



Electronic Submittal and Digital Signature Guide

for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors

October 2020

(Revised April 2025)

About This Guide

The Nevada Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors drafted this guide in collaboration with agencies and professionals. In moving to paperless submittals, agencies and professionals experienced various challenges with different approaches to resolving those challenges. Rather than professionals individually doing what they thought was best to comply with agency requirements and Nevada regulations and each agency developing its own guide to meet its unique submittal processes, it was agreed the board would facilitate the development of a guide that could be adopted by agencies and provide uniform guidance to professionals.

This guide is intended to be software agnostic. References to Adobe or Bluebeam are solely due to common familiarity with the software. The concepts illustrated within this guide described for Adobe and Bluebeam should be helpful when using other PDF software.

The purpose of this guide is to:

- Establish uniform guidelines for electronic submittals and digital signatures
- Enable consistency amongst public agency requirements for electronic submittals
- Guide professionals in preparing and submitting electronic submittals that conform to Nevada regulatory and agency requirements
- Serve as a resource for public agencies and professionals

Conventions Used in this Guide

Terminology in this manual include the following:

- **Electronic Submittal**—submittal transmitted electronically
- **Stamp Image**—an image of a professional stamp, jpeg, tif, electronically created
- **Electronic Signature**—an image of a signature, jpeg, tif, or electronically created
- **Digital Signature**—certificate based encrypted signature that includes meta-data to identify the signer
- **PDF**—Portable Document Format
- **Flatten**—Conversion of a multi-layered document to a single layer, secures and locks all the elements of the document
- **Slip Sheeting**—replacing individual sheets of an original document with a new sheet, resulting in invalidating digital signatures of the original document
- **PDF Package or Portfolio**—a PDF package/portfolio is when multiple documents are packaged together into one PDF file without invalidating digital signatures

Contents of this Guide

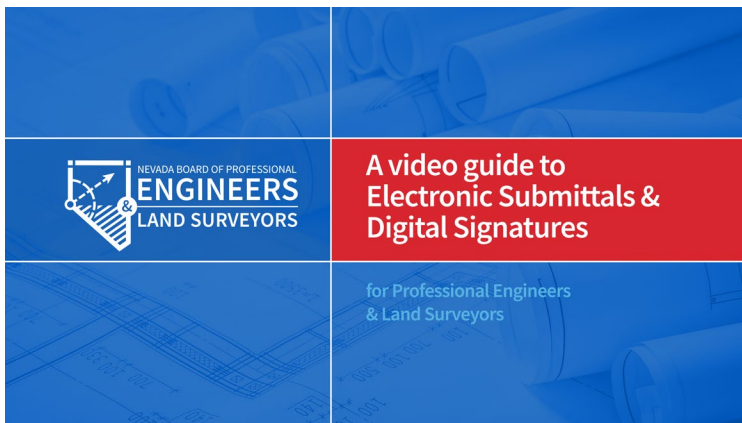
Included in this guide are the following:

- Electronic Submittals— Guidelines for preparing and submitting electronic plan sheets/documents
- Digital Signing of Documents—Guidelines on how to digitally sign electronic plan sheets/documents
- How to create a digital signature in Adobe Acrobat Pro
- How to use a digital signature in Adobe Acrobat Pro
- How to create a digital signature in BlueBeam Revu
- How to use a digital signature in BlueBeam Revu

Video Guide

In 2025, the Board created an instructional video as a companion to this written guide to further assist licensees who are not familiar with electronic submittals or digital signatures in Nevada.

Step-by-step instructions for both Adobe Acrobat and Bluebeam Revu are included in the video. A link to the video is provided below.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JZta8pU2-c>

Electronic Submittals

Guidelines for preparing and submitting electronic plan sheets:

