

Signing and Sealing Guidelines in the Virtual World.

General Information and Concepts:

A scanned image of an original signature shall not be used in lieu of a digital or electronic signature, FAC, 61G15-23.003.

There are two ways to sign-and-seal plans (without ink) in the virtual word.

– Digitally and Electronically.

An Electronic Signature is not the same as a Digital Signature.

A document in the computer world is considered signed and sealed when the Engineer has “locked” the document, preventing any change from being made without the Engineer’s knowledge. A document in the computer world can be locked by two methods:

- 1- Digital signing and sealing. Covered in FAC rule 61G15-23.004
- 2- Electronic signing and sealing. Covered in FAC rule 61G15-23.005.

FAC rule 61G15-23.003: It establishes the procedure for signing and sealing Electronically Transmitted Documents. In this rule “Electronically Transmitted Documents” is a reference to the “virtual world documents” and not a specific method of signing and sealing.

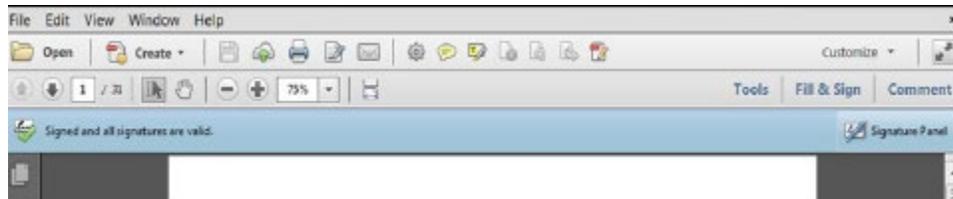
FAC rule 61G15-23.004: Procedures on how to Digitally sign and Seal documents in the virtual world.

FAC rule 61G15-23.005: Procedures on how to Electronically sign and seal documents in the virtual world.

Digital Signature:

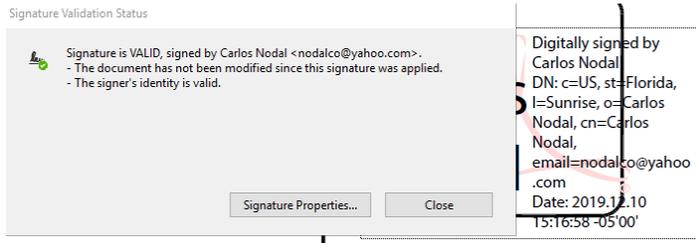
It is the method that almost all Engineers and Architects are using.

This method provides third party verification, the document will show a colored text bar at the top indicating if the signature is valid or not. If this bar does not appear or the text does not indicate “valid”, the documents has been altered and we should not accept it.



There is also a signature panel which shall be active to indicate the validity of the Digital Signature when clicking on it.

Example



The Engineer can choose to include an image of his/her wet seal or not.



1- When an image of the seal is added on the drawings the following text shall appear:

This item has been digitally signed and sealed by [NAME] on the date adjacent to the seal.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.

2- When an image of the wet seal is not used, the following text shall appear:

[NAME], State of Florida, Professional Engineer, License No. [NUMBER]

This item has been digitally signed and sealed by [NAME] on the date indicated here.

Printed copies of this document are not considered signed and sealed and the signature must be verified on any electronic copies.

This is to make sure that Engineer's Name and License is in the Title Block as it is required by FAC 61G15-23.002 (3) (a), and that for the paper drawings to be original, they must have a manual signature and seal.

When engineering calculations, specifications, reports or other documents contain multiple sheets or pages, the Engineer may apply a single digital signature per PDF file, as per rule 61G15-23.001, F.A.C. A digital signature applied computer PDF file shall have the same force and effect as signing all the individual sheets or pages contained within that item.

Notice that FAC, 61G15-23.04 allows the digital signature in one PDF file containing several drawings, but Miami-Dade County Guidelines for CPP and GoldKey indicates that each drawing shall have its own PDF file, no multiple sheets in one PDF file are allowed for the drawings.

Electronic Signature:

Almost nobody is using this method, especially after PEDDS (Professionals' Electronic Data Delivery System) was discontinued by the DOT.

This method does not have third party *verification*. Instead it requires a "signature Report", as per FAC 61G15-23.003 & 61G15-23.005.

Signature Report: Printable "signature report" shall contains the licensee's given name, the licensee's license number, and a list of the electronic files to be signed and sealed that includes a brief description of each engineering document and the SHA authentication code of each engineering document; a list of the drawings submitted and their Secure Hash Codes, 61G15-23.005(c).

The signature Report must be wet-sealed and may be scanned and submitted as long as the engineer retains the hard-copy.