



2026

SPECIFICATIONS HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1-1 GENERAL

This Handbook provides guidance to the District Specifications Office, District Maintenance Office, and design team (including Department and consultant Engineers of Record) in preparing a Specifications Package and describes their various components. Some guidance in this Handbook is written specifically for construction contracts with design phase submittals and may not apply to the maintenance specification package preparation. This Handbook shall be used in conjunction with Specifications Package Preparation Procedure Topic Number 630-010-005.

1-2 QUALITY CONTROL PLAN

Each District must have written procedures to ensure all Specifications Packages and Revised Specifications Packages are prepared at the highest level of quality standards.

Consultants preparing Specifications Packages for the Department are required to prepare a Quality Control Plan that complies with the guidelines in this Handbook.

SECTION 2 – SPECIFICATIONS PACKAGE

2-1 GENERAL

The process for preparing a Specifications Package is a progression of identifying, comparing, resolving, and compiling. Two reviewers - an initial reviewer and final reviewer - independently review the project plans and files to determine the applicable Supplemental Specifications and Special Provisions listed in the Workbook, as well as the need for a Developmental Specification, Technical Special Provision (TSP), or Modified Special Provision (MSP). Then, the two reviewers compare the results of their review and resolve any discrepancies. After all issues are addressed, the Specifications Package is compiled, reviewed, and signed and sealed by the Engineer of Record (EOR). Each TSP is individually signed and sealed by the design Engineer responsible for its technical content and included as an attachment to the Contract Documents. The titles for each TSP must be listed on the TSP Header Page after the Specifications Package is merged.

2-2 SPECIFICATIONS PACKAGE FILE

Create a file to maintain the individual documents and correspondence that will be used to prepare the Specifications Package, Revised Specifications Packages, and individually signed and sealed TSPs.

2-3 PRE-CHECK

The designer/EOR should coordinate with the District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office to review the project's plans and files, along with the applicable implemented Specifications early in the design development process. This is necessary for determining if the FDOT Standard Specifications, Special Provisions, and Supplemental Specifications address the needs of the project, or if a Modified Special Provision, Developmental Specification, or Technical Special Provision is needed. The

designer/EOR should run the Project Edit Report from Web Gate reports at Phase II or as early as possible in the design development process to identify the need for pay item driven specification/plans requirements. Below is a key for the pay item flags that appear on the Project Edit Report.

A= Approvals needed

B= BOE guidance

D= Developmental Spec

E= Estimates Use Only

G= Generic Item

T= Technical Special Provision

M= Maintenance use only

P= Plan Details

R= Permit

S= Modified Special Provision

(See the Basis of Estimates Manual for additional information)

2-4 INITIAL REVIEW

The initial reviewer is responsible for verifying that the plans and Specifications Package files contain all necessary information to prepare a complete Specifications Package.

Information and tasks include but are not limited to:

1. Permit notifications from the District Office responsible for permit coordination,
2. Utility/Railroad Agreements or memos from the District Utility and Rail Offices,
3. Contract time from the District Construction Office,
4. Special limitations of operation from the District Construction Office,
5. The need for Modified Special Provisions (MSPs),
6. The need for Developmental Specifications,
7. The need for Technical Special Provisions (TSPs),
8. Complete Sole-Source Approvals, if required. Include the Sole-Source Justification with the MSP request when applicable.

Review the Plans and/or other contract documents, Specifications Package, and Workbook to confirm that all proposed work is covered by an approved Specification, all issues have been addressed, and there are no conflicts between the plans and Specifications.

Identify the Specifications to be included in the Specifications Package based on the project requirements and associated usage notes. Insert information for Special Provisions in Specs on the Web, as needed.

Identify any non-standard or sole source materials specified in the materials articles of a TSP or MSP. Coordinate with the Product Evaluation Office to verify that the products are available on the Approved Products List (APL).

2-5 INTERMEDIATE REVIEW

For construction contracts, initiate the review process for all MSPs, TSPs, and Developmental Specifications, as needed. This review usually begins by phase III or 90%, but there may be some cases such as TSPs related to Utility Work by Highway Contractor (UWHC) Agreements that are identified later in the project development.

2-6 FINAL REVIEW

The final reviewer will independently perform the tasks of the Initial Review. The initial reviewer and final reviewer will compare their results, resolve any discrepancies or outstanding issues, and confirm the accuracy of all information. The Specifications Package will then be compiled using the Specs on the Web application. By either the initial reviewer, or Engineer of Record (EOR). The EOR holds ultimate responsibility for the completed Specifications Package.

