

§ 136-18.3A. Wireless communications infrastructure.

(a) The definitions set forth in G.S. 160D-931 shall apply to this section.

(b) The Department of Transportation is authorized to issue permits to wireless providers for the collocation of wireless facilities and the construction, operation, modification, or maintenance of utility poles, wireless support structures, conduit, cable, and related appurtenances and facilities for the provision of wireless services along, across, upon, or under the rights-of-way of State-maintained highways. The permits and included requirements shall be issued and administered in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner.

(c) The Department of Transportation shall take action to approve or deny a permit application for collocation of a small wireless facility under this section within a reasonable period of time of receiving the application from a wireless provider.

(d) The collocation of small wireless facilities and the construction, operation, modification, or maintenance of utility poles, wireless support structures, conduit, cable, and related appurtenances and facilities for the provision of small wireless facilities along, across, upon, or under the rights-of-way of State-maintained highways shall be subject to all of the following requirements:

- (1) The structures and facilities shall not obstruct or hinder the usual travel or public safety on any rights-of-way of State-maintained highways or obstruct the legal use of such rights-of-way of State-maintained highways by other utilities.
- (2) Each new or modified utility pole and wireless support structure installed in the right-of-way of State-maintained highways shall not exceed the greater of (i) 10 feet in height above the height of the tallest existing utility pole, other than a utility pole supporting only wireless facilities, in place as of July 1, 2017, located within 500 feet of the new pole in the same rights-of-way or (ii) 50 feet above ground level.
- (3) Each new small wireless facility in the right-of-way shall not extend (i) more than 10 feet above an existing utility pole, other than a utility pole supporting only wireless facilities, or wireless support structure in place as of July 1, 2017, or (ii) above the height permitted for a new utility pole or wireless support structure under subdivision (2) of this section. (2017-159, s. 3(b); 2019-111, s. 2.5(p); 2020-3, s. 4.33(a); 2020-25, s. 51(a), (b), (d).)