- Plans are **submitted electronically as a PDF file and remain electronic** throughout the submittal process. Documents are exported/saved to PDF, not printed and then scanned.
- **Use the combine file option** when combining PDF's to maintain smaller file sizes. Zip files, PDF packages and PDF portfolios can result in files too large to transmit electronically and are often not compatible with review software such as Bluebeam.
- PDF documents need to be **flattened prior to digitally signing** and transmitting electronically.
- Security settings for the document should be the lowest setting allowed by the software. **No password protected or locked documents.** Files must be protected to a level that allows mark-ups and corrections by reviewers.
- For plans that include multiple disciplines—architectural, landscape, civil, structural, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, etc—check with the agency for specific submittal requirements. Agencies may require:
 - The prime professional to submit separate files for each discipline
 - Each discipline to submit their plans individually to the agency
 - The prime professional to combine files into a single file by “stapling” (BlueBeam), or “combining” into a single document (Adobe)
- Each discipline/design professional adds their stamp image, signature image, and date of signing to each of their plan sheets, and then adds their digital signature to their cover/title/first page. Then the professional's plans are transmitted to the prime professional who will submit the plans or staple/combine each professional's plans and submit to the public agency. **Combining will invalidate the digital signatures** so each professional will need to reapply their digital signature after the document is combined. Alternatively, all digital signatures can be applied to the appropriate discipline cover sheet after all sets have been combined.
- The **first page of each PDF file for each discipline** including plan sheets, structural calculations, geotechnical reports, drainage reports, etc, require a digital signature.
- Each plan sheet of the submittal needs to include an image of the professional's stamp along with an image of the professional's signature and date of signing. The **digital signature is applied only to the cover/title/first page** of each professional's submittal for a project.
- Engineer and Land Surveyor professionals must use **digital signatures per NAC 625.610** in combination with a stamp, expiration date, and date of signature.
- A software certified document is not a digital signature, sign the document with a digital signature, do not use the certify document function in the software or lock the document in a manner that prevents review comments/changes.
- Professionals must take adequate protections to prevent fraud or misuse of their digital signature.
- To address review comments, each discipline must resubmit separate files similar to the initial submittal. **Each discipline submits their entire file with the updated/corrected sheets**, each sheet has an image of the professional's stamp with the image of the professional's signature and date of signing, and the cover/title/first page includes the stamp image, signature image, and a new digital signature corresponding to the new resubmittal date—the new digital signature will include a new embedded date stamp.
- **Slip sheeting by professionals during the submittal process is not allowed** due to digital signature invalidation or software limitations.

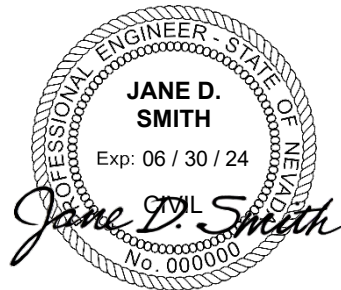
Digital Signing of Documents

Electronic documents must be digitally signed, but not certified. As with paper plans, apply your stamp electronically to each sheet, this can be an image of your stamp or a stamp created electronically. Compile sheets into a single file with the image of your stamp and image of your signature on each page, and then apply your digital signature to the cover/title/first sheet.

If there are multiple disciplines and the discipline files need to be compiled into a single file for submitting to an agency, compiling will invalidate the digital signature and the compiled document will need to be circulated to each of the professionals for reapplication of their digital signature.

If combining/compiling documents, combine the document with the stamp images and signature images for each design professional on the cover/title/first sheet of each discipline. Then have each design professional add their digital signature to the cover/title/first sheet for their discipline, being careful not to make changes to the document that would invalidate previous signatures.

Example of an electronic stamp with signature image:



Date Signed: 10 / 18 / 22

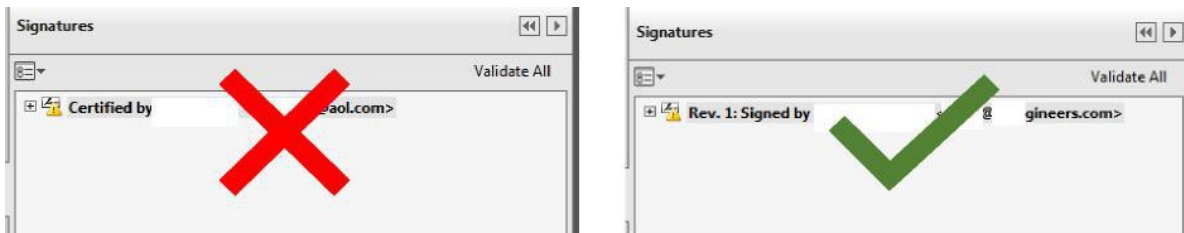
Example of an electronic stamp and signature image with the digital signature added next to the image of the stamp:



Date Signed: 02/24/20

A digital signature can show the name as text, as shown here, or as an image of the signature. When the digital signature is shown as an image of the signature it is not necessary to add a separate signature image.

A common error that many professionals make when preparing documents for submittal is using the CERTIFIED BY function of the software instead of digitally signing. Using the software certify function prevents plan reviewers from performing critical functions needed to complete a review.

