

Approved:

Effective: May 18, 2016
Review: January 14, 2016
Office: Policy Management
Topic No.: 050-030-001-j


Department of Transportation

FORM DEVELOPMENT AND CONTROL

PURPOSE:

To establish the process for developing, revising, and controlling the Florida Department of Transportation's (Department) forms. Through this process, it is the Department's intent to: (a) reduce duplication of information required and collected and (b) to ensure the integrity of the Department's official forms.

AUTHORITY:

Sections 20.23(3)(a) and 334.048(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.).

REFERENCES:

Chapters 23 and 119, F.S.
Sections 120.52(15) and 120.55(1)(a)4, F.S.

SCOPE:

This procedure affects all Department employees who complete, develop, or manage forms.

DEFINITIONS:

Confidential or Sensitive - Information exempt from public disclosure under **section 119.071, F.S.**, which is confidential by law; information which requires protection from unauthorized access by virtue of its legal exemption from the **Public Records Act** (see, e.g., **section 119.071(4)(a)1, F.S.**, regarding exemption of social security numbers).

Contact Person - A person from the originating office who is responsible for ensuring a particular form is revised or made obsolete when necessary.

Financial Impact Form - A form that establishes an amount to be received or paid, or that indicates a current or future receipt, payment or usage of funds, budget or cash, or receipt or provision for delivery of goods or services. A form that involves a process affecting the Department's finances.

Forms Inventory Management System (FIMS) - A computerized inventory system administered by the Policy Management Unit to track a form's creation and revision process.

Forms Library - The online location for official Department forms on the Department's external

and internal websites that are managed by the Policy Management Unit.

Form: An electronic method of collecting data, documenting approvals, or executing an agreement, regardless of whether the final document can be or is printed.

“Form” does not include administrative related documents such as letterhead, envelopes, labels, tags, tickets or notepads, one-time surveys, non-mandatory checklists, or CADD Forms for Contract Plans. CADD forms include plan sheets and forms created in the Department Software System used for the design of Department road and bridge construction contract plans, with the exception of quantity tabulation forms managed by the Construction/Estimates Office. The Department CADD Software System is managed and controlled by the Engineering/CADD Systems Design Office.

Legally Binding Form – A form that sets out in writing the rights and obligations of parties or users of the form. A form referenced in a rule must be processed according to **Section 4.4**. Examples of legally binding forms include: licenses, permits and certifications, as well as applications for licenses, permits and certifications, contracts, leases, and other agreements.

Legend - The notation on a form displayed in the upper right corner, which includes the form number, originating office, revision date, page numbering (if more than one page), and Office of General Counsel (OGC) preceding the revision date if the form is legally binding and approved by the OGC as to the legality of the form. This may also include a link to a form notice to give further direction on coordinating with Office of Comptroller (OOC), Office of General Counsel (OGC), or another office that may need to approve changes to the form.

NOTE: A cite legend is displayed in the upper left corner, if applicable, to list the **Florida Statute** or **Florida Administrative Code Rule** that references the form.

Originating Office - The office that develops a form and is responsible for notifying the Policy Management Unit of required changes and/or removal of obsolete forms. Requests for Form Action can be made using the Policy Management Unit’s SharePoint: <http://fdotsharepoint.dot.state.fl.us/fa/admin/SupportServices/OFP/Lists/Form%20List/AllItems.aspx>

Policy Management Unit - The office within Transportation Support Services that is the main repository for the Department’s forms and has the primary responsibility for form management and publication.

Public Form - Any form that solicits information from, or imposes requirements on, persons or groups outside the Department. A public form that is specifically required by statute or by an existing rule must be adopted as a rule pursuant to **chapter 120, F.S.** (see **Section 4.4**). Any such form must be incorporated by reference and filed with the Department of State as part of the Department’s rules. Incorporation by reference will only be as to the form as it exists at the time of rule adoption. Any revisions of such forms must be adopted by rule amendment as required by **section 120.55(1)(a)4, F.S.** This does not include general information gathering, such as voluntary surveys.

Revision Date - The date of the latest version of the form, consisting of the first two digits representing the month and the last two digits of the year (MM/YY) which is displayed in the legend of the form.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 POLICY MANAGEMENT UNIT

1.1.2 The Policy Management Unit maintains the repository for the Department's official forms and has the primary responsibility for form management and publication. FDOT web applications are not the responsibility of the Policy Management Unit and are not included in the Forms Library or assigned an official number. Web applications should be reviewed by OGC and OOC for legal and financial impact. The responsibility to seek OGC and OOC review is that of the owner or creator of the web application. Unless an exception is granted, all electronic versions of forms are to be accessed and controlled through the official Forms Library or other deployment point approved by the Policy Management Unit.

It is the responsibility of the Policy Management Unit to determine if a form meets the definition of an official form and also to ensure the integrity, availability, and access method for all Department forms. Likewise, the Policy Management Unit is responsible for determining the means by which an electronic version of a form is to be created and utilized.

1.1.3 It is the responsibility of the Policy Management Unit to help ensure that originating offices coordinate forms with the OOC, OGC, or other affected offices that hold legal or financial responsibility for the data on the form.

