

South Carolina Department of Transportation

Engineering Directive

Directive Number: ED-66 **Effective:** September 11, 2025

Subject: Confidentiality of the Engineer's Estimate

References: FHWA 23 CFR § 635.100
SC Code of Laws § 11-35-410

Purpose: To establish policy and procedures for maintaining the confidentiality of the Engineer's Estimate

Primary Department: Office of Engineering Support

This directive establishes the policy for maintaining the confidentiality of the Engineer's Estimate used for bidding highway and bridge construction projects administered by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). The protection of this information is essential to preserving the integrity and competitiveness of the bidding process.

Policy:

The Engineer's Estimate is confidential and is not to be released outside the Department at any time, including after contract award. Maintaining the confidentiality of this information is critical to ensuring fair competition, preventing collusion, and safeguarding public funds.

Procedures:

1. System-Based Access Controls

SCDOT shall utilize a centralized digital platform with role-based access control to manage Engineer's Estimate data. Access will be governed by workflow-based permissions, ensuring that individuals are granted access only when fulfilling a designated role on the project.

- Access shall be restricted to SCDOT staff directly involved in the preparation, review, or approval of the estimate.
- Access rights will be granted based on predefined project workflows and roles. These rights will be automatically revoked once the user's involvement concludes.
- All users must comply with the latest version of the state's security standards (DIS-200) and execute a Confidentiality Agreement for the Engineer's Estimates prior to being granted access.

2. Handling and Storage

- All Engineer's Estimate documents must be stored in the approved secure digital platform with user authentication and access logging.
- Printed copies, when necessary, must be clearly labeled as **"CONFIDENTIAL – DO NOT DUPLICATE OR DISTRIBUTE"** and must be unattainable when not in use.
- Do not disclose, reproduce, transmit, or distribute the estimate or any part thereof to unauthorized individuals or entities.

3. Prohibition of Disclosure

- Engineer's Estimates shall not be authorized for disclosure, in whole or in part, with any bidder, contractor, member of the public, or external entity.
- These prohibitions, as in storage, printing, and disclosing, apply at all stages of project development, including post-letting and post award.

4. Audit and Oversight

- The Office of Engineering Support and the Office of Contracts Administration shall oversee platform access permissions and maintain the official list of users with Engineer's Estimate access.
- A quarterly audit shall be conducted to verify role alignment and remove expired or unnecessary access.

5. Reporting Violations

- Any suspected or confirmed unauthorized access, disclosure, or mishandling of the Engineer's Estimate must be reported to the Office of Engineering Support. The Director of Engineering Support will notify the Chief Engineer for Project Delivery, the Office of the Chief Counsel and the Office of the Chief Internal Auditor.
- Violations may result in disciplinary action, contract termination, or legal consequences.

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History: Issued on September 11, 2025