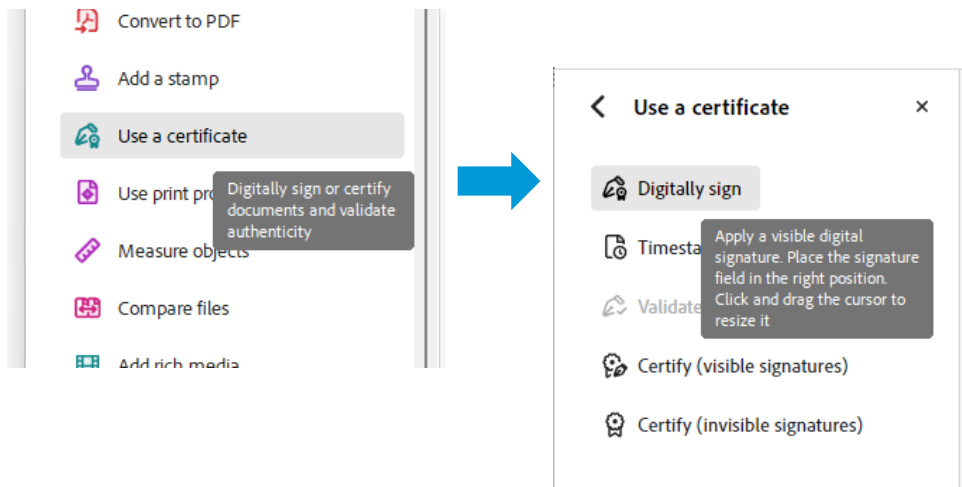


To sign documents using Adobe Acrobat or BlueBeam Revu, the first step is to create a “self-signed digital ID.” The digital ID is password protected and contains your name, email address, organization name, a serial number, and an expiration date. It shows your identity every time you use it to sign a file.

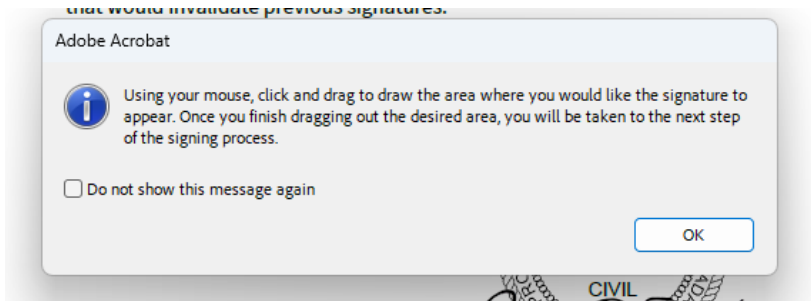
You do not need to create a digital ID each time you need to use one. If you have already created a digital ID, then skip the following sections describing how to create a digital signature, and refer to the following sections on using a digital ID.

Create a Digital ID Using Adobe Acrobat

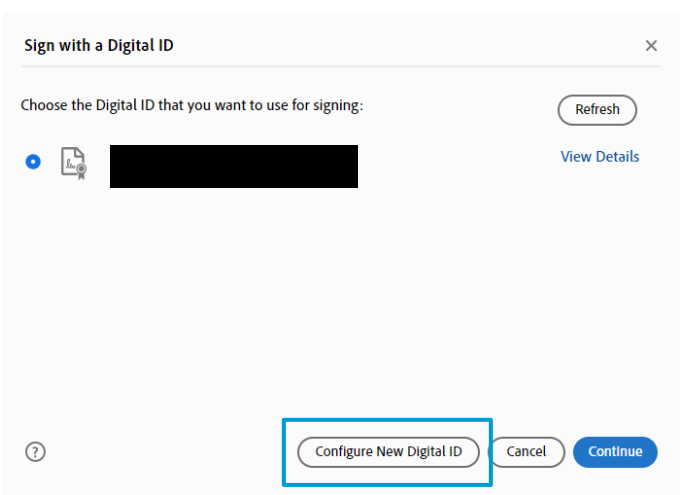
In Acrobat, click **Use a Certificate** in the menu, then **Digitally Sign**.



