

City of Tempe

Political Sign Information



The following information was developed for candidates and campaign committees in response to newly-enacted state legislation concerning political signs. For specific guidance, please refer to Arizona Revised Statute §16-1019, located on the reverse side of the handout.

For further information regarding political signs or to file a sign complaint, please contact City of Tempe Code Compliance at (480) 350-8372.

Political signs shall be placed in locations that:

- are not hazardous to public safety
- do not obstruct clear vision in the area
- do not interfere with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

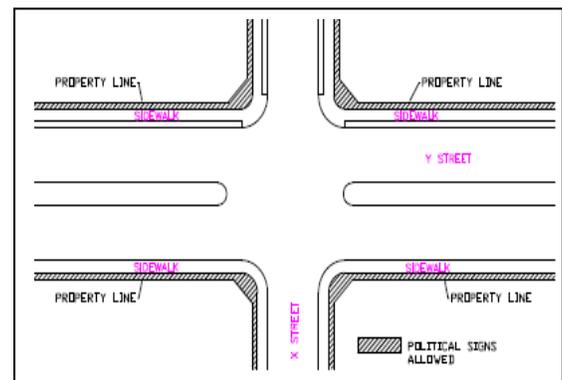
Political sign requirements include:

- permits are not required for political signs
- signs must contain the name and telephone number of the candidate or campaign committee contact person.
- sign size:
 - maximum area of 16 square feet in an area zoned for residential use
 - maximum area of 32 square feet in any other area
- signs must be removed within 15 days after the election. *Exception: for a candidate in the primary election that advances to the general election, the sign may remain in place during both elections, but must be removed within 15 days after the general election.*

City of Tempe right-of-way:

Political signs are allowed within the City of Tempe right-of-way between the outer edge of the sidewalk and the property line.

Due to the potential of public safety hazards and visual obstructions, and to meet ADA requirements, political signs are not allowed on City right-of-way between the outer edge of the sidewalk on one side of the street and the outer edge of the sidewalk on the other side of that street, including all parkways and medians in between.



City of Tempe property:

Political signs cannot be placed, mounted, installed, or affixed to any City of Tempe property or structure, unless placed in conformity with Arizona Revised Statutes §16-1019 (see reverse side).

Private property:

Political signs are allowed on private property with the property owner's permission. Enforcement of signs located on private property is the responsibility of the candidate and the property owner.

Election Day:

On Election Day, political signs are allowed outside of the 75 foot limit at any facility that is used as a polling place. Signs must not impair access to the facility or to parking spaces for voters.

Arizona Revised Statutes

16-1019. Political signs; printed materials; tampering; classification

A. It is a class 2 misdemeanor for any person to knowingly remove, alter, deface or cover any political sign of any candidate for public office or knowingly remove, alter or deface any political mailers, handouts, flyers or other printed materials of a candidate that are delivered by hand to a residence for the period commencing forty-five days before a primary election and ending seven days after the general election.

B. This section does not apply to the removal, alteration, defacing or covering of a political sign or other printed materials by the candidate or the authorized agent of the candidate in support of whose election the sign or materials were placed, by the owner or authorized agent of the owner of private property on which such signs or printed materials are placed with or without permission of the owner or placed in violation of state law or county, city or town ordinance or regulation.

C. Notwithstanding any other statute, ordinance or regulation, a city, town or county of this state shall not remove, alter, deface or cover any political sign if the following conditions are met:

1. The sign is placed in a public right-of-way that is owned or controlled by that jurisdiction.
2. The sign supports or opposes a candidate for public office or it supports or opposes a ballot measure.
3. The sign is not placed in a location that is hazardous to public safety, obstructs clear vision in the area or interferes with the requirements of the Americans with disabilities act (42 United States Code sections 12101 through 12213 and 47 United States Code sections 225 and 611).
4. The sign has a maximum area of sixteen square feet, if the sign is located in an area zoned for residential use, or a maximum area of thirty-two square feet if the sign is located in any other area.
5. The sign contains the name and telephone number or website address of the candidate or campaign committee contact person.

D. If the city, town or county deems that the placement of a political sign constitutes an emergency, the jurisdiction may immediately relocate the sign. The jurisdiction shall notify the candidate or campaign committee that placed the sign within twenty-four hours after the relocation. If a sign is placed in violation of subsection C and the placement is not deemed to constitute an emergency, the city, town or county may notify the candidate or campaign committee that placed the sign of the violation. If the sign remains in violation at least twenty-four hours after the jurisdiction notified the candidate or campaign committee, the jurisdiction may remove the sign. The jurisdiction shall contact the candidate or campaign committee contact and shall retain the sign for at least ten business days to allow the candidate or campaign committee to retrieve the sign without penalty.

E. A city, town or county employee acting within the scope of the employee's employment is not liable for an injury caused by the failure to remove a sign pursuant to subsection D unless the employee intended to cause injury or was grossly negligent.

F. Subsection C does not apply to commercial tourism, commercial resort and hotel sign free zones as those zones are designated by municipalities. The total area of those zones shall not be larger than three square miles, and each zone shall be identified as a specific contiguous area where, by resolution of the municipal governing body, the municipality has determined that based on a predominance of commercial tourism, resort and hotel uses within the zone the placement of political signs within the rights-of-way in the zone will detract from the scenic and aesthetic appeal of the area within the zone and deter its appeal to tourists. Not more than two zones may be identified within a municipality.

G. A city, town or county may prohibit the installation of a sign on any structure owned by the jurisdiction.

H. Subsection C applies only during the period commencing sixty days before a primary election and ending fifteen days after the general election, except that for a sign for a candidate in a primary election who does not advance to the general election, the period ends fifteen days after the primary election.

I. This section does not apply to state highways or routes, or overpasses over those state highways or routes.