



Town of Highland Beach

Building Department

3616 South Ocean Boulevard • Highland Beach, Florida 33487

NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNERS, CONDO ASSOCIATIONS, AND CONTRACTORS

Subject: Important Changes to Contractor Licensing and Permit Requirements

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

Recent changes in Florida law have significantly altered how contractors are licensed in the State of Florida. These changes affect how the Town of Highland Beach and the Town of Gulf Stream issue permits and regulate contractors. This notice explains what's changing, how it impacts you, and what steps must be taken by both contractors and property owners to remain in compliance.

Why This is Happening

Florida House Bills 735 (2021) and 1383 (2023), along with Senate Bill 1142 (2024), have preempted most local contractor licensing in Florida. These laws:

- Eliminate local Certificates of Competency (COC) in many trades as of July 1, 2025,
- Prohibit counties and municipalities from requiring a license for certain "non-structural" trades, and
- Shift the responsibility for most licensing to the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR).

Palm Beach County has formally announced that it will stop issuing Certificates of Competency for affected trades on July 1, 2025.

What's Replacing the Old System

Palm Beach County is creating a new voluntary registration called the Installer Registration, which will be available for previously licensed trades that are no longer required to hold a county license. Examples of affected trades include:

- Painting
- Flooring
- Cabinetry
- Pavers
- Tile, terrazzo, and stone
- Non-electrical signage
- Decorative metalwork
- And others

The new Installer Registration is not a license. It does not require an exam and is not regulated by the State. However, it does require proof of insurance, workers compensation (if applicable), bonding, and a County Business Tax Receipt.

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How the Town is Responding

State law (§ 489.113, Florida Statutes) requires that permits may only be issued to certified or registered contractors. However, because licensing for many trades has been eliminated, and the law prohibits us from requiring a license, the Town—along with Palm Beach County—is taking the following approach to stay compliant with state law and maintain appropriate administrative regulation and oversight of construction activities within its jurisdiction:

1. Permits Will Only Be Issued To:

- Contractors who are state-certified or state-registered through DBPR; or
- Contractors who have a state license or Installer Registration with Palm Beach County; and
- Contractor who have registered with the Town of Highland Beach or Gulf Stream (no fee required).

2. Town Registration Required

All contractors, regardless of license type, must register with the Town to perform any construction work. This includes contractors with state licenses and those with a County Installer Registration.

3. Owner-Builders

Property owners may still obtain permits for work on their own property under the existing owner-builder exemption.

What This Means for Contractors

If you are currently working under a Palm Beach County U-License, you:

- May apply for the new Installer Registration from Palm Beach County (starting July 1, 2025),
- Must register with the Town (no fee), and
- Must provide proof of and maintain valid insurance and bond documents on file with both the County and the Town.

Failure to register with the Town or to provide proof of and maintain valid insurance and bond requirements will result in permit denials.

What This Means for Property Owners and Condo Associations

When hiring a contractor after July 1, 2025:

- Ask for a copy of the contractor's license or Installer Registration,
- Verify state licenses at www.MyFloridaLicense.com,
- Ask if the contractor is registered with the Town, and
- Never allow unregistered or uninsured individuals to perform work that requires a permit.

Some trades are no longer required to be licensed under state law, but the Town will still require them to register locally to maintain permit eligibility.

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Key Dates

Now – June 30, 2025: Existing U-Licenses remain in effect

July 1, 2025: U-Licenses sunset, new Installer Registration becomes available

July 1, 2025 Onward: Permits issued only to certified, registered, or Installer-registered contractors

Questions?

Town of Highland Beach – Building Department

Phone: (561) 278-4540

Email: permits@highlandbeach.us

Town of Gulf Stream – Building Department

Phone: (561) 276-5116

Email: dgillion@gulf-stream.org

Palm Beach County Contractor Regulations

Phone: (561) 233-5525

Website: www.pbcgov.com/pzb/contractors

We appreciate your cooperation as we implement this change and continue to work toward safer, properly permitted construction throughout our community.