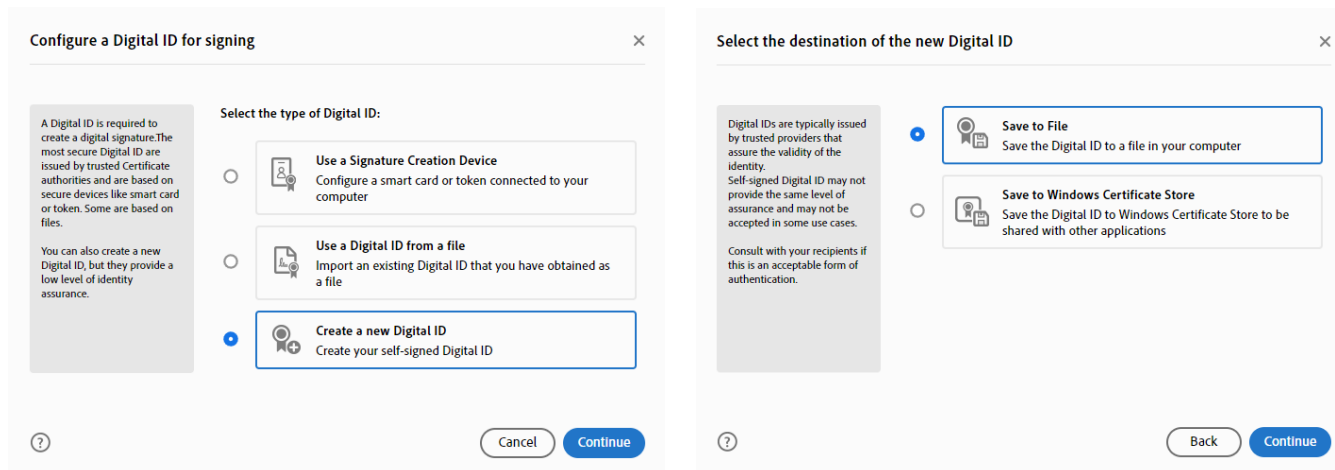
Follow the instructions in the popup window and select an area on a document with your mouse.



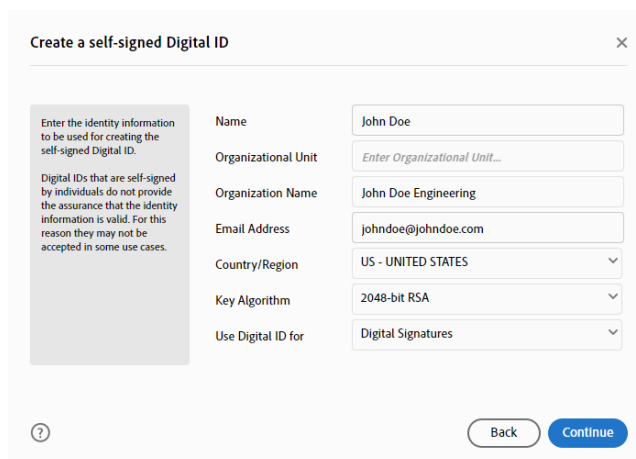
Select the **Configure New Digital ID** button on the popup window that appears.



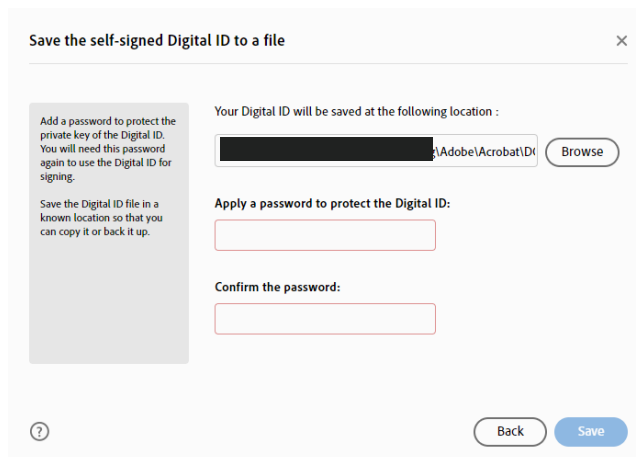
Select **Create a new Digital ID** from the choices and then **Save to File**.



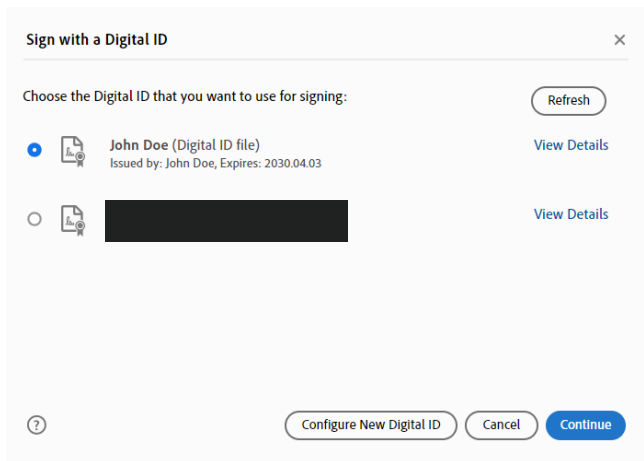
Enter your personal information and make the selections as shown. Then click **Continue**.



