

PORCH WINDOWS DIRECT

How Xtend Porch Windows Fit Within Florida Building Codes

A practical guide to removable porch-enclosure panels, product approvals, and project classification

Bottom line: Xtend units are best presented as removable vinyl-glazed panels used to enclose a non-habitable, unconditioned porch or screen enclosure—not as conventional exterior windows serving a conditioned dwelling. Florida’s code expressly recognizes screen enclosures with removable vinyl wind-break panels. The final classification and permit requirements remain with the local building official.

The distinction that matters

Florida does not treat every transparent panel as the same product. The code separates conventional windows in the building envelope from removable panels used in screen enclosures and certain sunrooms. That project context—not simply the fact that a panel is clear—drives the applicable requirements.

Question	Conventional exterior window	Xtend porch-enclosure application
What is it doing?	Completing the dwelling’s weather-resistant exterior envelope.	Adding removable clear-vinyl protection to a porch or screen-enclosure opening.
Type of space	Typically habitable and conditioned.	Non-habitable and unconditioned when used in the intended Category I/II-type application.
Relationship to the house	May be the primary wall opening separating indoors from outdoors.	The home’s existing exterior wall, windows, and doors remain in place and continue to separate the dwelling from the porch.
Storm role	May be required to resist project design pressures and wind-borne debris.	Not marketed or relied upon as hurricane, impact, or wind-borne-debris protection; removable-panel rules may apply.

Why Xtend aligns with the porch-enclosure pathway

- **The Florida Building Code definition** of a screen enclosure includes walls of insect screening “with or without removable vinyl or acrylic wind break panels.”
- **Xtend uses flexible 10-mil vinyl**—below the 20-mil maximum described for Category I sunrooms—and includes a full exterior screen.
- **The vinyl-glazed sashes can be removed** from the tracks from inside the porch. This supports the code concept of a removable panel.
- **The intended room remains non-habitable and unconditioned**, with the dwelling’s original exterior wall, windows, and doors left intact.

Relevant Florida pathways

1. Screen enclosure

Strongest fit for many retrofit projects. FBC Residential defines a screen enclosure as a building or part of a building with insect-screen walls, with or without removable vinyl or acrylic wind-break panels. This language directly recognizes the basic use case: a screened porch that gains removable weather panels.

2. Category I sunroom

A Category I sunroom is non-habitable and unconditioned. Its openings may be enclosed with insect screening or plastic film not more than 20 mil thick. Xtend’s 10-mil flexible vinyl is consistent with that material-thickness description. Local officials may distinguish a “screen enclosure” from a “sunroom” based on the complete structure.

3. Category II sunroom

Category II also remains non-habitable and unconditioned, but permits enclosed walls with translucent or transparent plastic or glass. Depending on the porch design and jurisdiction, an official or designer may use this classification instead of Category I.

4. Categories III, IV and V

These are not the default Xtend position. Category III adds forced-entry, air-leakage, and water-penetration requirements. Categories IV and V are habitable/conditioned and add thermal-performance requirements; Category V is open to the main structure. Those uses move the project closer to conventional fenestration and building-envelope requirements.

Important boundary: Adding permanent heating or cooling, removing the wall or exterior doors/windows between the porch and house, or representing the porch as living space can change the classification and trigger requirements Xtend is not intended to satisfy as a conventional window system.

What Florida says about removable panels

FBC Building Section 2002.3.3 expressly allows vinyl, tempered-glass, and acrylic panels in screen enclosures when the panels are removable. It also requires removable panels to be visibly identified by a decal stating, in substance, that the panel must be removed when wind speeds exceed 75 mph (34 m/s).

Product action item: For Florida projects using this pathway, provide a visible removable-panel warning decal and project instructions consistent with Section 2002.3.3. The permit professional or local official should confirm decal placement and whether each sash or each unit must be labeled.

