

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - DIGITAL SIGNATURE GUIDE

WHEN IS A DIGITAL SIGNATURE REQUIRED?

1. The City of Bonita Springs Community Development department accepts the following permit applications electronically: Trade permits, dock and shoreline permits, open records requests, preapplication meetings, and zoning non-contravene letters requests.
2. In some circumstances, other documents may be submitted electronically on a case-by-case basis while the department is in the process of implementing electronic plan submittal and review for all Building permits and applicable Planning, Zoning, and Development Services permits.
3. Florida Statute states that engineering plans, specifications, reports, or other documents which must be signed, dated, and sealed in accordance with the provisions of Section 471.025, F.S., and Rule 61G15-23.001, F.A.C., may be signed digitally as provided herein by the professional engineer in responsible charge. A professional engineer utilizing a digital signature to electronically sign and seal engineering plans, specifications, reports, or other documents shall have their identity authenticated by a certification authority. The Community Development department will not accept self-signed certificates.
4. In addition to professional engineers, the department also requires electronically signed and sealed documents prepared by architects, landscape architects, surveyors, or similarly licensed professionals to have their digital signature and identity authenticated by a certification authority.

WHAT IS A DIGITAL SIGNATURE AND A DIGITAL CERTIFICATE?

1. **DIGITAL SIGNATURES** – Although sometimes used interchangeably with “electronic signature”, the term “digital signature” refers to an e-signature that is generated using a digital certificate issued by a trust service provider (TSP), such as a certificate authority (CA), after a thorough verification of your identity.¹
2. **DIGITAL CERTIFICATES** – A digital certificate is an electronic document issued by a Certificate Authority (CA), which validates the identity of the signer.¹
3. **CERTIFICATE AUTHORITY (CA)** – A certificate authority (CA) issues and maintains digital identities (IDs) in the form of certificates. Once a signer’s identity is confirmed, the CA issues the certificate-based digital ID, private PIN, and/or hardware security device (such as a USB token or smart card) that can be used to apply a certificate-based digital signature.¹


HOW DO I OBTAIN A DIGITAL CERTIFICATE FOR MY DIGITAL SIGNATURE?

1. A digital certificate can be purchased or licensed through a third party provider.
2. Below is a sample list of commonly used third party providers:
 - a. Digicert - <https://www.digicert.com/document-signing/>
 - b. Entrust - <https://www.entrust.com/document-signing-certificates/>
 - c. Globalsign – <https://shop.globalsign.com/en/document-signing>

¹ "Acrobat Sign Solutions digital signature FAQ", *Adobe Acrobat Sign*, <https://www.adobe.com/sign/digital-signatures.html#digital-signatures-faq>. Accessed 4 March 2022.

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HOW DO I REGISTER A DIGITAL ID AND CERTIFICATE ([Adobe Help System](#))?

1. In Acrobat, click the **Edit** menu and choose **Preferences > Signatures**. In Identities & Trusted Certificates, and click **More**.
2. Select **Digital IDs** on the left.
3. Click the **Add ID** button  .
4. Choose one of the following options:
 - a. **A File** - select this option if you obtained a digital ID as an electronic file. Follow the prompts to select the digital ID file, type your password, and add the digital ID to the list.
 - b. **A Roaming Digital ID Stored On A Server** - select this option to use a digital ID that's stored on a signing server. When prompted, type the server name and URL where the roaming ID is located.
 - c. **A Device Connected To This Computer** - select this option if you have a security token or hardware token connected to your computer.
5. Click **Next**, and follow the onscreen instructions to register your digital ID.
 - a. **Note:** Professional engineers, architects, and surveyors should refer to their respective organizations for guidelines and instructions on required text language.
 - a. For Configure Text, select the options that you want to appear in the signature. Distinguished Name shows the user attributes defined in your digital ID, including your name, organization, and country.
 - b. For Text Properties, specify the writing direction and type of digits used, and then click **OK**. See also [Enable right-to-left languages](#).
 - c. (Optional) If the dialog box includes the Additional Signature Information section, specify the reason for signing the document, the location, and your contact information. These options are available only if you set them as your preferences in the Creation and Appearance Preferences dialog box (Edit > Preferences > Signatures > Creation & Appearance > More).

HOW DO I ELECTRONICALLY SIGN A DOCUMENT WITH A DIGITAL ID?

1. Plug in the USB token containing the third party certificate.
2. In the Adobe Acrobat/Reader ribbon, select the Tools tab.
3. Locate the Certificates tool and click Open.
4. Click the Digitally Sign button from the Certificates toolbar, then click OK in the information dialog box, and draw a rectangle to place your signature in the PDF. Adobe Acrobat users will have the option to Certify with a Visible Signature. This option provides greater control over
5. In the Sign with a Digital ID window, select your Digital ID and click Continue.
6. Select an Appearance for the Digital Signature. By default, Adobe uses a Standard Text appearance. If you wish to customize the appearance, please see below.

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7. Enter the Digital ID PIN or Password and click the Sign button.
8. When prompted, enter a file name, and select a location to save the signed document.

HOW DO I CUSTOMIZE THE APPEARANCE OF MY DIGITAL SIGNATURE ([Adobe Help System](#))?

1. **Note:** professional engineers, architects, and surveyors should refer to their respective organizations for guidelines and instructions on creating a digital signature and seal.
2. (Optional) If you want to include an image of your handwritten signature in the certificate-based signature, scan your signature, and save it as an image file. Place the image in a document by itself, and convert the document to PDF.
3. Right-click the signature field, and select **Sign Document** or **Certify With Visible Signature**.
Note: You can also create an appearance using the Signature preferences: Edit > Preferences > Signatures (Windows) or Acrobat > Preferences > Signatures (Mac OS).
4. From the Appearance menu in the Sign dialog box, select **Create New Appearance**.
5. In the Configure Signature Appearance dialog box, type a name for the signature you're creating. When you sign, you select the signature by this name. Therefore, use a short, descriptive title.
6. For Configure Graphic, choose an option:
 - a. **No Graphic** - displays only the default icon and other information specified in the Configure Text section.
 - b. **Imported Graphic** - displays an image with your certificate-based signature. Select this option to include an image of your handwritten signature. To import the image file, click File, click Browse, and then select the image file.
 - c. **Name** - displays only the default signature icon and your name as it appears in your digital ID file.