

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FINAL BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [HB 929](#)

**TITLE:** Local Government Regulation of Chickees

**SPONSOR(S):** Cobb and Gentry

**COMPANION BILL:** [SB 1020](#) (Truenow)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

**FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION:** 112 Y's 0 N's

**GOVERNOR'S ACTION:** Pending

## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The bill prohibits a county or municipality from enacting an ordinance that prevents a member of the Miccosukee or Seminole Tribes from constructing a chickee under certain conditions.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill may have a positive indeterminate fiscal impact on the private sector.

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## ANALYSIS

### EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance or policy that prevents or has the effect of preventing a member of the [Miccosukee Tribe of Indians](#) of Florida or [Seminole Tribe of Florida](#) from constructing a [chickee](#) as defined in [553.73, F.S.](#):

- In a side yard if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from the property line.
- Near another structure if the chickee is at least 10 feet away from any other structure. (Sections [1](#) and [2](#))

The bill also prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting an ordinance or regulation concerning chickees that is more restrictive than federal floodplain management regulations. (Sections [1](#) and [2](#))

The bill revises the definition of "chickee" for purposes of exemption from the [Florida Building Code](#) to include chickees that:

- Have a wooden deck.
- Incorporate nonwood fasteners.
- Incorporate electrical or plumbing features in accordance with a [building permit](#) for those specific features. (Section [3](#))

The bill adds a criminal penalty for a person who is not a member of the tribes who constructs a chickee in an attempt to assert an exemption. (Section [3](#))

The bill exempts a chickee from the [Florida Fire Prevention Code](#) if:

- The chickee is at least 20 feet from another structure subject to the Florida Building Code, or
- The chickee otherwise implements fire-proofing measures approved by a certified fire protection system contractor. (Section [4](#))

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2026. (Section [5](#))

**STORAGE NAME:** h0929z

**DATE:** 3/13/2026

**RELEVANT INFORMATION**

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

**Indian Tribes in Florida**

Two tribes, the [Seminole Tribe of Florida](#) and the [Miccosukee Tribe of Indians](#) of Florida, currently reside and have tribal lands in the state. Most state law governing the relationship between the state and the federally-recognized tribes with tribal lands in the state is contained in ch. 285, F.S.<sup>1</sup>

**Chickee**

Chickee is the word Seminoles use for “house.” Chickees are palmetto thatch over cypress log frame.



Florida law currently defines “chickee” as an open-sided wooden hut that has a thatched roof of palm or palmetto or other traditional materials, and that does not incorporate any electrical, plumbing, or nonwood features. They are exempt from the Florida Building Code when constructed by the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida or the Seminole Tribe of Florida.<sup>3</sup>

**Florida Building Code**

Chapter 553, part IV, F.S., is known as the “Florida Building Codes Act” (Act). The purpose and intent of the Act is to provide a mechanism for the uniform adoption, updating, interpretation, and enforcement of a single, unified state building code. The Building Code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.<sup>4</sup>

It is the intent of the Legislature that local governments have the power to inspect all buildings, structures, and facilities within their jurisdiction in protection of the public’s health, safety, and welfare.<sup>5</sup>

**Florida Fire Prevention Code**

The SFM adopts by rule the Florida Fire Prevention Code (FFPC), which contains all fire safety laws and rules that pertain to the design, construction, erection, alteration, modification, repair, and demolition of public and private buildings, structures, and facilities and the enforcement of such fire safety laws and rules.<sup>6</sup> The SFM adopts a new edition of the FFPC every three years<sup>7</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the FFPC took effect on December 31, 2023.<sup>8</sup> The FFPC is largely based on the *National Fire Protection Association’s (NFPA) Standard 1, Fire Prevention Code*, along with the current edition of the *NFPA’s Life Safety Code, NFPA 101*.<sup>9</sup>

The FFPC is the minimum fire prevention code deemed adopted in each municipality, county, and special district with firesafety responsibilities, and applies to every building and structure throughout the state with few exceptions.<sup>10</sup> Municipalities, counties, and special districts with firesafety responsibilities may supplement the

<sup>1</sup> [Ch. 285, F.S.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Seminole Tribe of Florida, <https://www.semtribe.com/culture/chickee> (last visited Jan. 15, 2026).

<sup>3</sup> [S. 553.73\(10\)\(i\), F.S.](#)

<sup>4</sup> See [s. 553.72\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [S. 553.72, F.S.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ch. 69A, F.A.C.

<sup>7</sup> [S. 633.202, F.S.](#)

<sup>8</sup> See Florida Fire Prevention Code (FFPC), <https://www.myfloridacfo.com/division/sfm/bfp/florida-fire-prevention-code> (last visited January 28, 2026).

<sup>9</sup> [S. 633.202\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [S. 633.208, F.S.](#) and R. 69A-60.002(1), F.A.C.

FFPC with more stringent standards.<sup>11</sup> Local fire authorities (authorities having jurisdiction or LAHJs) set standards for radio signal strength throughout buildings within their jurisdiction to ensure consistent fire and rescue communication capabilities.

**Building Permits**

Every local government must enforce the Florida Building Code and issue building permits.<sup>12</sup> A building permit is an official document or certificate issued by the local building official that authorizes performance of a specific activity.<sup>13</sup> It is unlawful for a person, firm, or corporation to construct, erect, alter, repair, secure, or demolish any building without first obtaining a building permit from the local enforcement agency or from such persons as may, by resolution or regulation, be directed to issue such permit.<sup>14</sup>

Any construction work that requires a building permit also requires plans and inspections to ensure the work complies with the Florida Building Code.<sup>15</sup> The Florida Building Code requires certain building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and gas inspections.<sup>16</sup> Construction work may not be done beyond a certain point until it passes an inspection. Generally speaking, a permit for construction work that passes the required inspections are considered completed or closed.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [S. 633.208\(3\), F.S.](#), and R. 69A-60.002(2), F.A.C.

<sup>12</sup> Ss. [125.01\(1\)\(bb\)](#), [125.56\(1\)](#), and [553.80\(1\)](#), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> [S. 468.603, F.S.](#); [S. 202 of the Eighth edition of the Florida Building Code \(Building\)](#).

<sup>14</sup> Ss. [125.56\(4\)\(a\)](#) and [553.79\(1\)](#), F.S.

<sup>15</sup> S. [553.79\(2\)\(a\)1](#), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> *See* [s. 553.73\(1\)](#), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> [Section 110 of the Eighth Edition of the Florida Building Code \(Building\)](#).