2-7 QUALITY CONTROL (QC) REVIEW

The District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office will review the Specifications Package in accordance with the QC Plan to ensure all applicable Specifications are included, inserted information is accurately entered, and the package is complete. Supplemental Specifications or Special Provisions in the Specifications Package compiled directly from the implemented Workbook, without modification, will not require a review by the State Specifications Office.

2-8 SIGNING AND SEALING

The EOR is responsible for reviewing, signing and sealing, and submitting the Specifications Package to the appropriate Department office. Rule 61G15-23.004, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) outlines two acceptable methods for digitally sealing electronically transmitted engineering documents. Specs on the Web, and the sample TSP Cover Sheet included in this handbook are formatted to use a digitally created seal. If the EOR chooses not to use a digitally created seal, the accompanying signature language must be revised by the EOR to comply with the Rule.

2-9 DISTRICT QUALITY CONTROL CHECK

The District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office will review the Specifications Package for completeness and accuracy in accordance with the District QC Plan prior to the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) submittal to the State Specifications Office or the District Contracts Office. Only maintenance contracts that are federally funded (Class 1) are required to provide the PS&E submittal.

2-10 REVISED SPECIFICATIONS PACKAGE

Prepare a Revised Specifications Package when revisions are needed to either the original Specifications Package or a previously submitted Revised Specifications Package after it has been accepted by the State Specifications Office or the District Contracts Office. The Revised Specifications Package must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines in this Handbook and must include the following:

1. In the first paragraph of the Supplemental Specifications Cover Page, include the digital signature date of the original Specifications Package being revised.
2. Ensure the last page of the Revised Specifications Package is included and states “This Completes This Revised Specifications Package.”

SECTION 3 – MODIFIED SPECIAL PROVISIONS

3-1 GENERAL

Identify the need for an MSP as early as possible in the development of the project. Use an MSP when an implemented Specification does not fully address the specific needs of a project. Coordinate with the District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office to modify the Specification as needed. Use the appropriate Word file corresponding to the Fiscal Year in which the project is scheduled to let. The development of the MSP should proceed in parallel with the development of the project Plans. Submit the proposed modification to the District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office for their review and approval. Do not use plan notes to modify an implemented Specification.

Once reviewed by the District, the MSP will be submitted to the State Specifications Office. Additional review and coordination with the State Construction Office (SCO), State Office of Maintenance (OOM), Office of General Counsel, and relevant Central Office technical experts will be conducted as needed. The State Specifications Engineer holds the final approval for all project specific MSPs.

3-2 DEVELOPMENT AND FORMAT

In some cases, the Standard Specifications must be modified to meet the specific needs of a project. All MSPs are project specific and must be supported by a valid justification.

The following guidelines are required during the development of a Modified Special Provision (MSP):

1. Provide additional information when requesting an MSP using the Modified Special Provision Approval Form.
2. Include the Specification Section header, Revision Date, and Lead in Sentence.
3. Use Track Changes when modifying or adding to an existing Standard Specification or Special Provision, in accordance with Specification Style Guide.
4. Once approved, ensure all Track Changes are accepted before inserting the final version into the Specifications Package.
5. All MSPs must be signed and sealed by the Engineer of Record after receiving approval from the State Specification Engineer.

The Style Guide for Specifications and Specifications Format Template are available on the State Specifications Office website at the following URL:

https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/specifications/resources/handbooks-and-manuals/style-guide-for-specifications.pdf?sfvrsn=b108e109_6

The format and style of a MSP should follow that of the Standard Specifications. MSPs must be prepared using AASHTO format in accordance with Procedure Topic No. 630-

010-001, Specification Development.

If an MSP modifies material requirements, products currently listed on the APL are not automatically considered approved under the revised specification. Contact the Product Evaluation Office at Product.Evaluation@dot.state.fl.us for assistance.

3-3 PROCESS REVIEW

To request a modification to a Standard Specification or Special Provision follow these steps:

1. Draft a Modified Special Provision Approval Request and redline proposed Specification revision.
2. Submit the proposed MSP to District Specification Engineer or District Maintenance Engineer for initial review.
3. The District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office will submit the proposed MSP to the State Specifications Engineer for Central Office Review.
4. The State Specifications Office will forward to the State Construction Office (SCO) or Office of Maintenance (OOM), Office of General Counsel and the appropriate Central Office technical experts for review.
5. If comments are provided during the review, the MSP will be returned to District Specification Office for response and revision.
6. The State Specifications Engineer is responsible for the final approval or denial of project specific MSPs.

