Sovrin Ledger Access Policies

This is a Controlled Document of the Sovrin Governance Framework V2 approved by the Sovrin Board of Trustees. If you have comments or suggestions, we invite you to contribute them to the living community version of this document—access is open to anyone. If you are interested in joining the Sovrin Governance Framework Working Group, please visit our Meeting Page.

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Governs	Policies for reading and writing to the Sovrin Ledger
Governed By	Sovrin Governance Framework Working Group

Preamble

DECLARATION OF INTENT: The policies defined in this version of this document—in particular those regarding Permissioned Write Access and Personal Data—have been adopted by the Sovrin Foundation during the current period of regulatory uncertainty about compliance with the GDPR when utilizing a distributed public ledger. There are a number of open questions regarding cross-border transfers of data, restriction of processing, and effective erasure, as well as the scope and nature of Personal Data itself. For example, it is unclear how the GDPR applies to a pseudonymous DID and DID Document posted by an Individual on the immutable Sovrin Ledger for the purpose of having a publicly verifiable Sovrin Identity. Once there is clarity regarding these questions, it is the intent of the Sovrin Foundation to revise these policies so Individuals shall have the right of Public Write Access to the Sovrin Ledger directly if they so choose. If possible, the Sovrin Foundation intends to accomplish this revision within six months of the approval of the Sovrin Governance Framework V2, and in any case not later than one year after such approval.

*TERMINOLOGY NOTE: Under the previous Sovrin Provisional Trust Framework, the term **Trust Anchor** was used to describe the role authorizing a party to write to the Sovrin Ledger. Under the Sovrin Governance Framework V2, the term "Trust Anchor" is deprecated for this purpose (it has been assigned to have a new meaning at the Governance Frameworks layer). The new term for the role authorizing a party to write to the Sovrin Ledger is **Transaction Endorser**.*

RECOMMENDED READING: The terms used in this Controlled Document are more fully explained, including a visual diagram, in [Appendix E of the Sovrin Glossary](#).

1. Transaction Author Agreement

1. The Sovrin Foundation MUST:
   a. Publish a Transaction Author Agreement between a Transaction Author and the Sovrin Foundation (representing the Sovrin Network as a whole) specifying the terms and conditions under which Transaction Authors agree to submit write Transactions to the Sovrin Ledger, including the policies defined in this Controlled Document.
   b. When necessary, revise the Transaction Author Agreement under the same policies as a Controlled Document as specified in section 4 of the Sovrin Governance Framework Master Document.
   c. Publish the current version of the Transaction Author Agreement on the Sovrin Foundation website and in the Sovrin Code Repository.
2. A Transaction Author MUST agree not to submit Transactions that contain:
   a. Data that would violate the intellectual property rights of others.
   b. Data that may not lawfully be written to the Sovrin Ledger, where the definition of applicable law in this context is provided in the Transaction Author Agreement.
3. Until such time as the Sovrin Foundation revises this policy, the Transaction Author MUST agree not to submit a Transaction that contains Personal Data as defined by the EU General Data Protection Regulation.
4. A Transaction Author MUST agree that if it is determined in a court of law that one or more Transactions made by the Transaction Author violated the terms and conditions of the Transaction Author Agreement, the Transaction Author consents to the marking of those Transactions with a Tombstone and, if possible, the revocation of the State Proof(s) pertain to the Sovrin Ledger data for those Transactions.

2. Transaction Endorser Agreement

1. The Sovrin Foundation MUST:
   a. Publish a Transaction Endorser Agreement between the Transaction Endorser and the Sovrin Foundation specifying the terms and conditions under which Transaction Endorsers agree to write Transactions to the Sovrin Ledger, including the policies defined in this Controlled Document.

b. When necessary, revise the Transaction Endorser Agreement under the same policies as a Controlled Document as specified in section 4 of the Sovrin Governance Framework.

c. Publish the current version of the Transaction Endorser Agreement on the Sovrin Foundation website and in the Sovrin Code Repository.

2. A Transaction Endorser MUST agree to pay the Sovrin Ledger Fee for a Transaction as specified by the Sovrin Ledger Fee Table under the payment terms specified in the Transaction Endorser Agreement.

