

# In-person vs Virtual

## Verification of Identity

Lawyers and paralegals who need to verify an individual's identity can do so by viewing their government-issued photo identification in person or virtually using video-conferencing technology. While the requirements for both are the same, the process and criteria for assessing how to proceed differ. Below are the required steps for in-person and virtual verification of client identity using government-issued photo identification.



### In-person



#### Identify risks and red flags

Use the Law Society's [Red Flags Worksheet](#) to identify risks of fraud, money laundering, or other illegal activity. If risks or red flags cannot be resolved, determine whether to proceed with the transaction.



#### Set up an in-person meeting

Arrange to meet with the client in-person. Consider using a [scheduling tool](#) to coordinate calendars and ask the client to bring their [identity document](#) to the meeting. Ensure the meeting is private and cannot be overheard by others.



#### Examine the identity document and confirm it is authentic

Hold the identity document in your hands and carefully examine it under adequate lighting. Check the photo, birth date, and expiry date. Ensure the name and photo match the client. Feel for extra thickness and look for inconsistencies between numbers and letters. Click [here](#) for more tips.



#### Confirm the identity document is valid and current

Carefully read the expiration date on the identity document to ensure it is current and check for signs that the document has been altered or redacted. Consider using this [tool](#) to help validate a driver's license number.



#### Document and retain records

Document the process you followed to verify identity and retain a copy of all documents.



### Virtual



#### Identify risks and red flags

Use the Law Society's [Red Flags Worksheet](#) to identify risks of fraud, money laundering, or other illegal activity. If risks or red flags cannot be resolved, determine whether to proceed with the transaction.



#### Set up a virtual meeting

Arrange a virtual meeting with the client. Consider using a [scheduling tool](#) to coordinate calendars and optimize the meeting process. Ensure the [video conferencing technology](#) you use is secure and private.



#### Use technology to confirm the identity document is authentic

Before the meeting, ask the client to scan or take an image of their government-issued photo identification document and send it to you by secure means. A high-resolution image is preferred because it is clearer and easier to read. During the live video meeting, ask the client to show you the original identity document and use [technology](#) to confirm the document sent is true and genuine.



#### Confirm the authenticated identity document is valid and current

For example you could (a) meet with the client virtually and compare the name/features of the image of them on your screen to that of their authenticated identity document, **or** (b) ask the client to take a selfie (or have their picture taken) and use [facial recognition technology](#) to compare the selfie to the photo on the authenticated identity document.



#### Document and retain records

Document the process you followed to verify identity and retain a copy of all documents.