

Approved:

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Office: Maintenance

Topic No.: 850-045-003-c


Department of Transportation

REST AREA, WELCOME CENTER, AND TRUCK COMFORT STATION MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE:

To establish standard operating procedures for the management of the State of Florida Rest Areas, Welcome Centers, Truck Comfort Stations and Weigh Stations.

AUTHORITY:

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

SCOPE:

This procedure applies to all employees and operational units of the Department of Transportation (Department) responsible for management of the State of Florida Rest Areas, Welcome Centers, Truck Comfort Stations and Weigh Stations (collectively referred to as facilities), excluding the Turnpike Enterprise Service Plazas.

All components and/or features present within facility limits that are not specifically identified or addressed in this procedure are subject to the component or feature's relative procedure, manual, or handbook.

REFERENCES:

Title 20 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 107

Title 23 U.S.C. Section 111

Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Part 752

Sections 256.031, 413.051, 479.02(5), F.S.

Chapter 493, F.S.

Rule Chapter 14-28, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

Handbook for the Uniform Inspection of Rest Areas, Welcome Centers and Truck Comfort Stations

Procedure 956-030-001, Emergency Management Program

Florida Department of Transportation Sponsorship Program Policy

1. FACILITY PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Each District Maintenance Office is responsible for the maintenance and operation of all facilities within their District; this includes the responsibility of meeting all performance requirements.

1.1 INSPECTIONS

District Maintenance Offices shall inspect all facilities once per month using the appropriate Quality Assessment Review form, **Form 850-045-06, Quality Assessment Review/Rest Area Inspection, 850-045-07, Quality Assessment Review/Truck Comfort Station/Scale House, or 850-045-08, Quality Assessment Review/Truck Scale House.**

- 1.1.1 For each Rest Area and Welcome Center, at least one of every six (6) inspections must occur when security is scheduled.
- 1.1.2 For each facility, approximately 50% of inspections must be done randomly and unannounced.
- 1.1.3 Inspection forms shall be completed according to the Florida Department of Transportation Standard Criteria contained in the **Handbook for the Uniform Inspection of Rest Areas, Welcome Centers, and Truck Comfort Stations.**

1.2 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 1.2.1 All facilities must meet the following performance measures:
 - 1.2.1.1 Monthly quality assessment scores of at least an eighty-five (85).
 - 1.2.1.2 For any continuous six (6) month period, the quality assessment scores for each facility must average no less than ninety (90).

1.3 FACILITY ATTENDANTS

District Maintenance Offices shall ensure facility attendants are on site as necessary to continuously meet the performance measures identified in **Section 1.2** and the **Handbook**. Minimally, at least one attendant shall be on site twenty-four (24) hours each day, seven (7) days each week at Rest Areas and Welcome Centers.

1.4 SECURITY SERVICES

- 1.4.1 Ensure security services are provided at all Welcome Centers and Rest Area pairs for ten (10) nighttime hours seven (7) days each week including all holidays. A Rest Area pair is defined as two Rest Areas in close proximity where

- one serves traffic in one direction and the other serves traffic in the opposite direction. Security for Rest Area pairs will be provided by a single security officer, who will split time between the two facilities, rotating between them every hour. The time split should be close to 50/50, but shall be no greater difference than 60/40.
- 1.4.2 If circumstances warrant, a District may allow security officers to use median crossovers when rotating security duties between Rest Area pairs. Vehicles using median crossovers must be equipped with a roof mounted light bar utilizing white and/or amber colors. The use of red or blue flashing lights is prohibited.
 - 1.4.3 With approval from the Office of Maintenance (OOM), Districts may increase security services to provide additional hours of coverage or an additional officer if warranted.
 - 1.4.4 There shall be no lapse in security coverage during nighttime hours. Back-up personnel and equipment must be available for immediate replacement of personnel who need relief of duty and/or equipment that may fail.
 - 1.4.5 All security officers on duty shall be uniformed and armed consistent with **Chapter 493, F.S.**; security officers and supervisors are required to maintain active licensure in accordance with **Chapter 493, F.S.**
 - 1.4.6 Security vehicles shall be properly maintained for both appearance and operation, and must be legally drivable on the interstate. Security vehicles shall not be more than 10 years old or have more than 120,000 miles, but exceptions can be made if vehicles are in exceptional condition as determined by the District. Two-wheeled vehicles are not allowed.
 - 1.4.7 Security officers shall provide a visible presence in and around the Rest Area and Welcome Center facilities, being readily accessible and responsive to the public. Security officers are to actively monitor the entire limits of the facility, to include:
 - 1.4.7.1 Patrolling walkways, sidewalks, vending areas and parking lots on foot.
 - 1.4.7.2 Periodically patrolling the entire facility, to include the grounds, picnic areas, vending areas, bulletin board areas, parking lot, and entrance and exit ramps to and from the facility in a marked security vehicle.
 - 1.4.8 In addition to security monitoring functions, Security Officers shall respond to incidents, assist the public with information requests, and deter undesirable activities to create a safe atmosphere at the facilities.
 - 1.4.9 Security officers shall document any unusual activity or occurrence at a Rest Area or Welcome Center. This documentation shall be maintained in the facility's

