

ePLANS

Digital

Signatures



City of Ormond Beach, Florida

Version 1 - September 1, 2016

Digital Seal and Signature Regulations

2015 Florida Statutes

Title XXXII - REGULATION OF PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS

Chapter 471 - ENGINEERING - SECTION 025 Seals

471.025 Seals.

- (1) The board shall prescribe, by rule, one or more forms of seal to be used by licensees. Each licensee shall obtain at least one seal in the form approved by rule of the board and may, in addition, register his or her seal electronically in accordance with ss.668.001-668.006. All final drawings, specifications, plans, reports, or documents prepared or issued by the licensee and being filed for public record and all final documents provided to the owner or the owner's representative shall be signed by the licensee, dated, and sealed with said seal. Such signature, date, and seal shall be evidence of the authenticity of that to which they are affixed. Drawings, specifications, plans, reports, final documents, or documents prepared or issued by a licensee may be transmitted electronically and may be signed by the licensee, dated, and sealed electronically with said seal in accordance with ss.668.001-668.006.

Chapter 668 - ELECTRONIC COMMERCE – PART 1 ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES (ss.668.001-668.006)

668.003 Definitions. - As used in this act:

- (1) **Certificate** means a computer-based record which:
 - (a) Identifies the certification authority.
 - (b) Identifies the subscriber.
 - (c) Contains the subscriber's public key.
 - (d) Is digitally signed by the certification authority.
- (2) **Certification authority** means a person who issues a certificate.
- (3) **Digital signature** means a type of electronic signature that transforms a message using an asymmetric cryptosystem such that a person having the initial message and the signer's public key can accurately determine:
 - (a) Whether the transformation was created using the private key that corresponds to the signer's public key.
 - (b) Whether the initial message has been altered since the transformation was made.

A "key pair" is a private key and its corresponding public key in an asymmetric cryptosystem, under which the public key verifies a digital signature the private key creates. An "asymmetric cryptosystem" is an algorithm or series of algorithms which provide a secure key pair.

- (4) **Electronic signature** means any letters, characters, or symbols, manifested by electronic or similar means, executed or adopted by a party with an intent to authenticate a writing. A writing is electronically signed if an electronic signature is logically associated with such writing.

Reference: <http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2015/471.025>

Reference(2): <http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2015/668.003>

Florida Administrative Code 61G15-23.003 - <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-00790>

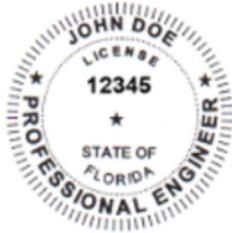
61G15-23.003 Procedures for Signing and Sealing Electronically Transmitted Plans, Specifications, Reports or Other Documents.

- (1) Engineering work which must be sealed under the provisions of Section 471.025, F.S., may be signed electronically or digitally as provided herein by the professional engineer in responsible charge. As used herein, the terms “certification authority,” “digital signature” and “electronic signature” shall have the meanings ascribed to them in Sections 668.003(2), (3) and (4), F.S. The affixing of a digital or electronic signature to engineering work as provided herein shall constitute the sealing of such work.
- (a) A scanned image of an original signature **shall not** be used in lieu of a digital or electronic signature.
- (b) The date that the electronic signature file was created or the digital signature was placed into the document must appear on the document in the same manner as date is required to be applied when a licensee uses the manual sealing procedure set out in Rule 61G15-23.002, F.A.C.
- (2) A professional engineer utilizing a digital signature to seal engineering work shall have their identity authenticated by a certification authority and shall assure that the digital signature is:
- (a) Unique to the person using it;
- (b) Capable of verification;
- (c) Under the sole control of the person using it;
- (d) Linked to a document in such a manner that the electronic signature is invalidated if any data in the document is changed.

Although the Florida Statutes cover electronic plan submittals and digital signatures, the City of Ormond Beach has broad home rule authority under Article VIII, Section 2 of the Florida Constitution and Chapter 166, Florida Statutes to regulate in many areas. Sections 166.222, 553.791 and 553.80 Florida Statutes specifically authorizes municipalities to provide a schedule of reasonable inspection fees in order to defer the costs of inspection and enforcement of building codes. In particular, section 553.80(7(a) as it relates to the enforcement by local governments of the building codes recognizes that the term enforcement includes the review of building plans, inspections, permit processing, etc. So, the City has broad home rule powers to establish an ePlans system as a means of deferring the costs associated with the submittal and review of plans, conducting inspections, etc.

The Digital Seal and Signature

An Engineer, Architect, and Surveyor's Digital Signature must be in compliance with the latest State Statute requirements [471.025](#) & [Florida Administrative Code 61G15-23.003](#). The digital signature will include a Certificate Authority and the NEW additional two sentences added by FBPE (*see below*).



This item has been electronically signed and sealed by JOHN DOE using a Digital Signature and Date. Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.

JOHN DOE
2016.07.1
1 10:44:09
-04'00'

This is a sample of what a digital signature might look like. Each company may design it a little differently.

A Digital Signature

The online equivalent of a notarized signature, in this case the Certificate Authority (CA), serves as the notary in terms of verifying your identity while a trusted timestamp verifies the date and time the signature was applied. Digital signatures allow users to keep their entire workflow online. Individuals can certify and sign documents as needed right from the comfort of their computers.

