

## Procedure for Private Providers (Per §553.791, Florida Statutes)

Florida Statute §553.791 allows property owners (or contractors with owner authorization) to hire qualified **private providers** (licensed architects, engineers, or certain building code inspectors) to perform **plans review**, **required building inspections**, or both, as an alternative to the local building department. This process accelerates permitting and construction while maintaining compliance with the Florida Building Code (FBC). The local building official retains oversight authority, including the right to audit private provider work (limited to no more than 4 audits per provider/firm per year unless a public safety threat exists).

### Step-by-Step Procedure for Owners/Contractors Using a Private Provider

#### 1. Select a Qualified Private Provider

- The private provider must be licensed under Ch. 471 (engineer), Ch. 481 (architect), or (for limited residential work) hold a standard inspector certificate under Ch. 468 Part XII.
- Duly Authorized Representatives (DARs) performing work must be employees of the firm and properly licensed in the relevant disciplines.
- Enter into a written contract with the private provider/firm outlining the scope of services (plans review, inspections, or both).

#### 2. Submit Notice to the Local Building Official

- At the time of permit application (or no later than 2 p.m. local time one business day before the first scheduled inspection), submit a **Notice to Building Official (NTBO)** using the standardized form.
- The notice must include:
  - Description of services (plans review and/or inspections).
  - Name, firm, address, and license numbers of the private provider and all DARs.
  - **Owner acknowledgment** and indemnification statement (holding the local government harmless).
- Required documentation: proof of insurance, licenses, etc for all license holders providing services on this project.

#### 3. Plan Review (If Selected)

- Private provider reviews plans for FBC compliance and affixes a signed/sealed affidavit to the plans stating compliance. Plans must be stamped on each page submitted verifying review.
- Submit plans + affidavit with the permit application.
- Local building department issues the permit faster within 5 business days from the date of receipt of the completed application, contractor registration, and completed private provider documentation submittal but still checks for zoning, fire, and non-FBC items. Reviews by the above listed departments are not included in the 5 business day issuance period.

#### 4. Scheduling and Performing Inspections

- Provide advance notice of inspections to the building official 4 p.m. of the day prior to the inspection to the building official.

- Private provider/DAR performs all mandatory FBC inspections (e.g., footing, slab, framing, rough-in, insulation, final). Virtual/remote inspections are allowed in most cases.
  - Record results (pass/fail) and note any deficiencies on-site.
  - Submit inspection reports and logs to the local building department **within 2 business days** of each inspection.
5. **Certificate of Compliance & Closeout**
- After all inspections, the private provider submits a signed/sealed **Certificate of Compliance** (under oath) confirming the work complies with approved plans and the FBC.
  - Local building department may issue the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) based on this (subject to any audits).
6. **Changes or Issues**
- Notify the building official within 1 business day of any change in private provider, DARs, or scope.
  - If deficiencies found during a municipal audit must be corrected by the private provider at no cost to the owner.

### **Permit Fee Reduction When Using Private Providers**

Florida Statute §553.791(2)(b) **requires** local governments to reduce the permit fee by the amount of cost savings they realize from not performing the services themselves. The City of Sebring provides the following reductions:

Plan review and inspections: 20%.

Plan inspection only: 10%.

This reduction is made only for the building permit specific elements of the permit and does not affect environmental, flood, fire, planning and zoning, site development, utilities, or any other secondary or tertiary activity fees associated with construction.