

CITY OF COSTA MESA



NON-COMMERCIAL PORTABLE SIGN REGULATIONS

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Political campaign signs are now considered “non-commercial portable signs” in the City of Costa Mesa. Non-commercial portable signs are defined as:

Any sign which can be moved from place to place which is not permanently affixed to the ground or to a building which is not used for commercial purposes. Examples of non-commercial signs generally include, but are not limited to, signs that espouse a political or religious viewpoint, and signs commenting on public officials(s) or matter(s) of public discourse.

Non-commercial portable signs may be displayed in Costa Mesa if they comply with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-123; here is the link to the Municipal Code: <http://qcode.us/codes/costamesa/?view=desktop>

Some common questions and answers regarding non-commercial portable signs are:

- Q:** Does the City require a security bond to be posted to ensure removal of non-commercial portable signs following the election?
- A:** No, the City does not require a security bond for non-commercial portable signs. However, the owner of the signs must affix their name, address, and telephone number on the sign prior to installation.

- Q:** When may non-commercial portable signs be posted?
- A:** Non-commercial portable signs may be placed in public parkways between 6 AM Friday and 6 PM Sunday. In the six weeks before the applicable election, the non-commercial portable signs may remain in the public parkways without any weekday restrictions.

Non-commercial portable signs may also be placed on private properties. Commercial portable signs are still only allowed to be installed in the public rights-of-ways between 6 AM Friday and 6 PM Sunday.

Q: When must non-commercial portable signs be removed?

A: Signs must be removed within 10 days after the election.

Q: What are the size limits for non-commercial portable signs?

A: In public rights-of-ways, signs may not exceed 5 sq.ft. in area with a maximum height of 3 feet above grade. On private properties, non-commercial portable signs may not exceed 5 sq.ft. in area with a maximum height of 6 feet above grade.

Q: Where may the non-commercial portable signs be posted?

A: The signs may be posted in any landscaped parkway, or on private property with the consent of the property owner, lessee, or occupant. All non-commercial portable signs – regardless of location – must be posted in the ground.

Q: Where are non-commercial portable signs not allowed to be posted?

A: Signs **may not** be posted on: Utility poles; roadway signs; traffic control boxes; bus shelters; in tree wells; center median islands; overhanging a curb, sidewalk, or driveway or anywhere that obstructs visibility of pedestrian or vehicular traffic; within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, intersection of an alley, street, or highway; or within 15 feet of a driveway, or on fences. Additionally, they may not be posted in front of public facilities such as libraries, schools, city hall, and parks and must be placed a minimum of 100 feet away from any polling place.

Q: What happens to non-commercial portable signs that are not legally posted?

A: City staff will only remove signs from public rights-of-ways posted in violation of the Municipal Code. Signs will be stored for 10 days and then can be disposed of unless the owner of the seized sign contacts the City's Code Enforcement Division within that 10-day period.

Q: How will a sign owner know whether the City or a vandal removed a sign?

A: Signs removed by the City are tracked and stored as noted above. The owner can contact the Code Enforcement Division at 714.754.5638.

Q: Are there any restrictions regarding non-commercial banners?

A: Yes. They may only be placed flat and securely affixed to a building or freestanding sign; identification must be placed on signs; maximum display time of 60 days; must be maintained in good condition; maximum of 1 banner per tenant/building occupant per street frontage; permit required.

Maximum area permitted for:

Residential zones: The greater of 0.5 sq.ft. per dwelling unit or 20 SF/100 sq.ft. maximum per site

All other zones: 0.5 sq.ft. per lineal foot of building frontage facing the street; minimum 25 sq.ft. per tenant with a maximum of 75 sq.ft. per tenant.

If you have any questions, please call Code Enforcement and 714.754.5638