IMPORTANT: Save the file to a location where you will be able to easily find it. Enter a password that you will remember and enter it again to confirm.



Your digital ID has now been created. Now you will see the new Digital ID appear when you select **Digitally sign** from the menu.



NOTE: Make a backup copy of your digital ID file. If your digital ID file is lost or corrupted, or if you forget your password, you cannot use it to add signatures to files and you won't be able to unlock/edit previously signed files.

Use Your Digital ID to Sign A PDF File in Adobe Acrobat

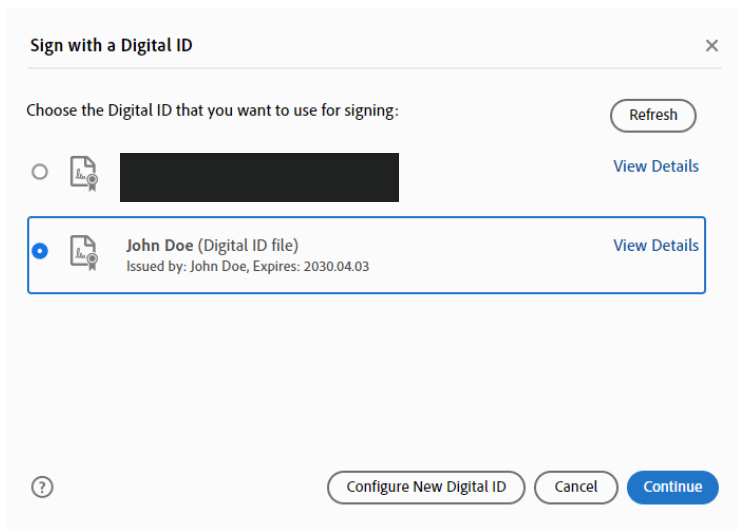
This process may vary slightly depending on which version of Adobe Acrobat you use.

Open the file to be signed.

In Acrobat, click **Use a certificate** from the menu, then click **Digitally sign**.

Use your mouse to select a rectangle area on the document where you want to apply your digital signature.

Select the Digital ID you created to apply your digital signature.



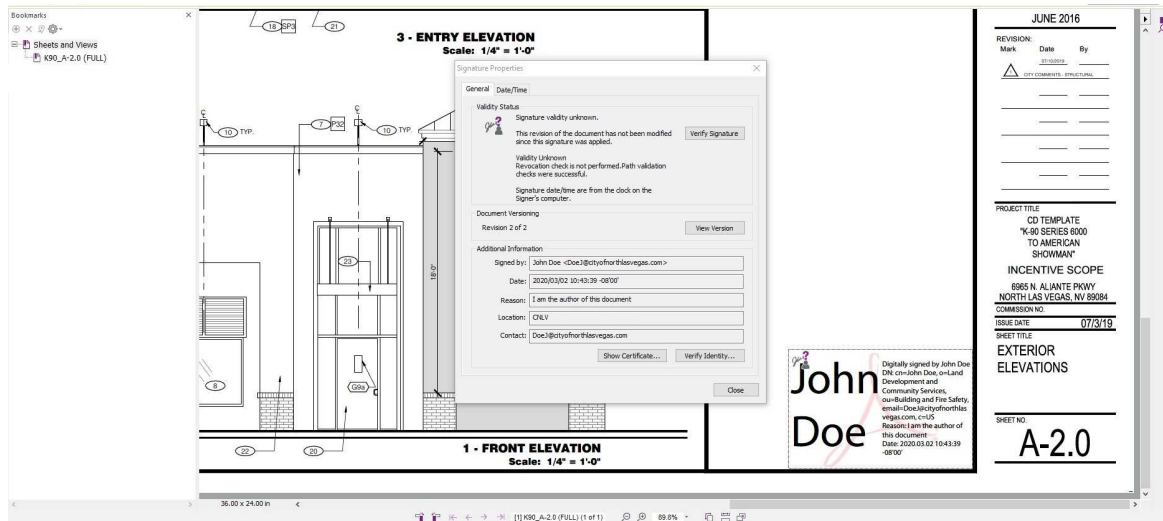
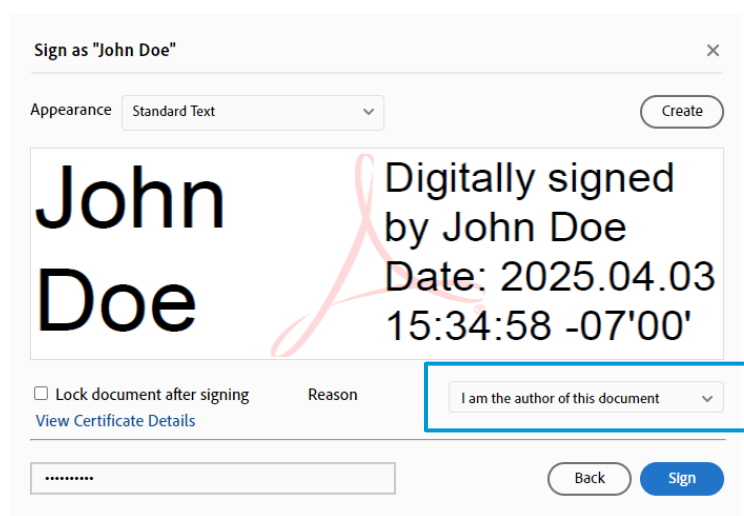
Under the **Reason** dropdown menu, select **“I am the author of this document”**

