



STATE OF FLORIDA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Ron DeSantis, Governor

Kevin Guthrie, Executive Director

July 31, 2026

Senator Ed Hooper
Senate Appropriations Chair
202 Senate Building
404 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Representative Lawrence McClure
House Appropriations Chair
221 The Capitol
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Florida PALM User Acceptance Testing Report

Dear Senator Hooper and Representative McClure:

Attached is the Florida PALM User Acceptance Report for the Florida Division of Emergency Management submitted pursuant to Chapter 2026-232, Section 249 Laws of Florida.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jeremy W. Smith
Bureau Chief of Financial Management
PALM Sponsor, Florida Division of Emergency Management



Florida Division of Emergency Management **UAT Engagement Plan**

For Florida PALM Financials, Payroll, and Data Warehouse/Business Intelligence

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Overview

The State of Florida is transitioning from the Florida Accounting Information Resource (FLAIR) system to the Florida Planning, Accounting, and Ledger Management (PALM) system. This plan summarizes the Florida Division of Emergency Management's (FDEM's) framework for implementing PALM and outlines the division's user acceptance testing approach. FDEM is committed to preparing end users to use PALM confidently. Through its testing approach, communication, and ongoing support, FDEM aims to equip end users with the knowledge, tools, and resources needed to successfully transition to the new system and perform their job duties effectively.

User Engagement Approach

FDEM is utilizing mission groups related to Hurricane Helene to organize and execute testing. This methodology aims to mimic the process during an activation. In addition, FDEM is embedding two other strategies to assist in the facilitation of user acceptance testing:

- 1) Tier-based Strategy
- 2) Project Recommended Standard Activity

The tier-based strategy establishes a ranking to the user story activities and determines the testing execution sequence. **Chart 1: Tier System** illustrates the established tier system.

Chart 1: Tier System

Tier 1	Critical/Essential Tasks
Tier 2	Important tasks
Tier 3	Recurring tasks (Monthly, Quarterly, Annual Reports, etc.)
Tier 4	Low Priority Tasks

Additionally, FDEM will utilize the prescribed 'Project Recommended Standard Activity' requirement to drive initial end user acceptance testing, as well. The Project Recommended Standard Activities are being tracked through PALM Monthly Progress Reporting.

FDEM has 152 applicable user story activities and successfully tested 77% of Project Recommended Activities across all Business Process Groups (BPGs). Most of the initial testing has been conducted by FDEM Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), however, testing with end users is underway. FDEM plans to continue user acceptance testing in efforts to complete all applicable user story activities.

FDEM will continue to assess and adjust strategy depending on end user needs and to accommodate for any shift in PALM requirements. FDEM's testing schedule and completion expectations are dependent on continued access to the PALM testing environment, availability of assigned SMEs and end users, timely resolution of testing defects, and any changes to Florida PALM Project requirements or timelines.

Testing Scope

Key members of the PALM Change Champion Network and Project Management Liaison will act as the primary and secondary parties responsible for the success of the user acceptance testing. The principal goal of coordination of user acceptance testing will be to optimize the time spent testing and will utilize instructor-led/conference style meetings to conduct testing.

FDEM will be utilizing test scripts to structure the testing activities of end users and to encourage testing in valuable areas (highly critical Tier 1 activities). Test scripts will have a secondary function and will serve as training tools for end users, as the scripts will record a step-by-step which will be available to all end users via FDEM's PALM Training Folder.

Roles and Responsibilities

FDEM staff have been assigned specific roles and responsibilities to support and facilitate the agency's transition to the PALM system. Individuals selected for these roles were chosen based on their subject matter expertise, institutional knowledge, familiarity with agency processes, and understanding of operational needs. This structure helps ensure that transition activities are coordinated effectively and that staff are positioned to provide informed guidance, support and oversight throughout the implementation process.