log book, available on site for review.

- 1.4.10 Security officers shall document departure and arrival times in the log books at each Rest Area when rotating between Rest Area pairs.

1.5 CUSTOMER COMMENT SYSTEM

- 1.5.1 All facilities except Weigh Station Scale Houses must have highly visible signs with telephone, email and quick response (QR) code information notifying visitors of means to provide comments.
- 1.5.2 The numerical and QR code shall be specifically designated for the facility.
- 1.5.3 Districts shall ensure that all customers requesting a response are contacted within five (5) business days of the date the comment was submitted.
- 1.5.4 Responses and actions related to all customer comments shall be recorded in the Department's electronic Customer Comment system.

1.6 TELEPHONES

- 1.6.1 Telephone services must be present at each Rest Area and Welcome Center facility. Phone services provided shall comply with ***Americans with Disabilities Act*** requirements.

1.7 FLAGS

- 1.7.1 All Rest Areas and Welcome Centers shall display the United States Flag, the POW/MIA Flag, and the State of Florida Flag.
- 1.7.2 When all three flags are flown from a single pole, the flags are to be displayed in the order they are flown at the State of Florida Capitol Building; the United States Flag at the highest point, the POW/MIA Flag, and then the State of Florida Flag.
- 1.7.3 Facilities featuring three flag poles shall adhere to the guidance provided by the Florida Department of State, Division of Administrative Services, with the United States Flag in the center at the highest point.
- 1.7.4 Properly illuminated flags, with a light dedicated to each flag, may be flown through the night. In the absence of proper lighting, flags shall be lowered at sunset and raised at sunrise.
- 1.7.5 Flags shall be properly maintained in clean and good condition. Flags shall not show signs of wear such as being significantly faded or torn. Tattered flags are to be destroyed in a dignified manner as described in the U.S. flag code.

2. ANCILLARY SERVICES

2.1 VENDING OPERATIONS

In compliance with **20 U.S.C. Section 107**, vending operations are administered by Florida's Division of Blind Services. The Florida Bureau of Business Enterprises Program (BBE) is the component of the Division of Blind Services providing job opportunities for eligible blind persons under the **Randolph Sheppard Act**. The BBE vendor is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all vending services.

2.2 INFORMATION AND SPONSORSHIP

2.2.1 REST AREA INFORMATION

Information system vendors contracting with the Department for privately operated information systems at State of Florida facilities, in accordance with Section **479.02, F.S.**, are responsible for all costs related to the system except electrical.

2.2.2 REST AREA SPONSORSHIP

Rest Area and Welcome Center sponsorship programs shall be administered by the vendor contracting with the Department to establish and implement sponsorship acknowledgement and revenue generation agreements.

The Department may be responsible for various installation and maintenance activities associated with sponsorship programs. Refer to the Sponsorship Agreement for details.

Sponsorship programs shall comply with all aspects of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA's) policy on sponsorship acknowledgement and the **Florida Department of Transportation Sponsorship Program Policy**.

2.2.3 VISIT FLORIDA WELCOME CENTER

Except for the programs identified in Sections **2.2.1** and **2.2.2**, advertising opportunities provided at the State of Florida Welcome Centers are operated and maintained by VISIT FLORIDA. All materials must promote Florida tourism and provide information about destinations, attractions, activities, and events which admit the general public.