IMPORTANT: Do not select the “Lock document after signing checkbox. Jurisdictions and public agencies require the least restrictive document setting.

Once you click SIGN, you will be prompted to save your file.

Your document is signed and is ready to be transmitted. Your signature will appear on the document in the area where you drew the rectangle, and the file will show that the signature is valid.

Any changes made to the file from this point on will invalidate the signature.

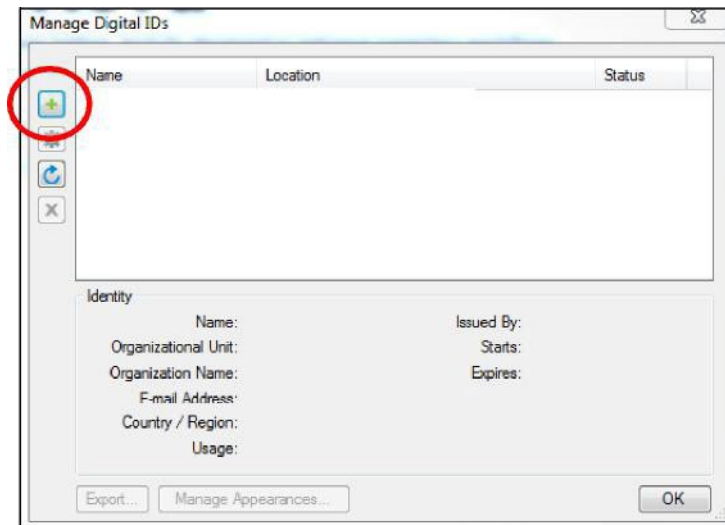
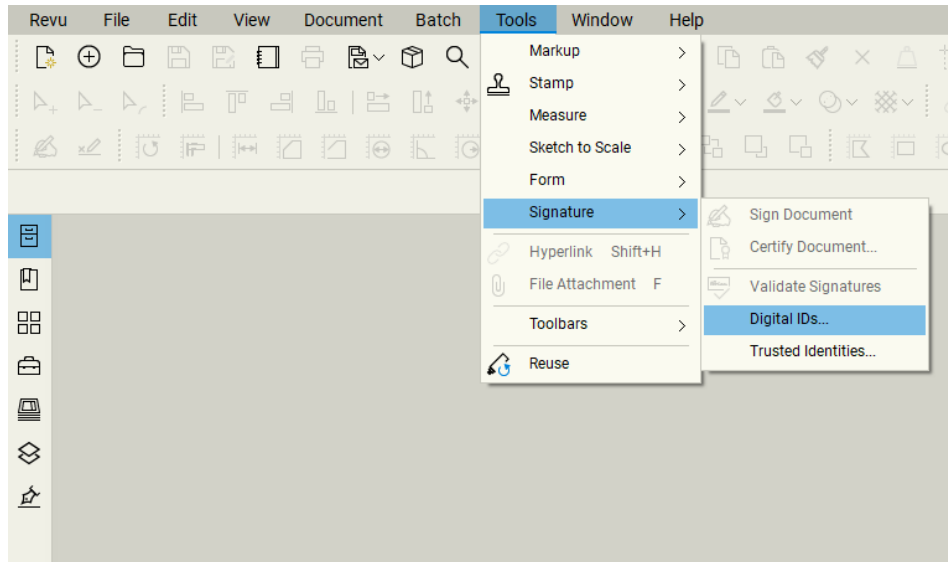


For additional help, consult the Adobe Acrobat User Guide available at <https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/user-guide.html>. You can also use Adobe’s digital ID resources available at <https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/digital-ids.html>.