Table 1: Agency UAT Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Resources
Agency Sponsor	• Certify readiness to participate in UAT. • Regularly monitor agency UAT progress. • Monitor agency risks, issues, and mitigation plans and communicate them to the Project. • Request, provide and assign appropriate resources as needed, and remove obstacles to successfully complete UAT activities.	Jeremy W. Smith <i>Jeremy.Smith@em.myflorida.com</i>
Agency Liaison	• Collaborate closely with UAT Coordinator and provide updates to the Agency Sponsor. • Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Brittany Adams <i>Brittany.Adams@em.myflorida.com</i>
Business Liaison	• Identify and confirm all agency business processes to be tested. • Confirm the creation of User Stories and updated documentation for processes and procedures. • Ensure that end-to-end testing of agency business processes is conducted. • Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Jeremy W. Smith <i>Jeremy.Smith@em.myflorida.com</i>

Role	Responsibility	Resources
Technical Liaison	- Identify and confirm all agency business systems to be tested. - Confirm agency business systems are ready for full integration testing. - Coordinate agency business system remediation as needed, based on the results of testing. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Melissa Hancock <i>Melissa.Hancock@em.myflorida.com</i>
Project Management Liaison	- Capture and track both Project- and internal agency-driven UAT activities and maintain awareness of progress and due dates. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Alma Valencia <i>Alma.Valencia@em.myflorida.com</i>
Change Management Liaison	- Develop and maintain UAT communication plan. - Support the identification and tracking of agency UAT participants. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Faith Holmes-Silas <i>Faith.Holmes@em.myflorida.com</i>
Training Liaison	- Identify and track agency UAT participants. - Support agency hosted UAT sessions with end users. - Coordinate or lead the agency training material development. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Alma Valencia <i>Alma.Valencia@em.myflorida.com</i>
UAT Coordinator	- Track and confirm testing progress. - Lead the Testing Error Triage Team. - Serve as the primary point of contact with the Florida PALM Project team for reporting progress, discussing testing issues, ensuring coordination of agency efforts with the overall UAT timeline.	Alma Valencia <i>Alma.Valencia@em.myflorida.com</i>

Role	Responsibility	Resources
Testing Error Triage Team	- Meet regularly to review progress and discuss upcoming activities. - Review testing errors to determine resolution or need for escalation.	Kristi Coppenger <i>Kristi.Coppenger@em.myflorida.com</i> Dale Dollar <i>Dale.Dollar@em.myflorida.com</i>
Subject Matter Experts (Assigned per Business Process Grouping)	- Support UAT planning (e.g., user stories/script development, agency-specific materials development). - Participate as first end users in UAT. - Conduct agency hosted UAT session with end users. - Serve as primary point of contact for end user business process, data, and technical questions. - Support agency training material development. - Report testing errors and testing progress to UAT Coordinator. - Support end user understanding during UAT and after go-live. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Tiffany Gary Emily Benton Susanne McDaniel Faith Holmes Brittany Adams Jessica Blake Richard Gage Michelle Kelley Quanah Brown Kayla Montgomery Davion Baker Kristi Coppenger Kenisha Whitaker
Security Access Manager	- Perform and track role assignment changes for SMEs and end users during UAT. - Report agency-specific Florida PALM risks and issues to Agency Sponsor and UAT Coordinator and support mitigation strategies or resolutions.	Kristi Coppenger <i>Kristi.Coppenger@em.myflorida.com</i>
Identity Provider Subject Matter Expert	- Add end users to the active directory (or applicable tool) for access to UAT. - Maintain active directory for access throughout UAT (adding new end users or removing end users as needed).	Kristi Coppenger <i>Kristi.Coppenger@em.myflorida.com</i>
File Manager	- Serve as the primary point of contact for interface testing. - Access the Florida PALM Managed File Transfer (MFT) site to send and receive files between the agency and Florida PALM.	Melissa Hancock <i>Melissa.Hancock@em.myflorida.com</i>
Batch Error Contact	Serve as the primary point of contact for batch errors or change in batch process timing.	Chris Backen <i>Chris.Backen@em.myflorida.com</i>
End Users	- Practice related job processes. - Confirm end user role assignment(s). - Report testing errors and testing progress to SME or UAT Coordinator, as appropriate.	Included in Table 2 below.

