



## Signage in the City Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is the purpose of the Sign Ordinance?***

The Sign Ordinance was developed to balance the needs of businesses to advertise, while providing minimum standards to safeguard life, health, property, public welfare, and provide for a more attractive appearance for our community.

### ***What is a sign?***

A sign is any device, structure, fixture, or placard used for the purpose of advertising or identifying any establishment, products, goods, service, political organization, person, or point of view of any kind.

Keep in mind, all signs shall be placed on private property. Sorry, signs placed in any right-of-way are subject to removal according to SMC 15.08 and AS 19.25.105.

### ***When do I need a Sign Permit?***

All new permanent and temporary signs, as well as alterations to existing signs, require a permit unless specifically exempt in either Section 15.08.010 (C) or 15.08.030 (D) of the Soldotna Municipal Code.

Items such as memorial signs, for rent/sale, and political signs are examples of signs that are exempt from permitting requirements.

### ***Do I need a Sign Permit to change advertising copy or routine maintenance?***

No, as long as the total area of the sign does not change and there are no structural or electrical changes.

### ***What are Temporary Signs?***

Temporary signs may be used for additional advertising related to short short-term (non-routine) events. Temporary signs may remain in place for a period not to exceed 30 days, and may not exceed 81 square feet in area.

### ***What signs are not allowed?***

A full list of prohibited signs is provided in SMC 15.08.030.C and include items such as:

- Abandoned signs;
- Off premise signs;
- Sign placed on vehicles or trailers parked primarily to display sign;
- Portable signs (except for sandwich boards);
- Animated and flashing signs;
- Audio signs; and
- Unauthorized signs in the right-of-way.

### ***Are there unique standards for Freestanding Signs in the Commercial District?***

Yes, freestanding signs may not exceed twenty feet in height, cannot exceed 110 square feet in area and need to be placed twenty feet back from the edge of curb, and at least five feet from the property line.

In addition to the general application requirements, freestanding signs require final approval upon the completion of the installation to verify the sign meets the requirements of all applicable codes, and were installed per the approved plans.

### ***Is my sign "Grandfathered"?***

Signs constructed prior to December 1, 1999 or signs that were permitted but made non-conforming by subsequent code amendments to the Sign Code are eligible for non-conforming status, but a permit must still be applied for if alterations/modifications or a change in location is made. However, there are several situations in which a sign would lose its legal non-conforming status and be required to come into compliance with the current regulations.

- If the sign was relocated for any reason;
- If the sign is abandoned, or damaged or deteriorates to an extent of 50% of the replacement value;
- If the structure or sign is altered in any way except towards compliance with the current regulations; and

### ***Can I apply for a variance to the sign code regulations?***

In obtaining a permit, an applicant may apply to the Planning Commission for a variance from the height, allowable area and placement requirements. Contact the Planning Department for more information.

### ***Basic Application Submission***

Before a permitted sign can be erected or installed the following information is required:

- Sign Permit Application (available on our website);
- Submittal documents (as indicated on the application);
- \$53 Permit Fee (includes sales tax);
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Sales Tax Compliance Certificate.

### ***What City Department issues the Sign Permit?***

The Planning Department will review and issue your permit to ensure the sign meets the zoning district requirements. However, some signs such as a freestanding sign may require an inspection by the Building Inspector and are considered a structure regulated by the Building Code.