Follow these guidelines when inserting an MSP in a Specifications Package:

1. Manually insert the MSPs in numerical order, including Section Header, Revision Date, and Lead in Sentence.
2. Update the Table of Contents to reflect the inclusion of the MSP.

3-4 BLANKET MODIFIED SPECIAL PROVISIONS

A Blanket MSP is a modification to a Standard Specification or Special Provision that is pre-approved for specific district use. All new Blanket MSPs or revisions to existing Blanket MSPs must be submitted to the State Specifications Engineer for approval no later than two weeks after the eBook is published on November 1st. For maintenance projects, Blanket MSPs must be submitted by the second Friday in December.

SECTION 4 – DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIFICATIONS

4-1 GENERAL

Identify the need for a Developmental Specification as early as possible in the design development of the project and coordinate with the District Specifications Office. A Developmental Specification may be available when the Department wants to try a new process, procedure, or material on a construction or maintenance project or permit. The Developmental Specification Monitor holds the final approval for all project specific usage request.

For Construction Push Button and Maintenance Work Document contracts, submit a

preliminary request to use a Developmental Specification on the project for inclusion in the bid documents.

4-2 REQUEST PROCESS

The District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office will submit a request to use a Developmental Specification to the State Specifications Office using SharePoint: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/xWL99FjKQk>. The Developmental Specification Monitor will coordinate with the District Specifications Office to finalize requests.

When a project-specific modification is needed to a Developmental Specification, download the appropriate Developmental Specification's Word file to make track change revisions. Submit the modification as an MSP in accordance with Section 3-3.

SECTION 5 – TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISIONS

5-1 GENERAL

Identify the need for a TSP as early as possible in the design development of the project . In certain cases, such as those involving UWHC Agreements – it may not be feasible to meet this requirement. The development of a TSP should progress in parallel with the development of the project Plans. Use a TSP if an implemented Division II or III Specification is not applicable to the type of work. Avoid including plan notes that duplicate or conflict with the specifications.

5-2 DEVELOPMENT AND FORMAT

A TSP must align with the Plans, Specifications, and other Contract Documents without creating any conflicts. Each TSP must clearly describe the work to be performed, specify material requirements, describe the construction or installation requirements, and state the method of measurement and basis of payment. Since all TSPs are project specific, any previously used TSPs should be thoroughly reviewed and revised in detail before use.

The Style Guide for Specifications, TSP Example, and TSP Header Page Template are available on the State Specifications Office website at the following URL:
<https://www.fdot.gov/specifications/specifications-guidance>.

Follow these guidelines when developing and formatting TSPs:

1. Provide a signed and sealed cover sheet for each TSP. Do not include company logos or headings.
2. Prefix the Section, article, or subarticle with a "T". Use the Basis of Estimates pay item number(s) to determine the "T" number. If multiple pay items are listed, select the primary pay item being used. Include the Method of Measurement and Basis of Payment sections in each TSP, even when using lump sum pay items or on lump sum projects. Coordinate with the Pay Item Group at co.fdotpayitems@dot.state.fl.us to request the appropriate pay item(s) or create a new pay item number in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Basis of Estimates Manual.
3. Include a table of contents for TSPs exceeding 15 pages. A table of contents is also recommended for TSPs over 10 pages. Number all pages consecutively, beginning

with the signed and sealed Header Page as page 1 of x. Do not use page numbering such as "10 A."

4. If definitions are necessary, include them at the beginning of the TSP and clearly state that they apply only to the TSP — not to any other Contract Documents. Review the definitions in Article 1-3 of the Standard Specifications before including any definitions in the TSP.

5. Use TSPs to address aspects of the work not covered by existing Specifications. Do not use TSPs to override or modify implemented Specifications.

6. Refer to the FDOT Standard Specifications, Supplemental Specifications, or Special Provisions as "the Specifications." When referencing another section within the TSP, use "this Technical Special Provision."

7. Use the term "Engineer" to refer to the Department or the Department's representative. Do not use references such as "Geotechnical Engineer" or similar designations.

