



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

No. APL-2016-01

Date: 07/11/2016

DOT ACQUISITION POLICY LETTER

This Acquisition Policy Letter is issued under the authority of the Senior Procurement Executive of the Department of Transportation

Subject: Digital Signatures of Contractual and Assistance Agreement Documents

References:

- Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (15 U.S.C. Ch. 96)
- The E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501)
- Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-00-15 "OMB Guidance on Implementing the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act"
- Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-04-04 "E-Authentication for Federal Agencies"
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) NIST Special Publication 800-25 "Federal Agency Use of Public Key Technology for Digital Signatures and Authentication"
- Federal Acquisition Regulation 2.101 "Electronic Commerce," "In writing," "writing," and "written"
- Federal Acquisition Regulation 4.502 "Electronic Commerce in Contracting"
- Transportation Acquisition Manual 1204.502 "Electronic Commerce in Contracting"
- 2 CFR 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"

When is this Acquisition Policy Letter (APL) Effective?

This APL remains in effect until the resulting policy is incorporated in the Transition Acquisition Manual (TAM).

Who is the Point of Contact?

Harry Palm, Associate Director, Acquisition Policy/Oversight, Office of the Senior Procurement Executive at (202) 366-4963 or by email at harry.palm@dot.gov.

Visit our website at <http://www.dot.gov/ost/m60> for additional information on DOT Acquisition Policy Letters and other policy issues.

What is the Purpose of this Acquisition Policy Letter?

The purpose of this APL is to establish the policy and procedures for the use of electronic signatures by DOT procurement and assistance agreement personnel on acquisition, grant, and cooperative agreement documentation.

What is the Background?

The United States government has undertaken a variety of measures to reduce paperwork, streamline acquisition processes, speed up timelines, and eliminate onerous barriers for federal government contractors and recipients. Electronic signatures are one method that helps to meet many of the above goals. The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act ("E-Sign Act") provided legal authority for the federal government and private contractors to use electronic signatures for contractual documentation. Following enactment of the E-Sign Act, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) established authentication guidelines for agencies and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) provided clear authority for government agencies to use and accept digital signatures. DOT-wide informational technology infrastructure currently allows for PKI certified signatures in Adobe Acrobat. Electronic signatures employing PKI certification meet general DOT security requirements as well as DOT acquisition systems security requirements.

What is the Guidance?

This policy establishes DOT's preference for electronic signatures as the preferred means of conducting business transactions. The policy does not forbid hand-written "pen-and-ink" signatures. However, DOT contracting and assistance personnel should employ electronic signatures to the maximum extent practicable on contracting and assistance documents, including supporting documents. Furthermore, DOT contracting and assistance personnel shall accept all electronically signed documents from contractors/recipients unless there is a reasonable basis for requiring a handwritten signature.

Electronic signatures are to be accomplished using an approved Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificates system. DOT contracting and assistance personnel shall electronically sign documents in Adobe Acrobat by employing PKI-enabled personal identification verification (PIV) cards issued to DOT employees. Instructions for electronically signing a document in Adobe Acrobat are included as an attachment to the APL. Should DOT replace Adobe Acrobat, DOT shall ensure that any replacement program or system will comply with all relevant verification requirements.



Harry Palm

Associate Director,
Acquisition Policy Oversight and Business Strategies

Attachment: Electronic Signatures Power Point Training

Electronic Signatures

U.S. Department of Transportation

Office of the Senior Procurement

Executive

Electronic Signatures

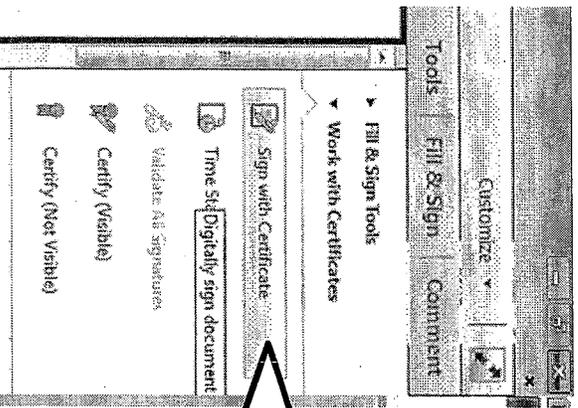
- **Why Create Electronic Signature**
 - Supports Telework and COOP
 - Support Paperless Initiatives
 - Supports Electronic Contract File System
 - Provides Secure Document Authentication
 - Facilitates Faster Document Coordination

Electronic Signatures

- Document is ready for distribution and/or filing
- Ready for coordination
- Multiple signatures can be applied to a document each with it's own signature verification

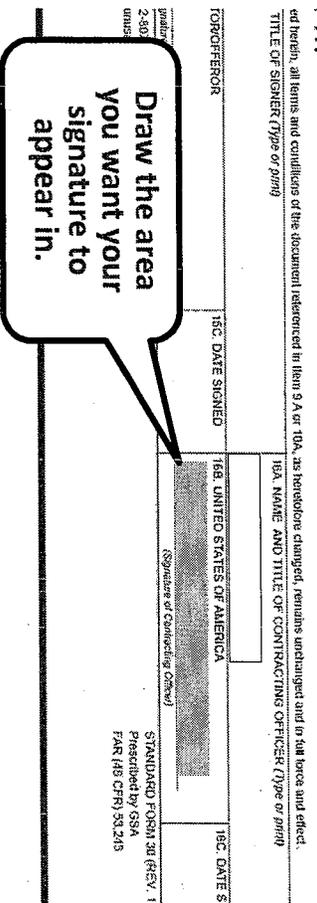
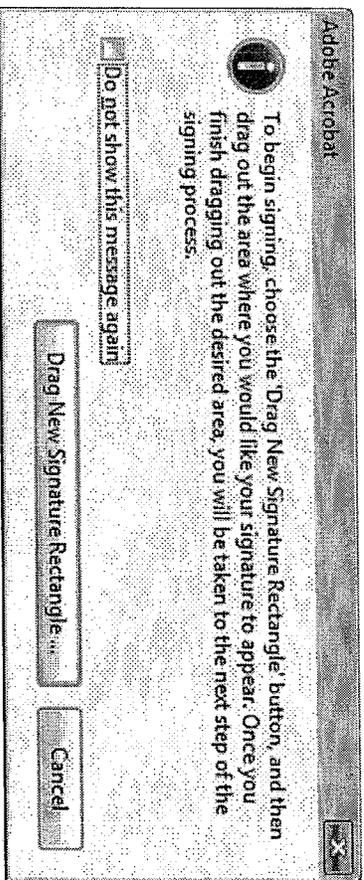
Electronic Signatures

1. Open PDF document in Adobe Acrobat Pro



Click "Sign with Certificate"

2. Drag New Signature Rectangle



Draw the area you want your signature to appear in.

Electronic Signatures

- **Setting up is Easy!**
 - You no longer need to go through the process of creating an E-signature
 - Your PIV carries a unique number for authentication
 - Acrobat Pro creates an E-signature automatically from your PIV