Wind-borne debris and hurricane claims

Xtend should not be sold as hurricane, impact, or wind-borne-debris protection. Florida Statute 553.842 prohibits marketing a product for those purposes unless it has the required approval. The code contains exceptions for certain porches or balconies under existing roofs/decks enclosed with screen or qualifying removable vinyl/acrylic panels, but the exception depends on the complete project configuration and code section applied by the permitting authority.

Florida Product Approval: the careful answer

Question: Does Xtend have a Florida Product Approval (FL#)?

Recommended answer: Xtend is not represented as a Florida-approved exterior window, hurricane product, or impact-protection system. It is designed for screened porches and other non-habitable, unconditioned enclosures using removable vinyl panels. Florida's code specifically recognizes removable vinyl panels in these applications. The local building official determines the project classification and what documentation is required for the permit.

Why this answer is accurate: Florida's statewide product-approval system covers listed building-envelope and structural categories—including windows, exterior doors, panel walls, and impact-protective systems. Whether a product falls into that system depends on its intended code use. Calling Xtend a conventional exterior window invites conventional-window requirements. Presenting it accurately as a removable porch-enclosure panel keeps the discussion tied to the screen-enclosure/sunroom provisions written for that use.

What we can document

- Intended use: removable weather panels for a screened porch or non-habitable, unconditioned enclosure.
- Construction: powder-coated aluminum frames, full exterior insect screen, and removable sashes glazed with flexible 10-mil vinyl.
- Testing: available structural/wind-test documentation may be supplied for technical review, but it must not be described as Florida Product Approval or as hurricane/impact certification.
- Installation: project-specific rough openings, attachment method, substrate, fasteners, and supporting structure must match the approved plans and local requirements.

- Limitations: not a guardrail, not an impact-protection product, not a primary exterior window, and not intended to convert the porch into conditioned living space.

Project checklist for Florida

Review item	Responsibility
Space remains non-habitable and unconditioned	Confirm
Existing exterior wall, windows, and doors remain between porch and dwelling	Confirm
Permit classification identified: screen enclosure or sunroom category	AHJ/designer
Panel-removal decal requirement addressed	Confirm
Wind design of host structure and attachments addressed	AHJ/designer
Required guards/fall protection provided independently	Confirm
Pool-barrier and egress requirements reviewed when applicable	AHJ/designer
No hurricane, impact, or wind-borne-debris protection claim	Confirm

Suggested permit-description language

Sample description: Install removable, flexible-vinyl-glazed porch-enclosure panels within existing screened-porch openings. The porch will remain non-habitable and unconditioned. The existing exterior wall, windows, and doors separating the dwelling from the porch will remain in place. The panels are not proposed as hurricane, impact, or wind-borne-debris protection and are not part of a required guard system. Final installation and labeling will comply with the locally approved plans and applicable Florida Building Code provisions.

Suggested homeowner explanation

These are porch windows in the everyday sense, but they are not intended to function as the home's conventional exterior windows. They are removable vinyl-glazed panels that make a screened porch more comfortable while the porch remains an unconditioned, non-living space. Your local building department has the final say on permits and classification.

Limits of this guide

This guide is a positioning and planning resource, not an engineering evaluation, legal opinion, permit approval, or project-specific code determination. Florida code requirements vary with location, wind speed, exposure, building type, enclosure design, existing conditions, and local interpretation. A Florida-licensed design professional and the authority having jurisdiction should confirm each project.

Primary references

[Florida Building Code, Residential, 8th Edition \(2023\), Chapter 2 and Section R301.2.1.1.1](#) — screen-enclosure and sunroom definitions/categories

[Florida Building Code, Building, 8th Edition \(2023\), Chapter 20](#) — Section 2002.3.3 removable-panel and decal requirements

[Florida Building Code, Building, 8th Edition \(2023\), Chapter 16](#) — wind-borne-debris provisions and porch/balcony exception

[Florida Statutes § 553.842 \(2026\)](#) — statewide product evaluation/approval and marketing restrictions

[City of Jacksonville Beach Sunroom/Screen Enclosure Affidavit \(8th Edition\)](#) — local-government example of category and use limitations

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