be in substantially the following form:

AFFIDAVIT FOR RELEASE OF UNILATERAL MEMORANDUM OF CONTRACT

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____ ("Affiant(s)") (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)) who, being first duly sworn, upon oath state(s):

(1) My name is/Our names are _____ (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)). I/We own the following described residential property ("Property"):

(describe the residential property)

(2) This affidavit is made for the purpose of effecting a release of a contract for the purchase of an interest in the Property, an option to purchase an interest in the Property, a right of first refusal or first offer to purchase an interest in the Property, or a right to match any offer to purchase an interest in the Property under a contract asserted to exist by that unilateral memorandum of contract recorded in _____ (refer to recording information of unilateral memorandum of contract) ("Unilateral Memorandum of Contract").

(3) The factual basis for this affidavit is:

(describe the relevant facts)

(4) This affidavit serves as a release of any contract for the purchase of an interest in the Property, option to purchase an interest in the Property, right of first refusal or first offer to purchase an interest in the Property, or right to match any offer to purchase an interest in the Property under the contract asserted to exist by the Unilateral Memorandum of Contract in accordance with Section [12.020](#), Property Code.

Signed on this _____ day of _____, _____.

(Signature of Affiant(s))

State of _____

County of _____

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the _____ day of _____, 20____.

My commission expires:

Notary's printed name:

(j) A certificate of mailing filed under Subsection (c) must be in substantially the following form:

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING OF AFFIDAVIT FOR RELEASE OF UNILATERAL
MEMORANDUM OF CONTRACT

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared _____ ("Affiant(s)") (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)) who, being first duly sworn, upon oath state(s):

(1) My name is/Our names are _____ (insert name(s) of Affiant(s)).

(2) On the ____ day of _____, 20__, Affiant(s) caused an Affidavit for Release of UNILATERAL MEMORANDUM OF CONTRACT to be recorded in _____ (refer to affidavit recording information) ("Affidavit").

(3) On the ____ day of _____, 20__, Affiant(s) sent a copy of the Affidavit and a letter notifying the person who filed the Unilateral Memorandum of Contract referenced in the Affidavit ("Memorandum") of the Affiant's/Affiants' claim for the filing and release of the Affidavit, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to:

(A) the address of the person who filed the Memorandum, as provided to the county clerk; and

(B) the address of any other person referenced in the Memorandum.

(4) Attached to this certificate are:

(A) a true and correct copy of the letter described by Subdivision (3) of this certificate; and

(B) proof of mailing of the letter as described by Subdivision (3) of this certificate.

Signed on the ____ day of _____, 20____.

(Signature of Affiant(s))

State of _____

County of _____

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the _____ day of _____, 20____.

My commission expires:

Notary Public, State of Texas

Notary's printed name:

(k) If a unilateral memorandum of contract filed for recording on or after September 1, 2025, does not comply with Subsection (b):

(1) the memorandum and any information derived or that could be derived from the memorandum does not:

(A) constitute constructive or actual notice of any contract, option, or right concerning the residential property that is asserted to exist by the memorandum;

(B) create any duty of inquiry in a person with respect to the residential property described in the memorandum; or

(C) affect the validity of a conveyance to a purchaser for value or of a mortgage to a lender for value;

(2) a contract, option, or right asserted to exist by the memorandum is not enforceable against a purchaser or lender described by Subdivision (1)(C), regardless of whether the purchaser or lender knew of the memorandum;

(3) an interest in the residential property may be transferred or encumbered free of all interests asserted in the memorandum; and

(4) the sole remedy available in an action brought to enforce a person's rights asserted under the unilateral memorandum of contract referenced in the affidavit is money damages.

Added by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 647 (H.B. [4063](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.