1.2 ORIGINATING OFFICE

1.2.1 It is the responsibility of the originating office to plan the content for new and revised forms. The Policy Management Unit will provide support in rendering the design and functionality of the form and will ensure the form facilitates the efficient performance of the Department's work. Revisions will not be processed by the Policy Management Unit without authorization by the contact person or designee.

1.2.2 Originating offices that frequently receive requests to modify forms to meet specific project needs critical to the Department's production process should establish a process to insure a timely response. If a request is denied, the response by the originating office shall explain in detail the basis for the denial.

1.2.3 The originating office must coordinate, distribute, and arrange for necessary testing and training associated with a new or revised form.

- 1.2.4** The originating office is responsible for developing any procedural documents or instructions for processing the form.
- 1.2.5** It is the responsibility of each originating office to carefully review and test new and revised forms and biennially evaluate existing forms for accuracy and compliance requirements. Similar forms that solicit the same information will be combined where feasible to reduce redundancy. Information requested should be necessary for the performance of the agency function or to support the proposed activity.
- 1.2.6** When planning forms, originating offices should carefully consider the need for information that is exempt from public records disclosure. If the information is not absolutely necessary (e.g., employee social security numbers) it should not be requested in the form (see **section 119.071(4)(a)1, F.S.**).
- 1.2.7** Originating offices are responsible for consulting with the Policy Management Unit before publication of web pages using official forms. Offices are permitted to connect to the Forms Library site through links. Production of official forms by means other than linking to the Policy Management Unit's website is prohibited.
- 1.2.8** If the form is legally binding or has financial impact on the Department, the Policy Management Unit will coordinate with the Office of General Counsel and/or Office of Comptroller to secure required reviews and documented approval prior to implementing the initial or revised version.

1.3 EMPLOYEES

- 1.3.1** It is the responsibility of all Department employees using Department forms to recommend to the contact person any changes that might eliminate, combine, enhance, or simplify forms. The name of the contact person for a form may be found under the "Detail" button for each form in the Forms Library. This site allows users to submit comments online about a form at any time. As these comments are received, they will be addressed by either the Policy Management Unit or the originating office.
- 1.3.2** All Department employees reviewing Department forms should also review any related procedural documents or rules for need, usefulness, improvements, or consolidation.
- 1.3.3** It is the responsibility of all Department employees to ensure they are using the most current version of any particular form and that this form is being directly accessed from the Forms Library. Saving forms from the library for use at a later date is prohibited. Employees may create a shortcut or bookmark to the form.

1.4 OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

- 1.4.1** New forms or revisions to existing forms that involve a legally binding process must be reviewed and approved by OGC prior to being implemented.

Many Department forms have legal implications and cannot be revised or altered by the Policy Management Unit or other offices without authorization from the originating office after coordination with the OGC. In accordance with **Section 4.4**, the OGC will ensure compliance with any rule requirements and protect the integrity of the Department's legal documents.

- 1.4.2 New computer applications or proposed revisions to existing computer applications that have electronic forms or entry screens used to gather or process information that legally binds the Department or affects Department contracts must be reviewed by OGC for approval prior to implementation.

1.5 OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER

- 1.5.1 New forms or revisions to an existing form that involve a process in which the Department's finances will be affected must be reviewed and approved by OOC prior to being implemented
- 1.5.2 New computer applications or proposed revisions to existing computer applications that have electronic forms or entry screens used to gather or process information affecting Department's finances must be reviewed by OOC for approval prior to implementation.

2. STANDARDS AND FORMAT

- 2.1 The Department's Forms Library allows forms to be maintained in multiple formats, such as Word, Excel, HTML, SharePoint, and PDF. The Policy Management Unit will continue to consult with originating offices to determine the best format for the development and use of Department forms.
- 2.2 Form numbers are assigned by the Policy Management Unit using the numbering system established in **Procedure No. 025-020-009, Topic and Subtopic Numbers**: The first three digits are the topic number that identifies the subject (not the office). The next three subtopic numbers define a more specific description of the program area. The last two digits are the numerical sequence for each topic/subtopic combination.
- 2.3 Any office developing an electronic form must first coordinate the development of the electronic form through the Policy Management Unit.
- 2.4 Whenever possible, forms should be formatted to accommodate standard paper size.
- 2.5 Each form will be uniquely identified by its legend which appears in the upper right corner of the form.
- 2.6 The revision date shall be the month and year the form is approved, in MM/YY format. Forms incorporated by reference into a rule are not effective until the rule's effective date.