8. While the style and format of TSPs should follow the AASHTO format outlined in this Handbook, exceptions are common for architectural structures such as rest areas and traffic monitoring centers. These TSPs are typically developed using the American Institute of Architects (AIA) MasterSpec format. Converting these TSPs to AASHTO format is often impractical.

9. Do not use statements such as, "if a conflict exists, the more stringent requirement prevails." Do not direct the Contractor's means and methods. Use performance-based criteria where appropriate.

10. Do not use sketches, pictures, or drawings within a TSP.

11. Do not specify a Contractor's warranty or extend the time period of a standard manufacturer's warranty. Only include standard manufacturer warranties that are transferable to the Department upon final acceptance.

12. Do not require bidders to submit documents (e.g., experience requirements) or information with the bid that may imply that the bid will be rejected without them. (For maintenance contracts with experience requirements, the experience requirements must be included in the Blanket MSP, not in the TSP.) Do not include cost estimates, summary of quantities, traffic control phasing, work schedules, or supplier names.

13. Refer to the Approved Products List (APL) for applicable products. If a referenced product is not on the APL, contact the Product Evaluation Office for assistance. For products with approved Sole Source documentation, list the product name in the Materials article, as required by the FDOT Design Manual (FDM), Section 110.4.1. These products must be listed on the APL. Confirm whether materials are subject to Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements under Section 6 of the Standard Specifications. If so, ensure products listed in the TSP are included on the APL. Contact the Product Evaluation Office as needed. Do not specify a patented or proprietary product or process with the phrase "or equal."

14. Refer to CADD Manual 8-4.2 for correct file naming conventions.

Follow these guidelines when formatting a Revised Specifications Package that includes changes or additional TSP:

1. Insert a lead in sentence above the TSP Section Header, including the revision date and page numbers.

1.1 When developing a new TSP, update the list of TSPs included in the TSP Header Page of the Specifications Package and the Table of Contents accordingly.

1.2 When a TSP is revised, include “REV 01, REV 02, etc.” at the end of the file name in accordance with the CADD Manual regarding CADD Delivery.

1.3 If a TSP is deleted, apply one of the following formats in the Revised Specifications Package:

1.3.1 When the package contains one TSP:

APPENDICES (CHAPTER PAGE) page XX, is deleted.

TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISIONS, page XX, is deleted.

TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISION TSP(T325)
REPAVED ASPHALT CONCRETE, a separately signed/sealed document is deleted entirely.

1.3.2 When the package contains multiple TSPs:

TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISIONS, page XX, is deleted, and replaced by the following.

<new TSP page here>

TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISION TSP(T325)
REPAVED ASPHALT CONCRETE, a separately signed/sealed document is deleted and replaced by TECHNICAL SPECIAL PROVISION TSP(T325) REPAVED ASPHALT CONCRETE - REV01.

5-3 UTILITY WORK

Define the utility work in the Plans and Specifications when the utility work is to be performed pursuant to a Utility Work by Highway Contractor (UWHC) Agreement with the Department. Specifications from the utility owner may be incorporated as TSPs to define the utility work. Only include the technical aspects of the utility work not addressed by FDOT Specifications.

Do not include any language resembling Division I General Covenants and Requirements or construction work that is covered by the Department’s Specifications. Ensure the Specifications received from the utility owner align with the other parts of the Plans and Specifications and do not re-define terms currently defined in Article 1-3 of the Standard Specifications such as, “the Engineer”. As stated above for architectural work, Utility Work by Highway Contractor TSPs are often developed using AIA Master Spec format, conversion to AASHTO format is typically impractical.

Follow these guidelines when writing a TSP for utility work:

1. Ensure the TSP and utility plans are consistent with the UWHC Agreement or approved Utility Permit.

2. Do not reference the UWHC Agreement or approved Utility Permit in the TSP.

3. Replace the term “abandoned” with “out of service” for utilities not in service.
4. Do not replace the “Engineer” with a utility representative. The Engineer has full authority, but utility representatives may provide technical assistance to the Engineer. Alternate language may be “the Engineer, in conjunction with a utility representative,” if necessary.
5. Do not provide a list of required or suggested utility contractors. Instead include reasonable objective qualifications requirements for utility contractors and their personnel.
6. Do not use a preferred list of vendors or products if the costs for utility work are reimbursable by the Department. The utility owner must provide justification to the Department if there is a legitimate concern for compatibility requiring specific products to be stated in the TSP. Early discussions with the utility owner are required to ensure the needs of both parties to the agreement are satisfied.
7. If the utility work is non-reimbursable, a preferred list of vendors or products may be used.
8. Verify if the utility work is subject to Build America, Buy America (BABA) requirements, per Section 6 of the Standard Specifications. If applicable, ensure that any products or materials described in the TSP have products listed on the APL. Contact Product Evaluation, as needed for assistance.
9. If the TSP for utility work is prepared by an internal employee of the Utility Agency/Owner, the TSP for the utility work does not require signing and sealing.

