

TO: ALL BUILDING DIVISION PERSONNEL
FROM: DOUG WISE
BUILDING DIVISION DIRECTOR
PREPARED BY: BUILDING DIVISION
SUBJECT: PERMIT TECH AUDITING
PPM #: PB-O-139

ISSUE DATE
November 9, 2021

EFFECTIVE DATE
October 11, 2022

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for management and Permit Tech III's to audit the various actions performed in the Permit Center on permit applications to ensure consistency in processes and procedures that will result in timely and accurate permit approvals and denials.

UPDATES:

Future updates to this PPM are the responsibility of the Building Division Director, or the Deputy Building Official under the authority of the Director of the Building Division.

AUTHORITY:

Florida Statutes 553.80, 468.603. Palm Beach County Code of Ordinances Section 7-52

SCOPE:

To standardize procedures for application intake, sufficiency review, and processing. To improve quality of the services provided while enhancing customer experience.

DEFINITIONS:

Audit – For the purposes of this PPM means a review of the work product performed by Division staff by a Permit Technician III or supervisor for code adherence, clarity and accuracy of code/deficiency citations, and efficacy of work habits in order to identify areas for improvement.

BACKGROUND:

A Building Division Permitting Section Audit was conducted by the County Internal Auditor during 2018. The Audit concluded that improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Permitting Process were warranted and suggested that documentation and checklists could improve the process. However, in early 2020, the Building Division implemented an online application submittal,

document routing, and review process dramatically changing the pre-existing procedures. Substantially revised processes include electronic review actions for Permit Tech review, Impact Fees review, Application Tracking, Application Issuance, and processing receipt, routing, and review of corrections to existing applications and revisions to issued permits. All of these processes are now entirely electronic, except that intake of and scanning of paper submittals for those persons unable to submit electronically creates seamless review processes for staff and reviewing agencies. Since there are over 400 permit descriptions, and each description is an approximation, many projects may require adjustments to the agency routing to ensure all required approvals are obtained before the permit is fully reviewed and a permit issued.

POLICY:

This policy intends to establish and maintain effective internal controls and to ensure that all projects submitted to the Division are processed in compliance with all applicable statutory and local regulations. It also seeks to ensure the Division is meeting appropriate level of service goals and allocating resources effectively and efficiently to meet demands. The policy seeks to provide management reliable information that can be utilized to govern management's actions. Data collected can be reported and retained to show trends and the effects of actions taken. Permit Center Permit Technician IIIs and management staff will routinely audit the intake and sufficiency of permit application submittals approved and denied by staff, utilizing a statistically significant sample size. The results of the audits will allow supervisors to focus training as needed. Because there is no staff interaction, no fee sub-permits and Self-issued permits will be excluded from this audit process and addressed under a separate PPM to steer the development of customer guidance and the ePZB external portal interface based upon findings.

Based upon audit findings, the Permit Technician III (Auditor) will conduct formal training with the Intake/Sufficiency staff on a bi-weekly basis. The training will be comprised upon the Permit Application Type Checklist to ensure staff is knowledgeable on the required documents associated with the scope of work. This training will also ensure staff understand the associated documents that pertain to the application request, to recognize that the scope of work indicated is appropriate.

PROCEDURE:

Each day, the Building Division management and Building Permit Technician III's will randomly select a sample of permit applications from an average sample size determined by the number of permit applications submitted in the prior month from the ISS report (Permits by Application Type Monthly). The sample selected should equally represent each Permit Application Type size to ensure 95% confidence interval.

There are four primary types of audits specific to Intake/Sufficiency, Tracking, Permit Technician and Data Issuance that will ensure quality and consistency in the reviews and decisions on applications filed with the Division. Additional auditing of other services provided by Division staff will be addressed in separate PPMs.

Intake/Sufficiency – The auditor will ensure the application is sufficient and in accordance with the Permit Application Type Checklist, has the correct description code and the proposed scope of work

corresponds to the correct contractor's license, if determined at the time of submittal. The auditor will also confirm that a value and that all the required fields have been filled out.

Tracking – The auditor will ensure the application routing through various review and pre-issuance stages and confirm the related routing and assignment of the application in ePZB. Although, this audit is not captured in ePZB, it will be performed to ensure the quality and accuracy of permit applications routed to applicable review agencies or placed on hold pending corrections.

Building Permit Technician Review – The auditor will ensure the quality and accuracy of the review is consistent with all relevant codes, regulations and PPM's and that all required review documents have been included. The audit will ensure that comments are clear, accurate and informative to assist the applicant in responding to comments for permit approval. The auditor will also ensure that the scope of work relates to the permit documents and that any applicable fees have been added.

Data Issuance – The auditor will ensure that the final permit package includes all relevant watermarks and applicable approval stamps. The auditor will also confirm that the contractor license correctly corresponds to the scope of work. The auditor will also verify that Holds and Stop Issuance have been correctly placed and in accordance to the relevant procedure.



DOUG WISE
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Supersession History

1. PPM# PB-O-139, issued