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**AB-716 Fictitious business name statements.** (2019-2020)

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**Assembly Bill No. 716**

**CHAPTER 15**

An act to amend Sections 17913 and 17916 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to business.

[ Approved by Governor June 26, 2019. Filed with Secretary of State June 26, 2019. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 716, Chen. Fictitious business name statements.

Existing law requires a person who regularly transacts business in the state for profit under a fictitious business name to file a fictitious business name statement in accordance with prescribed requirements and to file a new statement after a change in the facts set forth in the statement. Existing law requires that these statements be filed with county clerks. Existing law authorizes a county to require a registrant that mails a fictitious business name statement to a county clerk's office for filing to submit a completed and notarized affidavit of identity. Existing law also authorizes a county clerk to require an agent acting for a person filing a fictitious business statement, generally referred to as a registrant, to submit a notarized statement signed by the registrant declaring the registrant has authorized the agent to submit the filing on behalf of the registrant.

This bill would authorize a county clerk to accept an electronic acknowledgment verifying the identity of the registrant using a remote identity proofing process ensuring the registrant's identification, as specified, for purposes of filing fictitious business name statements, as described above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

**17913.** (a) The fictitious business name statement shall contain all of the information required by this subdivision and shall be substantially in the following form:

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as

\*

at \*\* :

\*\*\*

This business is conducted by \*\*\*\*

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on

\*\*\*\*\*

I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

Registrant signature

Statement filed with the County Clerk of \_\_\_\_ County on

NOTICE—IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBDIVISION (a) OF SECTION 17920, A FICTITIOUS NAME STATEMENT GENERALLY EXPIRES AT THE END OF FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK, EXCEPT, AS PROVIDED IN SUBDIVISION (b) OF SECTION 17920, WHERE IT EXPIRES 40 DAYS AFTER ANY CHANGE IN THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE STATEMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 17913 OTHER THAN A CHANGE IN THE RESIDENCE ADDRESS OF A REGISTERED OWNER. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION.

THE FILING OF THIS STATEMENT DOES NOT OF ITSELF AUTHORIZE THE USE IN THIS STATE OF A FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME IN VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF ANOTHER UNDER FEDERAL, STATE, OR COMMON LAW (SEE SECTION 14411 ET SEQ., BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE).

(b) The fictitious business name statement shall contain the following information set forth in the manner indicated in the form provided by subdivision (a):

(1) Where the asterisk (\*) appears in the form, insert the fictitious business name or names. Only those businesses operated at the same address and under the same ownership may be listed on one fictitious business name statement.

(2) Where the two asterisks (\*\*) appear in the form: If the registrant has a place of business in this state, insert the street address, and county, of the registrant's principal place of business in this state. If the registrant has no place of business in this state, insert the street address, and county, of the registrant's principal place of business outside this state.

(3) Where the three asterisks (\*\*\*) appear in the form: If the registrant is an individual, insert the registrant's full name and residence address. If the registrants are a married couple, insert the full name and residence address of both parties to the marriage. If the registrant is a general partnership, copartnership, joint venture, or limited liability partnership, insert the full name and residence address of each general partner. If the registrant is a limited partnership, insert the full name and residence address of each general partner. If the registrant is a limited liability company, insert the name and address of the limited liability company, as set out in its articles of organization on file with the California Secretary of State, and the state of organization. If the registrant is a trust, insert the full name and residence address of each trustee. If the registrant is a corporation, insert the name and address of the corporation, as set out in its articles of incorporation on file with the California Secretary of State, and the state of incorporation. If the registrants are state or local registered domestic partners, insert the full name and residence address of each domestic partner. If the registrant is an unincorporated association other than a partnership, insert the name of each person who is interested in the business of the association and whose liability with respect to the association is substantially the same as that of a general partner.

(4) Where the four asterisks (\*\*\*\*) appear in the form, insert whichever of the following best describes the nature of the business: (i) "an individual," (ii) "a general partnership," (iii) "a limited partnership," (iv) "a limited liability company," (v) "an unincorporated association other than a partnership," (vi) "a corporation," (vii) "a trust," (viii) "copartners," (ix) "a married couple," (x) "joint venture," (xi) "state or local registered domestic partners," or (xii) "a limited liability partnership."

(5) Where the five asterisks (\*\*\*\*\* ) appear in the form, insert the date on which the registrant first commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed, if already transacting business under that name or names. If the registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed, insert the statement, "Not applicable."

(c) The registrant shall declare that all of the information in the fictitious business name statement is true and correct. A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to this section that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

(d) (1) At the time of filing of the fictitious business name statement, the registrant filing on behalf of the registrant shall present personal identification in the form of a California driver's license or other government identification acceptable to the county clerk to adequately determine the identity of the registrant filing on behalf of the registrant as provided in subdivision (e) and the county clerk may require the registrant to complete and sign an affidavit of identity.

(2) In the case of a registrant utilizing an agent for submission of the registrant's fictitious business name statement for filing, at the time of filing of the fictitious business name statement, the agent filing on behalf of the registrant shall present personal identification in the form of a California driver's license or other government identification acceptable to the county clerk to adequately determine the identity of the agent filing on behalf of the registrant as provided in subdivision (e). The county clerk may also require the agent to submit a notarized statement signed by the registrant declaring the registrant has authorized the agent to submit the filing on behalf of the registrant.

(e) If the registrant is a corporation, a limited liability company, a limited partnership, or a limited liability partnership, the county clerk may require documentary evidence issued by the California Secretary of State and deemed acceptable by the county clerk, indicating the current existence and good standing of that business entity to be attached to a completed and notarized affidavit of identity, for purposes of subdivision (d).

(f) (1) The county clerk may require a registrant that mails a fictitious business name statement to a county clerk's office for filing to submit a completed and notarized affidavit of identity. A registrant that is a corporation, limited liability company, limited partnership, or limited liability partnership, if required by the county clerk to submit an affidavit of identity, shall also submit documentary evidence issued by the California Secretary of State indicating the current existence and good standing of that business entity.

(2) The county clerk may accept an electronic acknowledgment verifying the identity of the registrant using a remote identity proofing process ensuring the registrant's identification. The identity proofing process shall follow, to the extent reasonable, the federal guidelines for security and privacy and shall include dynamic knowledge-based authentication or an identity proofing method consistent with, at least, level 3 identity assurance, as described in the electronic authentication guidelines of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(g) A county clerk that chooses to establish procedures pursuant to this section shall prescribe the form of affidavit of identity for filing by a registrant in that county.

**SEC. 2.** Section 17916 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

**17916.** Presentation for filing of an original fictitious business name statement and one copy of the statement, with proper identification, accompanied by a completed and notarized affidavit of identity, if required by the county clerk, and other documents required in accordance with Section 17913, payment of the filing fee, and acceptance of the statement by the county clerk constitute filing under this chapter. The county clerk shall note on the copy the file number, the date of filing the original, and the date of expiration and shall certify and deliver the copy to the registrant or the registrant's agent. A county clerk may use a remote identity proofing process as described in subdivision (f) of Section 17913 for purposes of this section.