



## INCENTIVE INFORMATION SHEET

# PERMIT STREAMLINING INITIATIVES

*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. 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.*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Expedited permitting under 403.973, F.S., allows significant economic development projects, and projects located within designated Brownfield areas, 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.
- The Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development (OTTED) or a Quick Business County (QBC) 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).
- Eligibility criteria for using the process are outlined below. A business must:
  - Create at least **100 jobs**; or
  - Create **50 jobs** if the project is located in an enterprise zone, in a county which has a population of fewer than 75,000, or in a county which has a population of fewer than 100,000 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, OTTED may allow a business creating a minimum of **10 jobs** to use the process.
- Regional Permit Action Teams established by Memoranda of Agreement (MOA):
  - OTTED or a QBC (with delegation) directs the creation of these teams. The MOA is between OTTED and the heads of the Departments of Environmental Protection, Community Affairs, Transportation, Agriculture & Consumer Services, Labor & Employment Security; the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission; the Regional Planning Councils; and the Water Management Districts. The MOA accommodates participation by 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.
- Certified projects receive the following benefits:
  - Preapplication 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 permitability within 30 days from preapplication meeting,
  - Final agency action on permit applications **within 90 days** from the receipt of complete application(s),
  - Waiver of twice-a-year limitation on local comprehensive plan amendments,
  - Exemption for certain new projects from Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review when at or below 100 percent of numerical thresholds,
  - Doubling of substantial deviation thresholds without triggering additional lengthy and costly review for existing DRIs,
  - 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.
- Expedited permitting provides a special assistance process for Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) counties. OTTED, working with REDI and the regional permitting teams, is to provide technical assistance in preparing permit applications for rural counties. This additional assistance can include providing guidance in land development regulations and permitting processes, and working cooperatively with state, regional and local entities to identify areas within these counties which may be suitable or adaptable for preclearance review of specified types of land uses and other activities requiring permits.
  - Section 403.973(19), F.S., prohibits the following projects 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.

For more information about Florida's Expedited Permitting Process, contact Steven Birnholz at 407.316.4722.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LIAISONS

- Section 288.021, F.S., provides for the appointment of Economic Development Liaisons in the Departments of Transportation (including each District Office), Environmental Protection, Labor & Employment Security, Education, Community Affairs, Management Services, Revenue, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, and each Water Management District. Each department appointee has

general knowledge of both the state's permitting and other regulatory functions and of the state's economic goals, policies and programs.

- Each Liaison is expected to be the primary point of contact for the agency with OTTED on issues and projects important to the economic development of Florida, including its rural areas, to expedite project review, to ensure a prompt, effective response to problems arising with regard to permitting and regulatory functions, and to work closely with other liaisons to resolve interagency conflicts.

## ONLINE LICENSING AND PERMITTING

The State Technology Office (STO) maintains an online licensing and permitting Internet website. The website provides individuals and businesses with a central source of permitting information, as well as contact information for specific locations. State and local government links are added as they become available. The website is located at [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com) under [Business Licenses, Permits & Regulation](#).

## QUICK BUSINESS COUNTIES

- Encourages local governments to expedite and streamline permitting, adopt permitting best management practices and integrate local permitting process information into the statewide online licensing and permitting Internet website.
- Counties who adopt and implement permitting best management practices may be designated as QBCs by the STO. Once designated, the county is eligible for grant money to connect to the online licensing and permitting website. Up to \$50,000 in grant monies is available to purchase software, hardware or consulting services necessary to interface with the website. Grant monies are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- QBCs may receive delegation from OTTED to certify projects as eligible for expedited review and convene regional permit action teams for that purpose. In order to receive such delegation, the county must hold a public hearing explaining the expedited permitting process and agree to execute a MOA to participate in individual expedited permitting projects.

*Statutory References:* [Section 288.021, Florida Statutes](#)  
[Section 403.973, Florida Statutes](#)