

GUIDELINES FOR SIGNAGE: TEMPORARY GENERAL ELECTION AND REFERENDUM SIGNS

Introduction

The 2020 General Election will be held on Saturday 19 September along with the cannabis and end of life choice referendums.

The Council is responsible for regulating when, where, and how signs can be displayed. All other guidance and rules for general election and referendum advertising, including promoter statement requirements, are determined by the Electoral Commission.

These guidelines summarise the rules that apply to the most common types and locations of temporary general election (candidate and party) and referendum signage in the Christchurch District. A more complete summary of the District Plan rules can be found in the technical guidance. In particular, please refer to this guidance if you are considering signage in areas that may have natural, historic or cultural values such as the coastal environment, signage on verandahs, captive balloons, blimps, or flags hanging over the road corridor, signage in the Papakāinga/ Kāinga Nohoanga Zone, or signage that requires earthworks (e.g. for a support structure) particularly near protected trees.

It is the responsibility of the owner of each sign to ensure that their sign and any supporting structure(s) adhere to the legislation and rules. All temporary election and referendum signs, including on vehicles, must be removed¹ by midnight on the day before Election Day.

Any signs that are not legally established, or signs deemed to be unsafe, will be removed by the Council and compliance costs will apply.

Pre-election period: 18 July – 18 September

Temporary referendum and electoral signs that exceed the rules for permanent signage in the District Plan (e.g. size limits) are permitted for a period of nine weeks before Election Day from Saturday 18 July until midnight Friday 18 September 2020 if they comply with the rules outlined in these guidelines and the technical references.

Note that general election (party and candidate) signs which **comply** with the District Plan rules controlling area, height and number of signs can be erected at any time. Referendum signs are only permitted to be displayed during the nine week pre-election period.

Choosing a location to display temporary General Election and referendum signs

All signs must be located on private property with the permission of the **owner** of the property on which it is displayed. Where the sign is located in or on the State Highway network, NZTA permission is required.

Temporary election and referendum signs are not permitted on Council-owned public places including roads, footpaths, berms and verges, attached to wharves or jetties, or in parks. Signage must not be attached to public trees, traffic signals, poles or other road structures. Freestanding signs are not permitted in the road corridor.

The exceptions to this are:

- Where there is an existing legal sign frame or billboard in a public place.

¹ Or must comply with the District Plan standards for permanent signage.

- On fences facing the road where it is flush with the fence and does not protrude more than 100mm into the road corridor (which includes over footpaths and berms), provided that the owner of the fence has also given their permission.

Temporary election and referendum signs may not be:

- Reflectorised, illuminated, or have any moveable parts.
- Flashing or digitised unless they are on legally established billboards or digital displays.
- Similar to or the same as any traffic sign or controls in shape or colour.

General election (party or candidate) signs: general requirements

Temporary general election signage may be displayed at any time if it complies with the District Plan standards for permanent signage or if using an existing legally established sign.

Additional temporary general election signage is permitted during the nine week pre-election period.

During the pre-election period:

- The number of temporary signs (except freestanding signs) per site is not restricted as long as the combined area does not exceed:
 - A maximum area of 3m² of temporary election signage per site in addition to any other legal signage.
 - In zones where more than 3m² of signage per site is permitted by the District Plan (e.g. some commercial or industrial zones) and that limit has not been met by other kinds of signage, the balance can also be used for temporary electoral signage. For example, in a zone where 10m² of signage is normally permitted and the site has 4m² of permanent signage, 9m² (6m² + 3m²) of temporary election signage can be erected.
- Freestanding signs are limited to:
 - 1 sign per site in residential zones
 - 1 sign per vehicle access and pedestrian access in rural, commercial and industrial zones.
- The maximum height of any part of a sign depends on the zone and type of sign:
 - In most residential areas this is 4m
 - In other zones, the maximum height depends on the zone and type of sign.

If a sign is both a candidate or party sign and a referendum sign, both sets of rules apply and the more restrictive rules for referendum signs need to be followed.

Referendum signs: general requirements

Referendum signs are only permitted during the nine week pre-election period.

During this time, the number of temporary signs per site is not restricted as long as the combined area does not exceed the limits outlined below:

- A maximum area of 3m² of temporary election signage per site in addition to any other legal signage.
- In zones where more than 3m² of signage per site is permitted by the District Plan (e.g. some commercial or industrial zones) and that limit has not been met by other kinds of signage, the balance can also be used for temporary electoral signage. For example, in a zone where 10m² of signage is normally permitted and the site has 4m² of permanent signage, 9m² (6m² + 3m²) of temporary election signage can be erected.

- The maximum size of any individual sign is 3m² (except for signs painted on or attached flush to vehicles).
- The sign must not exceed 4m above ground level or the height of the façade where attached to a building, fence or other structure; whichever is the lower of the two.

Advertising on vehicles

When a vehicle or trailer is being parked up for the purpose of electoral or referendum advertising as opposed to transportation, it requires compliance with the temporary signage requirements outlined in these guidelines. Vehicles and trailers must not be parked on Council-owned roads or other public places for the purpose of advertising.

Generally, advertising on vehicles is permitted when the vehicle is being used for day-to-day transportation (for example, driving to and from work, school, family and leisure activities, making business deliveries and the like). For referendum advertising, this is only permitted during the pre-election period.

Election advertising on vehicles:

- Can be painted on or otherwise applied or attached flush with the body of the vehicle being used for transportation.
- No additional structures displaying election advertising can be added to the vehicle.
- In the nine weeks prior to Election Day up to 3m² of candidate or party signage can be added to the vehicle e.g. on the roof, a trailer, in the bed of a truck.

Referendum advertising on vehicles:

- Is only permitted in the nine week pre-election period.
- Can only be painted on or attached flush with the body of the vehicle being used for transportation.
- Any referendum signage such as a trailer, on the roof, in the bed of a truck, etc. is not permitted without a resource consent.

Who to contact for further information:

- **Council Duty Planner:** regarding the location and size of temporary signage or resource consent requirements:
 - 03 941 8999 or dutyplanner@ccc.govt.nz
- **Electoral Commission:** for all other information regarding advertising (including the content for signage), parties and candidates:
 - www.elections.nz - under the Guidance and Rules tab or in the FAQs
 - Specific questions can be directed to advisory@elections.govt.nz
- **NZTA:** state highway requirements:
 - Jude Ward, New Zealand Transport Agency
Network Technician/Corridor Manager, System Design & Delivery
Phone 03 964 2813, email jude.ward@nzta.govt.nz

Reference documents:

- Electoral Commission guidance and rules: www.elections.nz
- District Plan: <https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/plans/christchurch-district-plan/>

- District Plan Property Search website for any location where signage is proposed: <https://districtplan.ccc.govt.nz/PropertySearch/PropertySearchContainer.html>
- Areas identified by the District Plan with special values
- Public Places Bylaw: <https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/bylaws/public-places-bylaw-2018/>
- Traffic and Parking Bylaw: <https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/bylaws/traffic-and-parking-bylaw-2017/>
- New Zealand Transport Authority State Highway Bylaws: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/roads-and-rail/highways-information-portal/technical-disciplines/state-highway-bylaws/>
- Global consent conditions for referendum signs; available on request
- Permission for signage in the road corridor Transport memo; available on request.