



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR BOB FERGUSON —

EXECUTIVE ORDER 25-03

**IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY AND BUILDING EFFICIENCY
IN THE STATE'S PERMITTING AND LICENSING PROCESSES**

WHEREAS, transparency and accountability are core elements of good government; and

WHEREAS, eliminating barriers to economic development, professional opportunities, and public health and safety is a priority for my administration; and

WHEREAS, the number of permits, licenses, and certifications required to operate businesses in Washington State and nationwide has significantly increased in the last several decades; and

WHEREAS, Washington state agencies have improved transparency in their permitting processes by tracking and reporting their timelines for processing permit applications, but more progress is needed in reducing processing times; and

WHEREAS, increasing efficiency, transparency, and predictability in the processing and approval of state-issued permits, licenses, certifications, and identification cards will remove unnecessary barriers for Washingtonians seeking to do business in the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, Governor of the state of Washington, by the power vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the state of Washington, do hereby order and direct all executive and small cabinet agencies as follows:

1. Each agency that issues permits, licenses, certifications, or identification cards shall compile a catalog of the types of permits, licenses, certifications, or identification cards it issues and shall submit that catalog to the Governor's Office within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this Executive Order. The catalog shall include:
 - a. A description of each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card issued by the agency; the term thereof; and the statutory, regulatory, or other basis therefor;
 - b. The method by which the agency receives applications for each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card (e.g., paper, electronic, or other method) and, if readily available, when that method was last significantly updated;
 - c. Any statutory, regulatory, or other authority governing the length of time within which the agency must process applications for each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card;

- d. The application fee charged by the agency for each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card; the statutory, regulatory, or other legal authority therefor; and when the amount of the fee was last increased or otherwise changed;
 - e. The agency's analysis of the speed with which it could consistently process completed applications for each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card. An application is complete after the applicant has properly and timely submitted all information required by the agency to act upon the application. The agency's analysis should:
 - i. describe the steps in the current approval process, as well as any post-approval steps (such as inspection) that must be completed before the customer can make use of their permit, license, or certification;
 - ii. provide, for the calendar year 2024, the following information for each type of permit, license, certification, or identification card:
 - 1. the number of applications received;
 - 2. the average processing time for all applications, including those that were initially incomplete;
 - 3. the average processing time for only complete applications; and
 - 4. the average time between approval and any necessary post-approval step (such as inspection);
 - iii. identify opportunities to streamline the approval process, eliminate any unnecessary steps or barriers, reduce the incidence of incomplete applications, and eliminate any obsolete or unnecessary approval processes;
 - iv. identify the approximate number of pending applications the agency currently has, and whether a backlog exists; and
 - v. recommend the fastest timeframe in which the agency could, with existing resources, consistently process completed applications for each type of permit, license, or certification; and
 - f. Other relevant information as requested by the Governor's Office.
2. Following the completion of the catalog, each agency shall, after consultation with the Governor's Office, establish efficient and appropriate application processing deadlines for each type of permit, license, certification, and identification card. Agencies shall make these deadlines public and, where required by law or otherwise appropriate, shall comply with any applicable legal requirements such as notice and public comment procedures or tribal consultation in establishing these deadlines.

3. Any agency that, after receiving a completed application, exceeds the application processing deadline as established under Section 2, will refund the amount of the application fee to the extent permitted by law and any applicable tribal consultation requirements. The refund will have no bearing on the disposition of the underlying application.

This Executive Order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law. Provisions of this Order are not intended to alter any existing collective bargaining agreements. This Order is not intended to confer and does not confer any legal right or entitlement and shall not be used as a basis for legal challenges to any rule or any other action or inaction of the governmental entities and employees subject to it.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 15th day of January, AD, Two Thousand and Twenty-Five, at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Bob Ferguson
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State