

PRECONSTRUCTION DESIGN MEMORANDUM

MEMO: PCDM-04

DATE: June 5, 2025

SUBJECT: Digital Signatures for Licensed Professional Engineers, Surveyors, Architects, and Landscape Architects for Electronic Plan Submittals

RE: SCDOT Digital Signatures Manual, May 2024 (attached)
SC Code of Laws – Title 26 – Chapter 6
SC Code of Laws – Title 30 – Chapter 6
SCLLR Laws, Regulations, and Board Interpretation Section 40-22-270

Design documents are now routinely submitted, reviewed, and stored exclusively in electronic form, allowing them to be easily reproduced and modified. The use of digital signatures provides improved security and convenience for licensed professionals needing to certify their work. Digital signatures allow viewers to confirm that the signature is valid, not copied or forged, and that no changes have been made to an electronic document since it was signed. Digital signatures also help prevent visual quality losses from scanning, eliminate paper waste, and speed up the process of revising and recertifying plans.

In accordance with South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (SCDLLR), SCDOT recognizes that a digital signature satisfies a law requiring a seal and signature for licensed professionals, such as engineers, surveyors, architects, and landscape architects. Below is a summary of the standards concerning the use of digital signatures:

- Computer generated seals, signatures, and dates are acceptable to sign and seal the electronic files for design drawings, final construction plans, specifications, plats, documents, and reports, provided that a digital certificate is embedded in the electronic files in accordance with the requirements of SCDLLR.
- The digital certificate must be capable of free independent verification from a certification authority and shall permit a valid exchange of electronic files in a compatible manner. Verification must be possible independent of the continued future operation of that authority; all files and programs necessary for this purpose shall be provided and stored with the signed documents.
- All engineer plan submittals should be in electronic form utilizing the Adobe PDF as the file format.
- Computer generated seals shall be identical in size, design, and content with the approved impression seals.
- Computer generated signature and date shall be affixed under or across the face and beyond the circumference of the seal. The licensee's license number, name, signature, and date shall be legible.



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- Plan submittals generated internally by SCDOT employees should utilize self-signed digital IDs using the Adobe Acrobat software.
- Plan submittals generated by consultants are required to send the public certificate file (*.cer) and files that are digitally signed if a self-signed digital ID was used in the digital signing process. Consultants may elect to use 3rd party public Certificate Authority in accordance to their firm's internal policies and practices.
- SCDOT reserves the right to request one or more paper copies of any electronic document that is submitted as part of the review or approval process.

Requirements for Signing and Sealing based on Document Type

- **Final Construction Plans, Design Drawings, and Plats** prepared by or under the responsible charge of a licensee(s) shall consist of separate electronic files for each sheet and carry the required seal(s), date(s), signature(s), and digital signature certificate(s) on each sheet. Where the engineering or surveying practice is provided through a firm, such documents shall also carry the Certificate of Authorization seal.
- **Specifications, Reports, and Other Similar Documents** where more than one page is bound together in one volume, the licensee(s) or permit holder(s) may digitally seal, date, and sign only the Title Sheet, Table of Contents Sheet, or Index Sheet if the signed sheet clearly identifies all of the other sheets comprising the bound volume with responsibility clearly delineated.

This memorandum applies to and authorizes the submittal of electronic documents signed using digital signatures.



George R. Bedenbaugh, Jr., P.E.
Director-Office of Engineering Support

June 5, 2025
Effective Date

Attachment

ec:

John Boylston, Chief Engineer of Project Delivery
Julie Barker, Director of Preconstruction
Clay Richter, Director of Construction
Brent Dillon, Director of Traffic Engineering
Jeff Terry, Director of Maintenance
Mike Barbee, Director of Rights of Way
Chris Gaskins, Director of Alternative Delivery

Casey Lucas, RP Engineer – Lowcountry
Stacey Johnson, RP Engineer – Pee Dee
Adam Humphries, RP Engineer – Midlands
Berry Mattox, RP Engineer – Upstate
Bert Shumpert, Surveys Manager
Chris Lacy, Director of Bridge Management
Rickele Gennie, FHWA

History: Issued on November 2, 2015

¹First Revision on October 19, 2016

²Second Revision on June 5, 2025