

# Memorandum

To: DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Date: April 24, 2024

From: TONY TAVARES  
Director

Subject: **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SIGNATURE AUTHORITIES**

On July 5, 1988, responsibilities for project development activities, including project approval, were “delegated” from the Caltrans Director to the 12 District Directors via a Departmental Executive Order. On July 13, 1988, further guidance was issued to each District Director that specifically noted that the District Director was authorized to “approve and circulate all draft environmental documents” and approve all final environmental documents.

The purpose of this memorandum is to reaffirm these delegations and document existing practice on California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) signature authorities within Caltrans. As indicated by various sections of the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference, as well as the environmental determination and document annotated outlines and templates, all CEQA determinations or documents for which Caltrans is the lead agency must be signed by the appropriate environmental staff as delegated by the District Director. “Environmental staff” is defined as non-rank and file employees within the Environmental Planner or Environmental Scientist series and employees in CEA positions overseeing these environmental staff, and in accordance with each District’s “Signature Authority” or “Signature Delegation” (or similarly named) memorandum or policy. Districts should review these memorandums or policies on a regular basis and update them as needed due to staffing and/or organizational changes.

For detailed information on who may sign certain CEQA documents, determinations, and notices, please see the “Signature Authorities Under the California Environmental Quality Act” document.

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/environmental-analysis/standard-environmental-reference-ser/other-guidance#ceqa-signature>

This memorandum is not intended to direct, or limit, the ability of staff within other Divisions to review and/or issue CEQA determinations when Caltrans is acting as a responsible agency.

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Signature authorities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are dictated by the terms of our NEPA Assignment Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the Federal Highway Administration and can be found at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/environmental-analysis/standard-environmental-reference-ser/volume-1-guidance-for-compliance/ch-38-nepa-assignment#SignatureAuthorities>.

Please note that this delegation means that only District staff designated by the District Director may sign CEQA determinations and/or documents. Headquarters staff in any Division do not have CEQA signature authority (the only exception to this is the Division of Local Assistance, Office of Environmental Compliance and Outreach for the delivery of state and local funded off-system projects where Caltrans may have CEQA Lead Agency responsibilities, i.e., Rail and Mass Transit projects). Note the Caltrans Director retains the right to modify or supplement these delegations and may sign CEQA determinations and/or documents (e.g. statewide programmatic environmental documents).

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Jeremy Ketchum, Chief, Division of Environmental Analysis, at (916) 599-1580, or [jeremy.ketchum@dot.ca.gov](mailto:jeremy.ketchum@dot.ca.gov).

**APPROVED**



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TONY TAVARES  
Director

06/17/2024

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Date

c: Deputy Directors