

Florida understands that businesses need certainty, predictability and efficiency in government regulations. For this reason, Florida has developed permit streamlining procedures to assist existing, expanding or new-to-Florida businesses to obtain expedited review of all needed state and regional permit applications and, at the option of a participating local government, local development permits or orders and comprehensive plan amendments. This is achieved through commitment among the state's regulatory agencies and local governments to provide quicker, less costly and more predictable permitting processes for significant economic development projects without reducing environmental standards.

Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for using the process are outlined below:

- Business creating at least 50 jobs;
- Commercial or industrial development project that will be occupied by a business that would individually or collectively create at least 50 jobs;
- Business creating at least 25 jobs if the project is located in a county which has a population of fewer than 75,000, or in a county which has a population of fewer than 125,000 which is contiguous to a county having a population of 75,000 residing in incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county;
- On a case-by-case basis and at the request and recommendation of the governing body of a county or municipality in which the project is to be located, DEO may allow a business creating a minimum of 10 jobs to use the process;
- At the request of a county or municipal government, DEO or a Quick Permitting County may certify projects located in counties where the ratio of new jobs per participant in the welfare transition program, as determined by CareerSource Florida, Inc., is less than one or otherwise critical;
- The project is located in a designated brownfield area;
- Projects that are part of the state-of-the-art biomedical research institution and campus to be established in this state;
- Projects resulting in the production of biofuels cultivated on lands that are 1,000 acres or more or in the construction of a biofuel or biodiesel processing facility or a facility generating renewable energy;
- Projects for natural gas storage facilities that are permitted under chapter 377; and
- Projects for natural gas storage pipelines subject to certification by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The following projects are explicitly prohibited from using the expedited process:

- A project funded and operated by a local government and located within that government's jurisdiction;
- A project, the primary purpose of which is to:
 - Affect the final disposal of solid waste, biomedical waste, or hazardous waste in the state;
 - Produce electrical power (unless the production of electricity is incidental and not the project's primary function);
 - Extract natural resources;
 - Produce oil; or
 - Construct, maintain, or operate an oil, petroleum, natural gas, or sewage pipeline.

Application Process

The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) or a Quick Permitting County certifies a business as eligible to use the process. Recommendations on which projects should use the process may come from Enterprise Florida, any county or municipality, or the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI).

Approval Process

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) directs the creation of regional permit action teams for the purpose of expediting review of permit applications and local comprehensive plan amendments.

Regional Permit Action Teams established by Memoranda of Agreement (MOA):

- DEP and applicant direct the creation of these teams. The MOA is between DEP and the applicant and the heads of the Departments of Transportation, Agriculture & Consumer Services, and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission; appropriate Regional Planning Councils; appropriate Water Management Districts; and voluntarily participating municipalities and counties. The MOA accommodates participation by other local government or federal agencies, as necessary.
- At a local government's option, a special MOA may be developed on a case-by-case basis to allow some or all local development permits or orders to be covered under the expedited review. Implementation of the local government MOA requires a noticed public workshop and hearing.

Benefits

Certified projects receive the following benefits:

- A central point for filing permit applications;
- Pre-application meeting of regulatory agencies and business representative held within 14 days after eligibility determination;
- Identification of all necessary permits and approvals needed for the project;
- Designation of a project coordinator and regional permit action team contacts;
- Identification of the need for any special studies or reviews which may affect the time schedule;
- Identification of any areas of significant concern which may affect the outcome of the project review;
- Development of a consolidated time schedule which incorporates all required deadlines, including public meetings and notices;
- Statement of a project's ability to be permitted within 30 days from pre-application meeting;
- Final agency action on permit applications within 90 days from the receipt of complete application(s);
- Waiver of interstate highway concurrency with approved mitigation;
- Funneling of any challenges to agency final approvals into a single consolidated hearing; and
- Authorization for consolidation of state and local permits, licenses and approvals obtained through the expedited permitting review process.

Statutory Reference: [Section 403.973, Florida Statutes](#)