

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY ACCESS BREAK REQUESTS

General:

For any type of need (permanent or temporary) that crosses over, under, or physically through WSDOT limited access, including trails, pedestrian structures, utility installations, etc., a break request and approval are required. The request should be in such detail that someone conducting research 20 years from now can thoroughly understand why the request was made. This documentation is the historical record for the reason behind the action.

An access break request is completed by the Region and submitted to the HQ Access and Hearings Unit. If the access break is part of the Interstate system, the HQ Access and Hearings Unit will submit the request to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for their approval. There is a minimum 30 day review period if the break request is submitted to FHWA.

Permanent Limited Access Break Requirements:

The following questions need to be answered to request a temporary access break:

1. Who is making the request? Is it WSDOT, local agency, utility, or other?
2. Why? Note the need, background and history for the request.
3. What other alternatives have been considered and why won't they work? Is there alternate access available? Why can't that be used? Typically, cost alone is not a sufficient reason to allow a break in access.
4. What types of impacts will the break create and how will they be mitigated? (An example of an impact would be a pedestrian trail within the right of way and how the pedestrians will be kept separate from traffic.)
5. Where is the break located? Include a ROW sheet with the request showing location of work, proposed break locations, and access notes. When a request for a permanent break in access can be approved, the ROW/Limited Access plan needs to be updated. The Region submits a red and green revision showing the station location of the break(s). The Access and Hearings office can help with the wording of the access notes. Normally, the plan update is submitted with the break request packet.
6. How often will the break be used? This usually comes up with utilities after the initial construction is completed and the need is for periodic maintenance.
7. Is there a permanent property right associated with this request? Is a lease or easement needed? Talk to Regional Real Estate Services for this determination.
8. Include a plan sheet showing work to be done.

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9. If applicable, include a Traffic Control Plan.
10. For Interstate Projects provide proper environmental documentation. This could include a signed NEPA or a C or D list categorical exclusion. Contact the Access Control and Hearings Unit for level of needed documentation.

Temporary Break Request:

The following questions need to be answered to request a temporary access break:

1. Note the need, background and history for the request.
2. What other alternatives have been looked at? Is there alternate access available? If so, why won't the alternate access work?
3. What type of impacts will the break create?
4. How to mitigate those impacts?
5. What is the duration of the break request?
6. The limited access fencing must be replaced nightly or a gate installed. A gate must be locked when not in use.
7. Does the request enter onto either mainline or ramps? If so how will traffic be protected?
8. If applicable, include a traffic control plan?
9. If the break request location is within the Interstate ROW the request must be approved by FHWA. There is a 30 day approval time for FHWA.

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Temporary Limited Access Break Requests During Construction of WSDOT Construction Projects:

A temporary construction access break request on a limited access interstate facility is submitted for approval directly to FHWA from the WSDOT project office. (See WSDOT Construction Manual, Section 1-2.3A(3).)

A temporary construction access break request on a limited access non-interstate facility will be approved by Regional Headquarters. On all other roadways the Project Engineer may approve the temporary access break, with Regional concurrence. (See WSDOT Construction Manual, Section 1-2.3A(3).)

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