A Digital Signature is made up of several components:

1. **Adobe Acrobat Standard/Pro or Reader DC** – Most Digital Signatures are built using the Adobe platform. Step one creates the digital certificate. Step two involves scanning a professional's seal into a jpeg or pdf file on the computer hard drive. When signing, Adobe will integrate it with the digital certificate. Step three replaces the original digital certificate with the Certificate Authority's (CA) digital certificate file, token key or serial number in the digital ID as verification of the professional Engineer's identity.
2. **Digital Certificate** - a way of proving your identity in online transactions and is unique to you when signing a document. The typical digital certificate includes your full name, email address and your professional qualifications for signing.
3. **Certificate Authority (CA)** - a third party verification entity that certifies your identity with a digital certificate, software or a Token Key on a Smart Card or USB drive. Some companies require background checks or other various ways to verify your identity. The verification process can take up to two weeks.
4. **Secure Hash** - when the Engineer clicks "sign" in Adobe Acrobat, a unique digital fingerprint (called a hash) of the document is created using a mathematical algorithm. This hash is specific to this particular document; even the slightest change would result in breaking the hash. The hash is encrypted using the Engineer's private key from the digital certificate. The encrypted hash and public key are combined into a digital signature, which is applied to the document for security.
5. **Professional's Seal** - scan a wet stamp of the professional's seal into a 2" square jpeg or pdf file and save on the computer hard drive. **NEW! Added Language (two sentences)** (1) This item has been electronically signed and sealed by [LICENSEE NAME] using a Digital Signature and date. (2) Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.
 - a. Option One – add these two sentences next to your professional seal and save as the PE Seal graphic about 2" h x 4.5" w. It will then be integrated with your digital certificate.
 - b. Option Two – add these two sentences anywhere on each drawing or legal document page.

How does it Work?

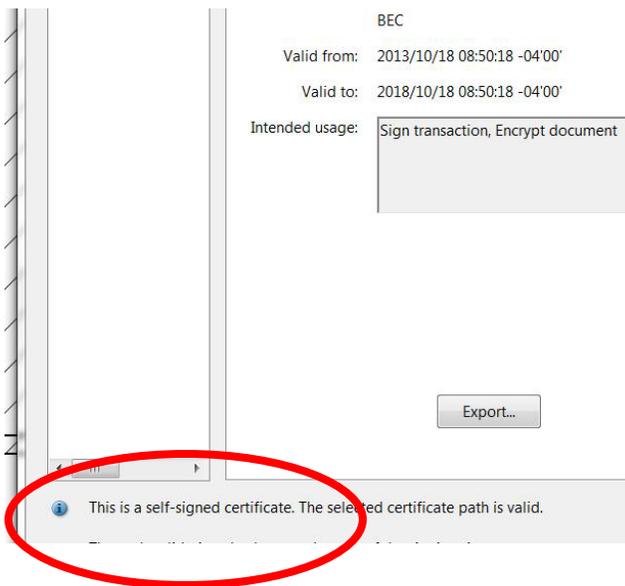
When you apply a digital signature on a drawing, a cryptographic operation binds the digital certificate and the data being signed such as a PDF or other drawing file into one unique descriptor. Any change to the drawing will remove your unique descriptor or break the hash and will be indicated when opened in Adobe, stating the Signature is Invalid—“This Document has been modified”.

Authentication – since a third-party validated certificate is used to apply the signature, recipients can easily verify the validity of the drawing. A right click on the digital signature displays a pop up screen to validate the Public Key, Summary, Certificate Authority, Revocation, Trust, Date/Time, Signature Properties and Policies. When the drawing is opened in Adobe it will automatically try to verify the signature.

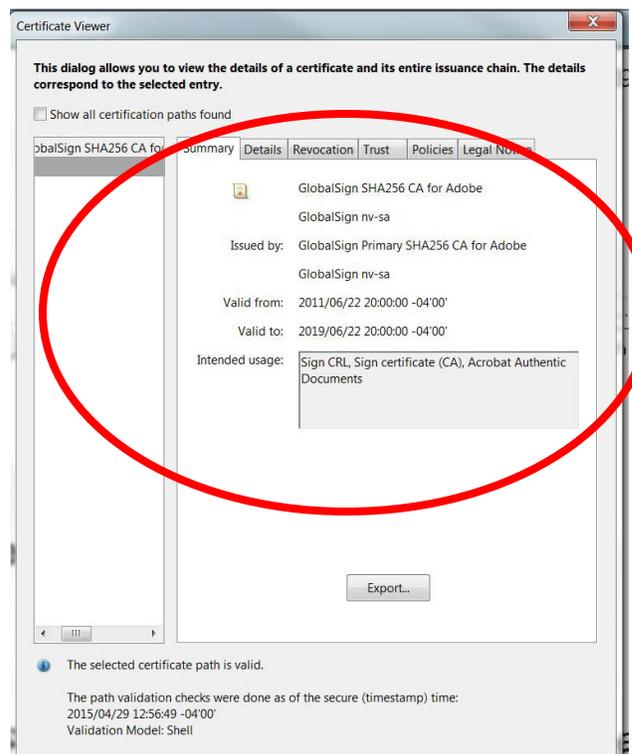
Data integrity – during the signature verification, Adobe checks to see if the data in the document has been changed since the signature was applied. Even the slightest change to the original document results a fail.

You can no longer Self-Sign your own Digital Signature.

The new requirement involves having your identity, digital seal and signature validated by a 3rd party Certificate Authority.



Wrong—Self Signed



Correct—Certificate Authority Attached