

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF THE PERMIT OMBUDSMAN**

**GUIDELINES
FOR
THE OFFICE OF THE PERMIT OMBUDSMAN**

Effective Date: _____.

Authority:

Section 3 of Public Act 10-158 (the act) created the Office of the Permit Ombudsman (the permit ombudsman) and requires the permit ombudsman to develop guidelines to be used in working with state permitting authorities to implement the provisions of § 3 of the act.

Background:

The following guidelines are provided in the interest of expediting the permit and approval process for state permits and approvals. Discretion in the application of these guidelines is allowable except as required by the act.

These guidelines shall apply to the expedited permitting process, which is primarily applicable to permits and approvals issued by the following state agencies: Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Transportation (DOT). The State Traffic Commission (STC) has voluntarily agreed to abide by these guidelines. Additionally, a limited amount of assistance may be provided for federal permitting. Please note that the permit ombudsman does not have jurisdiction over the municipal permitting and approval process.

State Agency Contact Information:

The state agency contact for obtaining information on permit requirements shall be the permit ombudsman:

Office of the Permit Ombudsman
Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development
505 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Attention: Maya Loewenberg, M.S.
DECD Permit Ombudsman

The state agency contact(s) for each partner agency (as defined below) for filing permit applications and approval requests and processing the expedited permit and/or approval application(s) shall be the following designated liaisons:

Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06111
Attention: Ms. Pam Sucato
Legislative Program Manager

Department of Transportation
171 Salem Turnpike
Norwich, CT 06360
Attention: Mr. John DeCastro
Special Services Section Manager

Department of Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Attention: Mr. Robert Kaliszewski
Director, Planning and Program Development

Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Avenue, MS #12RSW
Hartford, CT 06134
Attention: Ms. Ellen Blaschinski
Regulatory Services Branch Chief

Definitions:

All terms not otherwise defined herein shall have their respective meanings as set forth in the act.

A “**partner agency**” or “**partner agencies**” shall mean DECD, DEP, DPH & DOT.

Pursuant to § 3(b)(1) of the act, a “**qualifying project**” shall mean a project that would (A) create at least 100 jobs, (B) create 50 jobs, if such project is to be located in an enterprise zone designated pursuant to CGS § 32-70, (C) be located in a brownfield, as defined in CGS § 32-9cc, (D) be compatible with the state's responsible growth initiatives, (E) be considered transit-oriented development, as defined in CGS §13b-79kk, (F) develop green technology business, or (G) meet the criteria set forth in subdivision (2) of § 3(b) of the act.

Pursuant to § 3(b)(2) of the act, the DECD commissioner may designate other projects as qualifying projects, upon consideration of the economic impact factors of the project that include, but are not limited to: (A) The proposed wage and skill levels relative to those existing in the area in which the project may be located, (B) the project's potential to diversify and strengthen the state and local economy, (C) the amount of capital investment, and (D), in the judgment of the DECD commissioner after consultation with the remaining partner agencies, there is consistency with the strategic economic development priorities of the state and the municipality.

Procedures:

The expedited permitting intake process for qualifying projects shall be ongoing and continuous.

1. Each prospective applicant for expediting permitting should complete and submit an expedited permitting screening application and checklist (the application) to

the permit ombudsman. The foregoing document shall be made available on the permit ombudsman section of the DECD website, www.ct.gov/ecd.

2. Upon receipt of a completed application, the permit ombudsman will review the application to determine if the proposed project is a qualifying project and thus eligible for the expedited permitting process.
3. The permit ombudsman will utilize a rating and ranking matrix to prioritize qualifying projects for expedited processing. Priority will be given to those projects that have the highest total score out of a maximum of 100 points.
4. No later than 10 business days from the permit ombudsman's receipt of a completed application, the permit ombudsman shall provide written notice to the applicant indicating whether or not the proposed project is a qualifying project. For each qualifying project, the aforementioned notice shall explain that the next steps, which may include but are not be limited to, the submission of additional project materials in anticipation of a mandatory initial meeting. Additional information may include, but is not be limited to, the following: Detailed project schedule; architectural and engineering plans; and environmental reports.
The meeting shall be scheduled promptly upon the permit ombudsman's receipt of the additional information.
5. The applicable fee, calculated in accordance with the fee schedule set forth in these guidelines, shall be paid no later than the initial meeting.

Meetings & Communication:

Periodic meetings shall be conducted to reduce permitting conflicts by providing guidance to a developer of a qualifying project. The initial and subsequent periodic meetings shall address the following:

- (A) The permits and/or approvals needed from each partner agency;
- (B) Site suitability and limitations and facility design, as well as the required specifications for site planning and development; and
- (C) Steps the applicant can take to ensure expeditious permit application for state permits and provide advice and contact information to facilitate the expediting of the local permit application process.

Following the initial meeting, the permit ombudsman, with input from the partner agencies, will, for each qualifying project, create a coordinated project description and a project-specific checklist identifying the required state permits and/or approvals. The coordinated project description may be used by multiple state agencies to reduce the likelihood that an applicant will need to provide unnecessary duplicate information. The applicant shall assemble the material required for each permit, certificate, or approval application and submit such materials to the appropriate state agency along with any applicable application fees for said permit, certificate or approval.

A project scheduling tool, such as a Gantt chart, will be developed and agreed upon by all parties to manage the project submissions and timeframes. The permit ombudsman

shall be the applicant's primary contact for follow-up questions and permit application tracking.

The permit ombudsman shall facilitate communication and cooperation among partner agencies to ensure that developers of qualifying projects receive clear information about permit and approval requirements, including timelines for submission of application material.

Monthly project coordination meetings will be held with partner agencies to discuss potential qualifying projects and review the progress of qualifying projects previously selected for expedited permitting.

Fee Schedule:

The following fee structure shall apply to qualifying projects assisted by the permit ombudsman. The applicable fee shall be payable no later than the time of the initial meeting. The applicant shall provide a check, made payable to DECD. The applicable fee may be waived or reduced by the commissioner with consultation of the permit ombudsman. Additionally, the applicable fee shall be waived for projects carried out by the state.

Permit Type	Fee
Project total development cost less than \$10,000,000	\$1,000
Project total development cost greater than \$10,000,000	\$5,000