- 2.7** If a form is referenced in the **Florida Administrative Code**, the following statement will be inserted into the “forms” section of associated procedural documents of the Department:

*This form is incorporated by reference into **Rule XX-XX, Florida Administrative Code**, and any revisions, additions or updates to this form must be coordinated with the Office of the General Counsel for Administrative Code update.*

2.8 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM NUMBERS

Forms including requests for project reference numbers in the Financial Management System must use the following format:

Financial Project ID: 999999 9 xx 99⁽¹⁾

Federal Project ID: xxxx 999 x

County/Section No.: 99 999⁽²⁾

x = Alpha/Numeric

9 = Numeric

(1) = Where space is limited, Project ID may be used

(2) = County/Section No. refers to the FDOT County Number and Roadway Section Number

3. REQUEST FOR FORM DEVELOPMENT OR REVISION

- 3.1** When a form needs to be **created**, the contact person must submit a Request for Form Action using the Policy Management Unit’s SharePoint and include a rough draft of the form with their submission. The contact person will receive a draft copy of the form electronically for testing and approval. When the form has been approved, the contact person must respond in writing in order for the Policy Management Unit to proceed with publishing the form.

- 3.2** When a form needs to be **revised**, the contact person must submit the Request for Form Action, along with most current version of the form marked with revisions, using the Policy Management Unit’s SharePoint. The contact person should keep a copy of the form marked with the changes to verify all changes have been made on the official version. Once all changes have been implemented, the contact person will receive a draft copy of the revisions which will require his/her approval in writing in order to proceed with publishing the form revision.

- 3.3** The Policy Management Unit will:

(a) Analyze the completed Request for Form Action for compliance with this procedure.

(b) Approve the request for processing if it is in compliance with this procedure, or advise the originating office why the request will not be processed.

(c) Ensure coordination with the OGC and OOC, as applicable (see **Section 4, Form Coordination and Review**).

(d) Assign a form number (see **Topic and Subtopic Numbers, Procedure No. 025-020-009**) for any new form that has been approved by the Policy Management Unit for processing, and enter the form number and form information into the Forms Information Management System (FIMS).

3.4 The Policy Management Unit may also make recommendations for improvements to the form or suggest combining with another form, if applicable, to reduce redundancy.

4. FORM COORDINATION AND REVIEW

4.1 The Policy Management Unit will work with the contact person to determine needed reviews. Editorial or minor revisions may not require coordination. The contact person is responsible for coordinating new or revised forms with affected offices. For example:

1. If the form is legally binding, the Policy Management Unit must secure the review and approval by the OGC prior to the release of the form.
2. If the form has financial impact, the Policy Management Unit must secure the review and approval by the OOC prior to the release of the form.
3. If the form affects the Federal Highway Administration or other governmental agencies, it may require a review from that agency prior to the release of the form.

4.3 FORMS REFERENCED IN PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS OR RULES

4.3.1 All forms referenced in procedural documents are analyzed to determine their status by the Policy Management Unit Forms Administrator during the review process. The release of forms held pending the release of the associated procedural document is coordinated by the Policy Management Unit.

4.3.2 All forms referenced in **Florida Administrative Code** are analyzed to determine their status by the Forms Administrator during the review process. The release of forms held pending the release of the related rule is coordinated between the OGC and the Policy Management Unit. These forms must be promulgated pursuant to the Chapter 120 rulemaking process.

4.4 LEGALLY BINDING FORMS

4.4.1 Forms that are legally binding must be reviewed and approved by the OGC as stated in

Sections 1.4 and 4.3. The following explains the process:

1. The contact person prepares the "draft" form.
2. The contact person will send the draft to the Policy Management Unit for coordination and approval by OGC.
3. If comments are received that require additional revisions to the form, the Forms Administrator will notify the contact person via e-mail that additional changes are required by OGC.
4. If further revisions to the "draft" form are **not** required, approval from OGC will be documented and the form will be published to the Forms Library for implementation by the Department.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF FORM

5.1 When a "draft" form has been approved for release, the Policy Management Unit will initiate the appropriate process to ensure the form is available to users through one or more of the following methods:

- The Forms Library
- The Infonet
- The Internet
- The Originating Office

5.2 The form will be available to users by the date the rule or other operating instructions become effective or the date the instructions are distributed to the users.

5.3 A form referenced in a rule must be processed through the OGC for filing in accordance with the ***Administrative Procedure Act, chapter 120, F.S.***, and ***Procedure No. 025-010-003, Rule Development and Adoption***, before it can be officially implemented.

5.4 If the Department is required to use the forms of other governmental agencies, the primary office responsible for the use of the form will manage the form, ensuring the form distributed to users is current.

5.4.1 The Policy Management Unit will manage non-Department forms that the Department is authorized to change (such as Position Descriptions). With the approval of the owning agency, these non-Department forms will be processed as outlined in ***Section 3, Request for Form Development***.

6. OBSOLETE OR DISCONTINUED FORMS

6.1 When a form is no longer required (i.e., becomes obsolete) and will not be replaced by a

revised version, the contact person must notify Policy Management Unit immediately. This notification can be in the form of an e-mail, memorandum, or by completing a Request for Form Action. The Policy Management Unit will update the Forms Inventory Management System and the Forms Library.

- 6.2** The originating office is responsible for notifying users if a form is obsolete or discontinued.

7. TRAINING

- 7.1** There is no training mandated for the implementation of this procedure or the statutes identified as the authority for this function.

- 7.2** User help-guides are available at: <http://infonet.dot.state.fl.us/tlofp/>

8. FORMS

The following forms are available in the Department's Forms Library:

Form No. 050-030-01

Request for Form Action