3. UTILITY SERVICES

3.1 RECYCLING

All facilities except Weigh Station Scale Houses must maintain recycling receptacles for aluminum and plastic materials. The recycle receptacles are to be clearly marked and placed along the parking areas and/or the vending areas for increased awareness and accessibility. The receptacles are to be of commercial grade and maintained in a clean, sanitary, and undamaged condition, with no sharp edges or rust damage present. Districts shall ensure collected materials are properly recycled, either through pick up or delivery to a local recycling facility.

3.2 WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND POTABLE WATER

District Maintenance Offices shall operate and maintain wastewater treatment facilities, wells, and other potable water facilities according to all applicable federal, state and local laws and ordinances. Wastewater treatment facilities, wells and other potable water facilities must remain securely locked, with emergency contact information posted. Wastewater treatment facilities must have proper permits, with a log book documenting test dates and inspection results available on site for review. All permit requirements must be met.

3.3 EMERGENCY GENERATORS

If the facility is equipped with emergency generators, the District shall keep the generator area clean and free of debris. The District shall properly maintain generators, keeping them fueled, operational, and functioning as designed; test dates and inspection results are to be properly recorded.

4. WEIGH STATION FACILITIES

4.1 TRUCK COMFORT STATIONS

The District shall ensure Truck Comfort Stations in conjunction with select Weigh Station Scale Houses are inspected and maintained according **Section 1.1**.

4.2 WEIGH STATION SCALE HOUSES

The District shall ensure Weigh Station Scale House facilities are inspected and maintained according to **Section 1.1**. Weigh Station Scale House generators are to be maintained according to **Section 3.3**.

5. URGENT SITUATIONS

5.1 DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

When the Department becomes aware of a possible event such as an impending hurricane or extreme weather, the District shall make preparations to provide services as required in the District's Emergency Management Plan. If additional attendants or equipment, such as generators or portable toilets, are required due to increased usage when a facility is in the impact area of a hurricane or tropical storm, or on the evacuation route, they are to be supplied as needed.

If an emergency event occurs, refer to topic **956-030-001, *Emergency Management Program***.

During a declared emergency, if facility attendants and security personnel are required to evacuate for safety reasons, the facilities are to be left open and accessible to the public. Attendants and security personnel are to resume normal activities upon notice by the Department.

5.2 RESPONSE TO EVENTS AND INCIDENTS

When an event or incident, such as a fire, hurricane, tornado, vandalism, crime, crashes, conflicts, occurs, the proper law enforcement and medical agencies shall be alerted by the Department as appropriate.

Fire extinguishers shall be present at all facilities and be in proper working condition at all times.

If the facility has been damaged or rendered inoperable, the facility is to be safely secured or closed until repair can be completed. Warning signs shall be posted to notify facility users of possible hazardous or inoperable conditions.

5.3 FACILITY CLOSURES

If a facility is experiencing complications such as structural damage or water/plumbing issues, which interfere with the functions the facility is intended to provide, the District should temporarily close the facility. In the event a facility is temporarily closed, the District should provide notification of the closure on the interstate mainline, informing travelers prior to the interstate exit that the facility is closed.

For temporary closures greater than twenty four (24) hours, the District shall provide portable toilets and re-open the facility for customer use.

6. PERMITS

Organizations wishing to conduct solicitation events at Rest Areas shall submit **Form No. 850-040-70, *Permit Application for Solicitation at a Department Rest Area or***

Welcome Center, to the appropriate District Maintenance Engineer (DME) or designee for consideration. If the organization meets all requirements of **Chapter 496, F.S.** and **Chapter 14-28, F.A.C.**, the DME may approve the application for solicitation and issue the appropriate permit.

7. TRAINING

There is no training required by this procedure.

8. FORMS

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

Form No. 850-045-06	Quality Assessment Review/Rest Area Inspection
Form No. 850-045-07	Quality Assessment Review/Truck Comfort Station/Scale House
Form No. 850-045-08	Quality Assessment Review/Truck Scale House
Form No. 850-040-70	Permit Application for Solicitation at a Department Rest Area or Welcome Center