



LAUDERBUILD PLAN ROOM Digital Signature Policy

The Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) is working toward full digital application submission and storage. This document outlines the Department's digital signature policy and provides instructions for accepting digital signatures.

FLORIDA STATUTES

The Department will accept digital signatures in accordance with Florida Statutes ss. 668.001-668.006. Please refer to the Florida Building Code (FBC), Chapter 1, Section 107 for more information regarding signed and sealed requirements.

DEFINITIONS

Digital Signature

A digital signature takes the concept of traditional paper-based signing and turns it into an electronic "fingerprint." This "fingerprint," or coded message, is unique to both the document and the signer and binds them together. Digital signatures ensure the authenticity of the signer. Any changes made to the document after it has been signed invalidates the signature, thereby protecting against signature forgery and information tampering. As such, digital signatures help sustain signer authenticity, accountability, data integrity and the non-repudiation of signed electronic documents and forms.

Electronic (Scanned) Signature

An electronic signature can be as basic as a typed name or a digitized image of a handwritten signature. Consequently, e-signatures are very problematic when it comes to maintaining integrity and security, as nothing prevents one individual from typing another individual's name. Due to this reality, an electronic signature that does not incorporate additional measures of security (the way digital signatures do, as described above) is considered an insecure way of signing documentation and therefore **will not be accepted for plan documents and surveys, except for "Survey with Zoning Affidavit"**.

Third-Party Verification

This process is a service purchased by the user. When the plans examiner opens the electronic document, the PDF management software will connect to the third-party verification database via the internet and authenticate the signature. If the document has been modified since it was digitally signed the verification process will invalidate the signature file. The document would need to be replaced with a new document that has not been altered.



Application Documents

Application documents other than professional drawings and surveys, which require a professional signature, may be signed using a Digital Signature in Adobe Acrobat (as described in the **Definitions** section). A Digital Signature can be created in Adobe by following the steps in the link here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/digital-ids.html>

The applicant must not alter any document signed with an encrypted signature, because any alteration will void the document signature.

City's Digital Approval

Applications requiring City approval, which do not include professional drawings, will be signed by City staff with a digital signature approval.

DOCUMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DRAWINGS SUBMITTAL STANDARDS

Professional Signatures - Digital Sign and Seal

Professional drawings, surveys, maps and other documents that require professional signatures must be submitted with a digital sign and seal, and the identity of the professional and the integrity of the document must be registered with an approved third-party Certification Authority and will be validated by the City of Fort Lauderdale. You cannot self-sign your own digital signature. Any alteration of the electronic document made after the document was digitally signed will void the signature. Professionals can obtain digital certificates from the following approved certification authorities.

Each authority will have specific instructions.

- **IdenTrust** – <https://www.identrust.com/>
- **Entrust** – <https://www.entrustdatacard.com/>
- **DigiCert** – <https://www.digicert.com/>
- **Global Sign** – <https://www.globalsign.com/en>

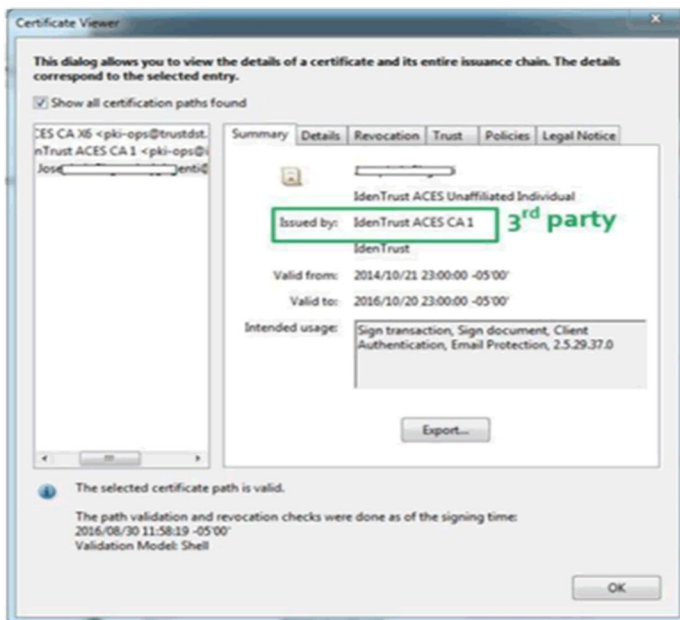


Third-Party Signature Verification

You cannot self-sign your own digital signature. The following image shows examples of digital signatures that have been verified and are correct or have been self-signed and are incorrect/invalid.



CORRECT – Certificate Authority Attached



INCORRECT/INVALID – Self Signed