3. A Transaction Endorser MUST:
    a. Only submit Transactions from Transaction Authors who have explicitly agreed to the Transaction Author Agreement by physically or digitally signing a copy.
    b. Maintain physical or digital evidence of conformance to this policy.

3. Permissioned Write Access

1. The scope of the policies defined in this section is defined as follows:
    a. The policies in this section MUST apply to the Sovrin Main Network.
    b. The policies governing write access to the Sovrin Test Network and Sovrin Demo Network MAY be defined separately by the Sovrin Technical Governance Board.

2. Sovrin Trustees are permitted to write Transactions to the Sovrin Ledger under the following rules:
    a. This policy MUST apply only to Trustees acting in their role as Trustees of the Sovrin Foundation.
    b. A Trustee MUST only make the following Transactions if the Transaction has been approved by a motion of the Sovrin Board of Trustees.
        i. Add or remove a Trustee.
        ii. Add or remove a Steward.
        iii. Add or remove a Transaction Endorser.
        iv. Create or update the Sovrin Ledger Fee Table.
    c. A Trustee MAY make Sovrin Ledger maintenance Transactions if the Transaction is approved by either the Sovrin Board of Trustees, the Sovrin Technical Governance Board, or the Sovrin Foundation Chief Technical Officer.

3. Sovrin Stewards are permitted to serve in the role of Transaction Endorsers under the following rules:
    a. The Steward MUST agree to the terms and conditions of the Transaction Endorser Agreement by submitting a physically or digitally signed copy to the Sovrin Foundation.
    b. The Steward MAY make a Transaction of any Transaction Type for which the role of Transaction Endorser is authorized by the Sovrin Open Source Code.

4. Organizations other than Stewards are permitted to serve in the role of Transaction Endorsers under the following rules:
    a. The Organization MUST submit a Transaction Endorser application to the Sovrin

Foundation that includes evidence that the Organization:

      i. Is a legally registered entity in a recognized Jurisdiction.

      ii. Is prepared to issue a Credential by publishing a Credential Definition on the Sovrin Main Ledger.

  b. The Organization's application MUST be approved by a Sovrin Trustee or by the appropriate Sovrin Governing Body.

  c. The Organization MUST agree to the terms and conditions of the Transaction Endorser Agreement by submitting a physically or digitally signed copy to the Sovrin Foundation.

  d. The Organization MUST only approve Transactions for which it is the Transaction Author.

5. Transaction Authors are permitted to write Transactions to the Sovrin Ledger under the following rules:

  a. A Transaction Author MAY only make a Transaction to update the state of a previous Transaction submitted by that same Transaction Author.

4. Public Write Access

1. Public Write Access MUST enable a Transaction Author to submit a Trans action directly to the Sovrin Ledger without requiring the signature of a Transaction Endorser.

2. As soon as resources permit and relevant legal and policy questions are resolved, the Sovrin Foundation MUST:

  a. Draft a revision to this Controlled Document defining the policies to enable Public Write Access.

  b. If necessary, draft a revision to the Transaction Author Agreement implementing the changes necessary to support these policies.

  c. Work with the Sovrin Community to implement the changes to the Sovrin Open Source Code necessary to implement these policies.

5. Public Read Access

1. Stewards MUST provide public read access for free to anyone for all Transactions on the Sovrin Ledger unless marked by a Tombstone.

2. Once Tombstone functionality has been: a) implemented by the Sovrin Community, b) approved by the Sovrin Technical Governance Board, and c) approved by the Sovrin Board of Trustees, a Steward MAY mark a Transaction as a Node-Specific Tombstone if:

  a. Requested by the Transaction Author of a Transaction for a valid reason as specified by the Transaction Author Agreement.

  b. Required of the Steward by a court order.

  c. The Steward has evidence that the Transaction violates the terms and conditions of the Transaction Author Agreement.

3. In keeping with the Censorship Resistance principle (SGF Master Document section 2.8.4), a Steward MUST NOT use a Node-Specific Tombstone for any other reason.
4. Ledger-Wide Tombstones MUST NOT be implemented until policies governing their usage are published in a future version of this Controlled Document.
    NOTE: *Ledger-Wide Tombstones are not planned in the near future.*