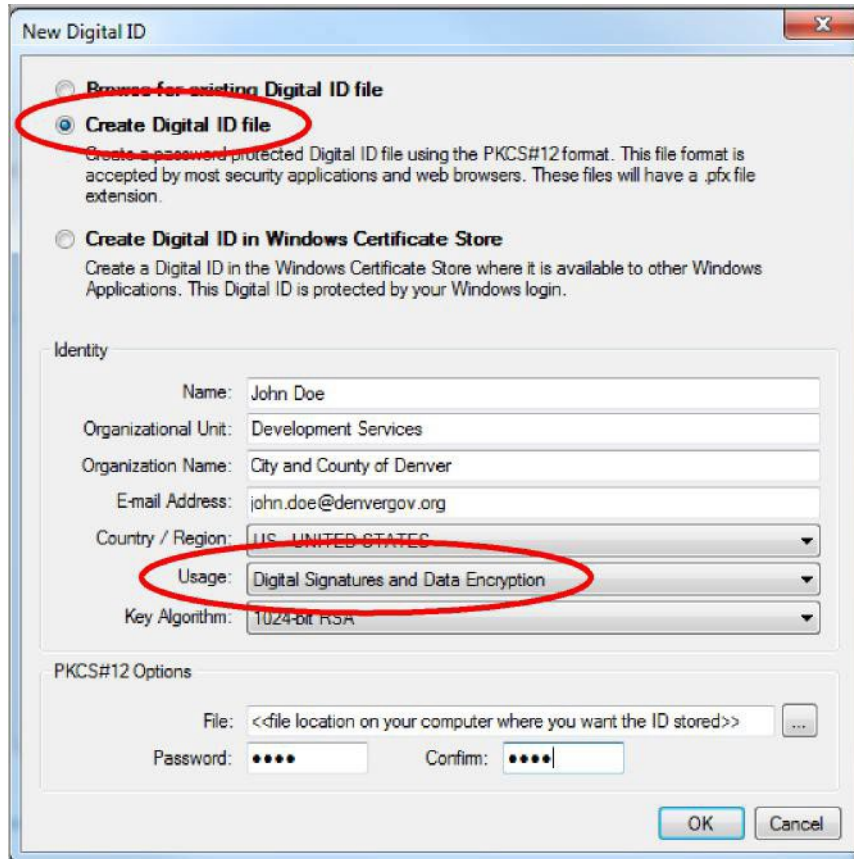
Create a Digital ID Using BlueBeam Revu

In BlueBeam, click the **TOOLS** menu and select the **SIGNATURES** icon. Then choose **DIGITAL IDS...**

On the window that appears, click the GREEN PLUS SIGN to add a new signature.

