



Permit Submittal, Processing, Reviewing and Approving Procedures Effective 10/1/2021

Notice: Prior to submitting a building permit, you are now required to obtain development permit compliance review (DPCR) approval. This policy applies for all building permits except for a/c change outs, like for like water heater replacements, residential water re-piping, and electrical service changeouts. Exceptions cannot be made by staff. Please continue reading this article for more information.

Previously, the City of Fort Pierce Building Department has acted as the permitting hub for all review agencies involved in the development permit and building permit process. This uncommon process was so efficient that most customers didn't even realize that two different processes were happening simultaneously.

However, due to changes in State law, it has become necessary to process permits differently. While you will still continue to interact and receive exceptional customer service from the permitting staff you are accustomed to, please take note of the following terms and changes effective October 1, 2021:

Development permit compliance review (DPCR) approval is an official action of the local government allowing the development of land. However, this does not include building permits pursuant to 125.022(4), Florida Statutes. DPCR agencies include, but are not limited to Planning, Zoning, Engineering, Solid Waste, Flood, Landscaping and the Fort Pierce Utilities Authority.

A *building permit* is authorization granted by the City's Building Official to perform construction following the review and approval of technical code requirements of the Florida Building Code, National Electric Code, Florida Fire Prevention Code and other referenced standards. Building permit review agencies include the Building Department and the St. Lucie County Fire District.

What does this mean to me?

New laws going into effect on October 1, 2021, require *building permits* to be reviewed within specified times and for applicants to respond to review comments within specified times. However, these time restraints only apply to *building permits* and do not apply to *DPCR*. In order to remain compliant with these timeframes, *DPCR* will now be processed independently from *building permits*. Prior to obtaining most *building permits*, you must now undergo and receive *DPCR* review and approval.

Will this cost more?

No, it will not cost more. However, routing fees that were previously collected with the *building permit* must now be collected with the *DPCR*.

Will this take longer?

It may. However, please be assured that the City of Fort Pierce is dedicated to providing exceptional customer service and will continue to strive to process *DPCR* and *building permits* as quickly as possible.

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How do I apply for DPCR?

You may submit the *DPCR* application form, found on our website, along with required plans and additional information to the Building Department. You may submit plans in-person or online using the online submittal instructions. Once received, the Building Department will assign a *DPCR* tracking number and will route the application and plans to the required *DPCR* review agencies.

During the review you will interact directly with the review agencies regarding the status of your review. However, all revisions, re-submittals or additional information will be submitted to the Building Department. Once you have received all *DPCR* approvals, you will be provided with a final *DPCR* approval letter and will be ready to submit your *building permit*.

Please note: the exact plans that were submitted for DPCR will be used for the building permit. If there are any changes to the plans after the DPCR approval, they must undergo DPCR review again before the building permit may be submitted or revised if the application has already been made.

How do I apply for a building permit?

You may continue to submit the *building permit* application form, found on our website, along with the DPCR final approval letter, all review agency approval letters, the same set of plans, drawings and attachments that were approved in the DPCR process, and the Affidavit of Plan Review Compliance form to the Building Department. You may submit plans in-person or online using the online submittal instructions. Payment of review fees must be made at the time of permit application before any further action is taken on your application.

How is the permit processed, reviewed, and approved?

For *building permits*, except as noted in the paragraphs below, once payment is received, the building department will review the application for completeness within 10 calendar days of payment. Technical code compliance review may or may not be reviewed within the first 10 calendar days. If the application is deemed incomplete or deficient, the applicant will be notified and the application will either be rejected or accepted with conditions, which must be signed by the applicant. Further processing of the application will not take place until revisions have been submitted, and/or the conditions have been signed. Once the application is deemed complete, the building department will review the permit for technical code compliance within 45 calendar days of application completeness and will notify the applicant if additional information is required. The building department will approve, approve with condition(s), or deny the permit within 120 calendar days after receiving a completed application. The 120-day period will be stalled from the time the applicant is notified of rejection or additional information being required and the time of revision submittal and payment. This process will continue to repeat itself until the *building permit* has been approved and is ready for issuance.

For *building permits* that require review by the St. Lucie County Fire District (SLCFD), your plans will be routed by the Building Department. SLCFD Fees shall be paid directly to the SLCFD within 5 calendar days. The times specified in the paragraph above apply. If the Building Department does not receive confirmation that the SLCFD fees have been paid and SLCFD application requirements have been met within 10 calendar days from the date of submittal at the Building Department, the application will be deemed incomplete and will be denied. No further action will be taken on your application until these requirements have been satisfied. This policy does not apply to Fire Alarm, Fire Sprinkler, Fire Suppression and tent permits. These permits are approved by the SLCFD first. Once approved, the approved stamped set of plans are then submitted to the Building Department for a building permit application. Tent permits are required to have *DPCR* approval prior to *building permit* application. The timelines and procedures in the paragraph above apply.

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For new single-family residential dwelling permits, once payment is received, the Building Department will issue or reject the permit within 30 business days from payment. If rejected, the applicant will be provided with two options.

Option 1) The applicant shall submit *building permit* revisions to the building department within 10 business days after receiving the rejection with the following outcomes: (a) If *building permit* revisions are not submitted within 10 business days, the application will be rejected, the *building permit* will be voided and no refunds will be provided. Any revisions submitted after 10 business days will be treated as a new permit submittal; new plans, new applications and fees for new applications will apply. Or (b) If *building permit* revisions are submitted within 10 business days, the revisions will be reviewed and approved by the building department within 10 business days from receipt. If rejected, the cycle stated above repeats. Please note: Prior to submitting *building permit* revisions to the building department within the 10 business days specified above, revisions must first be submitted, reviewed and approved by DPCR review agencies. This cannot be done simultaneously. This provides little time for completion and you are encouraged to consider option two.

Option 2) At the time of rejection, the applicant will be offered an extension agreement which will provide the applicant 30 business days or 60 business days to respond to the rejection with revisions. The agreement will also provide the building department with the same amount of time (30 or 60 business days) to review the revision with the following outcomes: (a) If revisions are approved, the permit will be issued within the 30 or 60 business days, as specified, from the date the revisions were paid. Or (b) If revisions are rejected, the cycle stated above repeats until the *building permit* has been approved and is ready for issuance.

Once the permit has been approved, all remaining fees have been paid, all application conditions have been satisfied and all permit conditions have been signed, the building permit will be issued to the applicant in the same manner in which it was received.

Why did the permitting process have to change?

The new laws also impose penalties for building departments that are non-compliant with review timelines. Since building permit revenue cannot, by law, be used in any other manner than enforcing the Florida Building Code, the Building Department cannot be responsible for delays caused by other review agencies involved in DPCR and remain compliant with other relevant laws.

Who can I talk to about this?

Your State legislators. Although each City and County may process permits differently, the laws have changed on a statewide level. Our processes have changed to ensure compliance with State law.

The Building Department thanks you for your patience and cooperation during this transition. Please feel free to contact the Building Department directly with any additional questions you may have. The Building Department may be reached at (772)467-3718.

Revised 9/29/2021