User Story Testing Progress

FDEM has developed a series of User Stories associated with activities within the Bureau of Financial Management (BFM) that correlate to specific job duties and business processes. These User Stories are intended to help validate the PALM functionality aligns with the responsibilities and operational needs of end users. FDEM has completed approximately 50 percent of its User Story Testing Activities and has completed a significant number of the Project Recommended Standard Activities. FDEM continues to work diligently each month to advance testing efforts and address remaining testing requirements. However, based on the current testing progress, FDEM does not anticipate completing the first round of testing by the Refresh. FDEM will continue to monitor progress, identify any barriers, and take appropriate steps to support completion of testing activities. **See Table 2: User Story Testing Progress** below.

Table 2: User Story Testing Progress

Number of Activities	Unique Number of User Stories	Number of Successfully Tested Unique User Stories	Number of Times the User Stories Have Been Tested	Status Comments
Account Management and Financial Reporting (AMFR)				
14	36	13	13	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Accounts Receivable (AR)				
24	68	29	29	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Asset Accounting and Management (AAM)				
20	35	22	23	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Banking (BK)				
6	15	2	2	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Budget Management and Cash Control (BM/CC)				
7	26	12	12	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Contracts Management (CT)				
2	4	0	0	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Disbursements Management (DM)				
23	86	11	11	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Data Warehouse/Business Intelligence (DW/BI)				
6	8	6	6	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Grants Management (GM)				
2	4	0	0	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Inter/Intra Unit Transactions (IU)				
13	52	30	30	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.

Number of Activities	Unique Number of User Stories	Number of Successfully Tested Unique User Stories	Number of Times the User Stories Have Been Tested	Status Comments
Payroll Management (PR)				
26	85	67	67	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Projects Management (PM)				
10	28	27	27	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.
Revenue Accounting (RA)				
2	7	11	11	Testing Complete
System Access and Controls (SAC)				
3	8	4	4	Ongoing; Will continue working through user stories.

Agency Business System Testing Progress

FDEM's Information Technology Management (ITM) team is responsible for coordinating and supporting Cycle 3 testing activities to ensure applicable systems are evaluated appropriately as part of the PALM transition. To validate system readiness and integration, Cycle 3 testing includes Informatica and Florida PA inbound and outbound files.

Cycle 3 testing remains underway and FDEM ITM will continue working to complete the necessary testing activities while identifying and addressing any issues that may arise during the process.

Table 3: Agency Business System Testing Progress

Business System Name	Cycle 3 Status (Not Started, In Progress, Complete)	End User Testing Needed (Y/N)	Status of End User Testing (Not Started, In Progress, Complete)	Planned or Actual Completion Date of End User Testing
Axiom Voucher System	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Financial Operations and Core Utility Suite (FOCUS)	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Division of Emergency Management Enterprise Solutions (DEMES)	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Informatica	In Progress	Y	In Progress	9/9/2026
Payroll System	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Smartlink	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Power BI	N/A	N	N/A	N/A
Florida PA	In Progress	Y	In Progress	9/9/2026

End User Testing

Most end users who have participated in user story testing to date have been Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), who have a strong understanding of agency processes, job responsibilities, operational requirements, and system functionality. FDEM is working to engage the remaining end users needed to complete testing in the PALM environment and ensure staff have the opportunity to participate in testing activities and provide feedback, where appropriate. FDEM will continue making progress toward completing UAT by the end of the UAT period while monitoring testing status, identifying gaps, and addressing barriers that may affect completion.

In addition, FDEM staff anticipate dedicating specific time commitments for testing activities to ensure staff have sufficient opportunity to become familiar with PALM, build confidence using the new system, and better understand how the system will support their assigned roles and responsibilities. **Table 4: End User Testing by Business Process Grouping** provides FDEM's plan for end user testing.