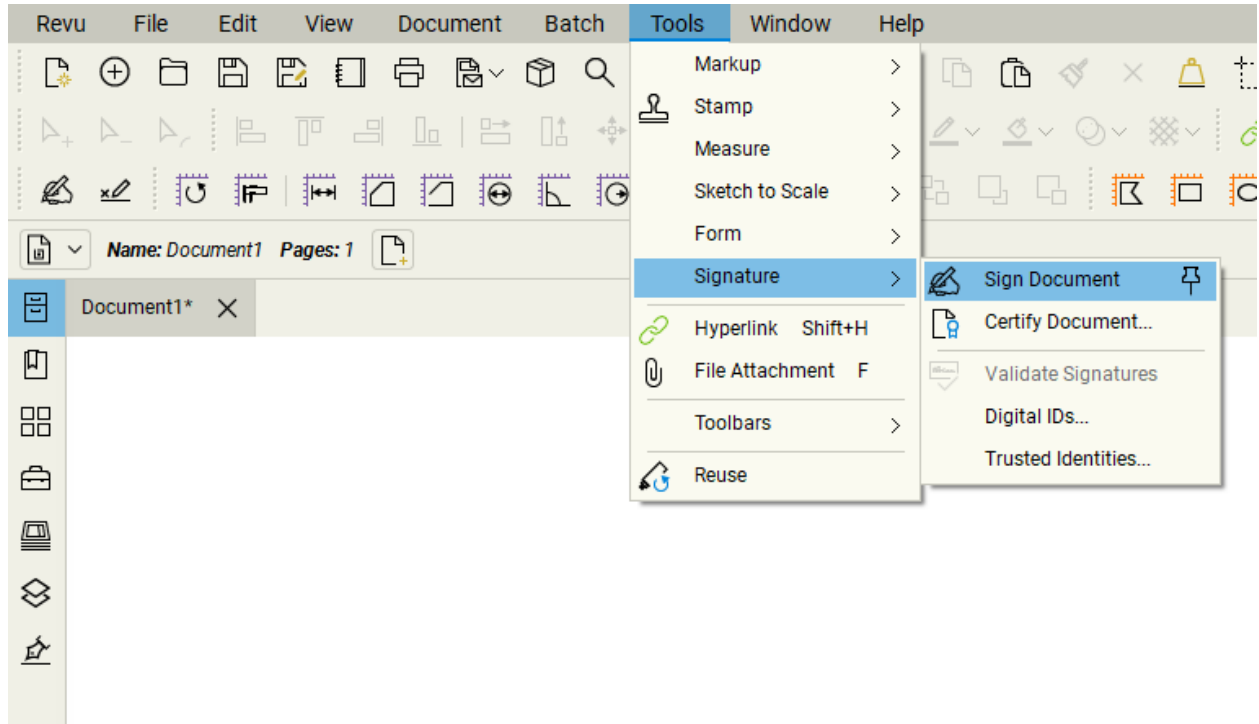


Select **CREATE DIGITAL ID FILE** and in the **USAGE** field, choose **DIGITAL SIGNATURES AND DATA ENCRYPTION**. Then fill in your personal information, enter a password for the ID file, and click OK.



Use Your Digital ID to Sign A File Using Bluebeam Revu 2019

In BlueBeam, click the **TOOLS** menu and select the **SIGNATURES** icon. Then choose **SIGN Document**.

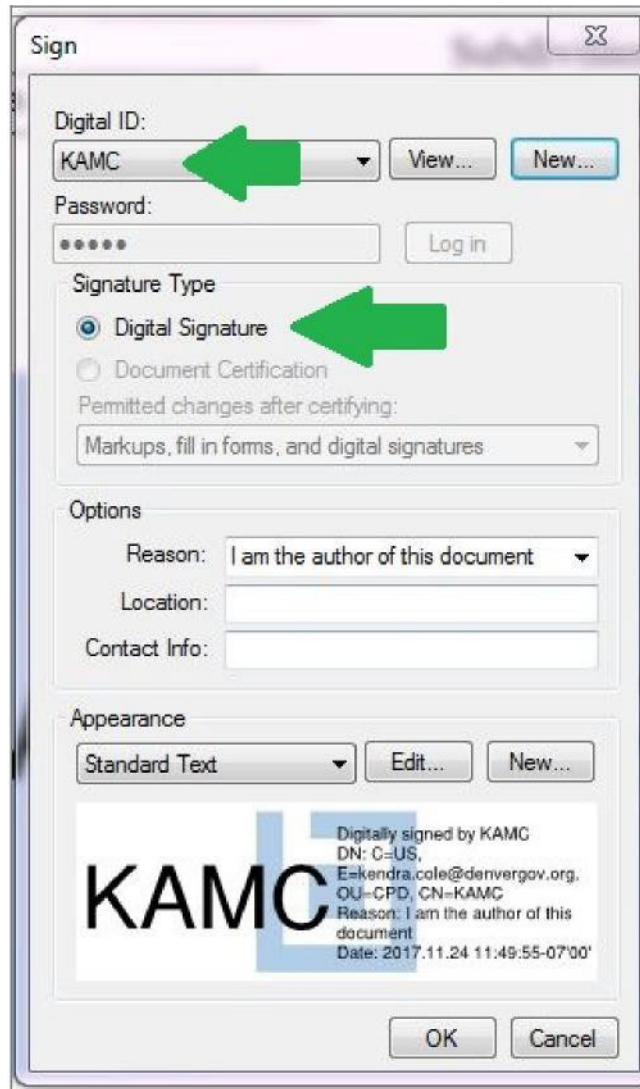


Click and hold down your mouse to draw a rectangle in the area of the document where you want to sign.

Using the DIGITAL ID: drop-down arrow, select the digital ID file you want to use. Then, enter your password.

Under SIGNATURE TYPE, select **DIGITAL SIGNATURE**.

After you click OK, you will be prompted to save your file.



Any changes made to the file from this point on will invalidate the signature. For additional help, consult <https://support.bluebeam.com/online-help/revu2019/Content/RevuHelp/Tutorials/Digital-Signatures.htm>