

Chapter 11. Region Right of Way Office Operation

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11.100 Introduction

Each of the ODOT Regions maintains a Right of Way office and staff to carry out the Region's Right of Way operations. The staff is under the direct authority of the Region Tech Center Manager. The Right of Way Section Administration, however, has Departmental and FHWA authority over all right of way policy and procedural issues. Because of this, the Section maintains oversight of the Region Right of Way office activities and ensures compliance by means of Section Review and Approval functions as detailed in the Right of Way Manual and by Quality Assurance audits.

11.120 Policies

The following policies apply to work done by Region Right of Way staffs:

1. All right of way functions and procedures shall be carried out in conformance with federal and state laws and policies as detailed in the Right of Way Manual and as interpreted by the Right of Way Section Administration.
2. Incoming and outgoing mail shall be processed promptly and accurately.
3. To enable quick access to current information, Right of Way Records shall be maintained and updated as required in the Right of Way Automated Information Network (RAIN) database. RAIN is supported by the Right of Way Program Management Unit.
4. Filing systems shall be maintained in accordance with the "ODOT Standard Filing Manual" to provide uniformity throughout the Division.
5. Payments on invoices shall be processed promptly and correctly, within the guidelines established by the ODOT Financial Services Division and the Right of Way Section.

11.200 Responsibilities

11.210 Region Right of Way Manager

The Region Right of Way Manager is responsible for the implementation of all phases of the Region Right of Way program and for carrying out the program in compliance with Right of Way Section policy. This policy conforms to federal and state laws and department rules and is detailed in the ODOT Right of Way Manual and other Section advisory documents. The Region Right of Way Manager may delegate responsibilities to Senior Right of Way Agents, Regular Right of Way Agents or administrative support staff.

11.220 Region Senior Right of Way Agents

Senior Agents are responsible for all right of way project management functions in the region. They assign work to staff right of way agents, provide oversight and training, and monitor work quality as well as work assignments and project deadlines. They may be responsible for consultant oversight and other duties as indicated by the Right of Way Manager.

11.230 Region Right of Way Agents

Right of Way Agents are responsible for carrying out the right of way functions for the region, including appraisal, acquisition, relocation and project-related property management activities as assigned by the Senior Agents and/or the Right of Way Manager.

11.240 Administrative Support Staff

The Right of Way administrative support structure varies from region to region. Sufficient administrative support should be available to meet the Right of Way programmatic and office needs in the areas of document preparation, file and data storage, and office correspondence and communications. Designated support staff hold a joint responsibility with the Data Systems Coordinator in the Right of Way Program Management Unit for correcting regional problems in the correct use of the RAIN database, remaining up-to-date on the system, and for learning and implementing future system upgrades as they are distributed.

11.300 Procedures

11.310 Right Of Way Acquisition

All regional right of way acquisition procedures are to comply with the requirements specified in the applicable chapters of this Right of Way Manual and as further elaborated by the Right of Way Section. These include: right of way project management, property appraisal, relocation, acquisition, and project-related property management

11.320 Mail Processing

The administrative support staff assigned the task of processing mail shall:

1. Date-stamp each piece of incoming mail with the current date, except for legal documents, such as deeds or real estate options. The date for such documents should be stamped on the envelope in which they arrived.

2. Distribute the date-stamped mail in a timely manner to the appropriate office staff per office procedures.
3. Follow office procedures for ensuring appropriate review of outgoing office mail and timely routing of outgoing mail to the appropriate offices and addresses.

11.330 Processing New Right of Way Files

The administrative support staff assigned this task:

1. Receives, date stamps and files e-mail transmittals from the Right of Way Programming Coordinator in the Project Administration Unit which give notice that the new file number(s), section, highway and county of the project have been received in Right of Way Headquarters from the Region Description writers. Copies of this notice are also made for the Right of Way Project Manager, the project file and individual property files.
2. Prepares a new file folder for each new file number listed in the transmittal.
3. Enters new file information such as grantor's name, file number, section, highway, county, and any other pertinent information on the region's file indexing system.

11.340 Region Filing Procedures

There are generally four sets of files kept in the Region Right of Way offices: Numbered right of way files, project files, county/city files, and general or miscellaneous files. The region administrative support staff should:

1. Store right of way files in numerical order with new material placed in the front of each file. Any material filed must have the file number entered and clearly visible on the upper right hand corner.
2. Store project and county/city files in alphabetical order by county, section and highway or street with new material placed in the front of each file. Material with no specific file number is put in the project file.
3. Store general or miscellaneous files according to the Division's uniform subject-numeric system which is explained in the "Standard Filing Manual."
4. Purge files as needed in order to comply with the "Standard Filing Manual" directions on records disposition.