Table 4: End User Testing by Business Process Grouping

Planned Number of End Users Performing Testing	Anticipated Time Commitment	End User Organization(s) or Agency Business System	Planned Dates for End Users to Perform Testing (Start and End Dates)
Account Management and Financial Reporting (AMFR)			
5	2 hours per week	Budget Management	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Accounts Receivables (AR)			
3	2 hours per week	Revenue	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Asset Accounting and Management (AAM)			
7	1 – 1.5 hours per week	Property Management	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Banking (BK)			
5	2 – 3 hours per week	Revenue	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Budget Management and Cash Control (BM/CC)			
4	2 – 3 hours per week	Budget Management	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Contracts Management (CT)			
5	1 – 1.5 hours per week	Contract Management	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Disbursements Management (DM)			
13	2 – 3 hours per week	Disbursements	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Data Warehouse/Business Intelligence (DW/BI)			
2	1 hour a week	Systems	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Grants Management (GM)			
4	2 – 3 hours per week	Grant Management	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026

Planned Number of End Users Performing Testing	Anticipated Time Commitment	End User Organization(s) or Agency Business System	Planned Dates for End Users to Perform Testing (Start and End Dates)
Inter/Intra Unit Transactions (IU)			
6	2 – 3 hours per week	<i>Bureau of Financial Specialists</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
6	2 – 3 hours per week	<i>Disbursements</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Payroll Management (PR)			
3	2 – 3 hours per week	<i>Payroll Team Human Resources</i>	March 2026 – October 2026
4	1.5 – 2 hours per week	<i>Budget Management</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Projects Management (PM)			
7	2 – 2.5 hours per week	<i>Bureau of Financial Specialists</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
4	2 – 2.5 hours per week	<i>Budget Management</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
Revenue Accounting (RA)			
3	2 – 3 hours per week	<i>Disbursements Human Resources Human Resources</i>	Approx. August 2026 – October 2026
System Access and Controls (SAC)			
1	1 – 2 hours per week	<i>Systems</i>	Approx. End of August 2026 – October 2026

UAT Engagement Risks

FDEM regularly monitors risks related to PALM and has established mitigation plans to address them. This ongoing monitoring helps prevent risks from increasing severity or likelihood and supports proactive decision-making throughout the transition. FDEM has provided bimonthly risk updates to the PALM team and will provide monthly updates as the PALM go-live date approaches. An abridged version of FDEM's current risks is provided below.

Risk Title	Risk Rating	Mitigation Plan
PA Payment Process	2 (Low/Medium)	FDEM will coordinate with Florida PA users and points of contact to confirm interface needs, document required decisions and ensure the appropriate interface discussions occur before testing milestones are affected.

EOG/DEM Interface Relationship	2 (Low/Medium)	Working directly with Kelley Sasso in EOG to put process agreements in place.
Payroll Process	1 (Low)	FDEM will prioritize Payroll during UAT because of its downstream impacts and will use testing results to quickly close issues or escalate them for resolution.
Interface Need Fulfillment	6 (High/Medium)	DEMES development assets have been on-boarded to the PALM project to project any issues that may arise and attempt to port all elements of PALM on top of the FLAIR structure.
Grant LTD Balances	1 (Low)	The FDEM Finance Team is building its reporting effectiveness to increase the agility of building reporting structures to the necessary level to meet this challenge.
Fund Data Freshness	1 (Low)	The budget team in the Finance Bureau has been tasked with clearing stale funds/project ids out of our system.
FLAIR to PALM Shutdown	1 (Low)	DEM is working on a cutover plan to determine 'next steps' to mitigate delays/issues.
New Interfaces Required due to changing ABS Functionality	4 (Medium)	If new interface needs arise, FDEM will email the Readiness Coordinator and Technical Coordinator with the requested interface, the business need, and the expected impact on testing or implementation activities.
Backend Report Information	2 (Low/Medium)	Monitoring the Knowledge Center to determine if new information is released.