

Highway Occupancy Permits #16

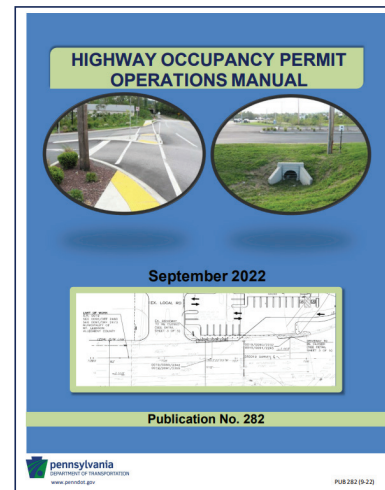


Introduction

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the issuance of Highway Occupancy Permits (HOPs) plays a critical role in regulating access to and occupancy of the state's highways. Through PennDOT, HOPs are required for any activity or construction that would impact the use of a state road. Whether it's the construction of a driveway to a new development or the installation of a new utility (water, gas, electric, communication, sewer, etc.) facility, obtaining an HOP is a key step to ensuring the safe and efficient flow of traffic while maintaining the road's infrastructure.

PennDOT has the right to regulate access to its right-of-way but also has the responsibility to accommodate land owners, developers, and utility owners who may want to access the public right-of-way and balance those plans with the needs of the traveling public. The Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP), and its review and approval process, is the device used by PennDOT to balance the needs of all stakeholders. The steps below walk through the HOP process.

- 1 Review the HOP Guidelines: Familiarize yourself with PennDOT's guidelines for Highway Occupancy Permits (HOPs). <https://www.pa.gov/services/penndot/apply-for-a-penn-dot-highway-occupancy-permit>



- 2 Determine the Type of Permit Needed: Identify the specific type of HOP you need based on your project, such as driveway access (low volume, medium volume, etc.), utility installation (gas, sewer, water, and telecommunications), or miscellaneous permit (sidewalk, drainage, etc). If needing access for a commercial or large residential development, a scoping application will need to be submitted to PennDOT via the [Electronic Permitting System](#) (ePermitting System or EPS) to determine if a meeting is required. The scoping application and meeting provide PennDOT and the municipality preliminary information about the project, and an opportunity to guide and direct the applicant in the preparation of the Transportation Impact Study, if required.

continued on next page



- 3 Prepare All Necessary Documentation: Gather all of the essential documentation, which may include site plans, engineering renderings, traffic impact studies, and any other required information.

Note: Utility companies need to provide information on traffic control measures during construction, the type of utility, location and highway restoration, which are identified on their prepared construction plans.

- 4 Submit Application: Access PennDOT's [Electronic Permitting System](#) (ePermitting System or EPS) to create an application. A PennDOT Business Partner ID (BP ID) is required to login to EPS. Instructions on how to obtain a BP ID can be found on the EPS website. The application can be submitted by the applicant themselves (for driveways, the property owner; for utilities, the utility company; and for drainage, the municipality) or by an authorized agent, typically a consultant or municipal engineer. When submitting via EPS, an authorized agent may submit the HOP application on behalf of a permit applicant if a properly completed M-950AA (Applicant's Authorization for Agent to Apply for HOP) form is provided and accepted as part of the application package submission.

- 5 Pay Fees: Pay any applicable fees associated with the permit application. Fee details can be found on the PennDOT website or by contacting your district office.

- 6 Review Process: PennDOT will review your application, and you may be asked to address any comments or modifications they request.

- 7 Approval: Once your application is approved, you'll receive the HOP and your project may commence.

- 8 Compliance: Ensure compliance with the conditions outlined in the permit during the execution of your project.

Summary

Navigating the HOP process requires extensive planning, adhering to standards, and collaboration with PennDOT. Whether it involves a new driveway, turn lane, or utility project, receiving an HOP is an important step to making sure Pennsylvania's state roads are being used safely and efficiently.

A proactive approach through early engagement with key partners and a commitment to following the rules and regulations set forth by PennDOT will allow for the successful completion of the project and Pennsylvania's roads.

Resources:

PennDOT: <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/Doing-Business/Permits/HighwayOccupancyPermits/Pages/default.aspx>

PA Code, Title 67 Chapter 441: <https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/067/chapter441/chap441toc.html>

PA Code, Title 67 Chapter 459: <https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/067/chapter459/chap459toc.html>

Highway Occupancy Permit Operations Manual: <https://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20282/PUB%20282.pdf>