5-4 PROCESS REVIEW

Follow the submittal and review process outlined in the flowchart at the following URL: https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/specifications/resources/handbooks-and-manuals/tsp-process-flowchart.pdf?sfvrsn=11b2b3d6_1

DISTRICT OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The District Specifications Office or District Maintenance Office is responsible for reviewing all TSPs for compliance with Department requirements for specification development and potential conflicts with the Plans and Specifications. The review must be performed in accordance with the District Quality Control Plan. The District Specifications Office must coordinate the legal review with the Office of General Counsel . Finalized TSPs must be uploaded by the District Specifications Office to SharePoint: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/SkwAVgn9uC>.

CENTRAL OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The State Specifications Office may assist the districts with the review or coordinate the review of a TSP when requested. The State Specifications Office will maintain a list of construction contract TSPs to identify frequently used TSPs for potential development and implementation as Standard Specifications.

SECTION 6 – DESIGN-BUILD PROJECTS

The District Construction Office is responsible for reviewing the Specifications Package prior to release for construction. The Division I Design-Build Boilerplate is developed using the current

edition in effect at the time the Bid Price Proposals are due, as adopted by the Department.

The Division I Specifications are developed using a boilerplate provided by the State Specifications Office available on the web at the following url:

<https://www.fdot.gov/specifications/design-build-specifications>

Any identified Division I Special Provisions that are included in the attachments to the Request for Proposal (RFP) are already considered contract documents and do not need to be incorporated into the Specifications Package. The completed boilerplate document is attached to the RFP, along with any Developmental Specs, TSPs, or MSPs required by the Department.

After award of the contract, the Design-Build firm will incorporate all Division II and III Specifications, including Special Provisions, Developmental Specs, and MSPs into the Specifications Package using the Specs on the Web application. Once the package is completed, the Design-Build firm must submit it to the District Construction Project Manager for review and approval to be stamped “Released for Construction” prior to the Contractor beginning work. Once “Released for Construction,” any changes to the Specifications Package will be added by the District Construction Office via Supplemental Agreement.

SECTION 7 – LOCAL AGENCY PROGRAM (LAP)

For local agency projects with federal funds, please refer to the FDOT LAP Manual for guidance on the preparation of FDOT LAP specifications to be included with the local agency’s bid documents and provisions. All LAP projects must use Specs on the Web to generate Specification Packages.

For local agency projects with FDOT state-funded grants, please refer to the Local Agency Agreement for plans and specification requirements.

SECTION 8 – TRAINING

8-1 GENERAL

The course, “Specification Package Preparation Training,” must be completed by any person creating or overseeing the package preparation, including all awarded firms (consultant and in-house EORs) prior to signing and sealing any Specification Package for FDOT projects. Use “Specification Package Preparation Training” link below:
<https://floridaltap.org/specification-training/>.

Upon completion of the “Specification Package Preparation Training,” all users must complete the online “Specifications Package Preparation Recertification CBT” every five years. Consultants and in-house EORs must recertify to maintain eligibility to sign and seal any Department Specification Package. All users must send a copy of the Course Completion form or a screenshot of the final exam score to the State Specifications Office at CO-SPECDEV@dot.state.fl.us. Use the following link to the online recertification CBT:

<http://wbt.dot.state.fl.us/ois/SpecPackCBT/index.htm>

Failure to recertify within the allotted five-year time period will require the user to retake the full Specification Package Preparation Training class.

8-2 DISTRICT OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The District Program Management personnel shall verify that consultant and in-house EORs are listed on the Florida LTAP Center's website at:

<https://floridaltap.org/specification-training/>

8-3 CENTRAL OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The State Specifications personnel shall manage and maintain the "Specification Package Preparation Training," the "Specifications Package Preparation Recertification CBT," and the certification list. The State Specifications personnel shall also maintain the Specs on the Web User Guide, available for download at:

<https://www.fdot.gov/specifications/specifications-guidance>