

# **OFF-SITE PROMOTIONAL HIGHWAY SIGNAGE POLICY EFFECTIVE JULY 3, 2006**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



GOVERNMENT OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

**Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation  
Department of Transportation and Works  
Department of Government Services  
Department of Municipal Affairs  
In consultation with:  
Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador  
Newfoundland and Labrador Chamber of Commerce  
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities**



## **1. What types of signs are included in the policy?**

Two main types of signs are included in the policy: **Off-Site Promotional Signs** and **Fingerboard signs**.

An **Off-Site Promotional Sign** is a sign that can be erected in Corridor No. 2 along highways, for establishments such as tourism attractions, theme parks, craft shops, art galleries, museums, tour operations, community festivals, farmers/fish markets, hotels/motels, hospitality homes, cabins, campgrounds, eating establishments and trailer dumping sites.

A **Fingerboard Sign** is a sign that is fabricated, installed and maintained by the Department of Transportation and Works in Corridor No. 1 along highways, for the most of the same establishments as listed above for Off-Site Promotional Signs and also includes fuel stations.

The main purpose of fingerboard signs is to provide direction to the location of the listed service/facility. The signs are of standard design listing the name, distance and directional arrow, in standardized white letters on solid, blue coloured background.

## **2. When will the policy become effective?**

The policy became effective on December 3, 2001. Therefore, any sign which is erected without a permit should be removed by the sign owner.

## **3. To which roads does the policy apply?**

The policy applies to all roads maintained by the Department of Transportation and Works and to all intersecting municipal and private roads that fall within the control zone as defined in the regulations.

## **4. How much will it cost me to install a sign under this policy?**

**Off-Site Promotional Signs** - The sign owner is responsible for the cost of constructing, erecting and maintaining off-site promotional signs. There is no fee for the initial permit or for the renewed permit to erect an off-site promotional sign. It is important to remember that a sketch or creative of the off-site promotional sign must be approved by the Department of Government Services and a permit issued prior to installation. To avoid unnecessary construction costs, individuals should get approval for the sign design prior to beginning construction.

**Fingerboard Signs** - The fee for a fingerboard sign is \$125.00 per sign plus HST for a total of \$141.25 annually. This will cover the costs to manufacture, install and maintain the sign.

## 5. Who has responsibility for administering the Highway Signage Policy?

The Government Service Centre of the Department of Government Services is designated as the Authority under the regulations and will perform all permitting functions and represent government at any appeal hearings in accordance with the Highway Sign Regulations. The inspections and monitoring functions will be undertaken by the Department of Government Services in consultation with, and with assistance from, the Department of Transportation and Works. In addition, the Department of Government Services will consult with the Department of Municipal Affairs (for regulatory matters) and with the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation (for policy matters).

## 6. Where do I obtain application forms and information?

Application forms and information for **all** types of signs are available from each of the following Government Service Centre offices:

Government Service Centre  
5 Mews Place  
P. O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6  
**Telephone:** (709) 729-3699  
**Fax:** (709) 729-2071

Government Service Centre  
2 Masonic Terrace  
Clarenville, NL A5A 1N2  
**Telephone:** (709) 466-4060  
**Fax:** (709) 466-4070

Government Service Centre  
7-9 Roddick Crescent  
P. O. Box 512  
Harbour Grace, NL A0A 2M0  
**Telephone:** (709) 945-3107  
**Fax:** (709) 945-3114

Government Service Centre  
Fraser Mall, 230 Airport Boulevard  
P. O. Box 2222  
Gander, NL A1V 2N9  
**Telephone:** (709) 256-1420  
**Fax:** (709) 256-1438

Government Service Centre  
The Noton Building  
133 Riverside Drive, P. O. Box 2006  
Corner Brook, NL A2H 6J8  
**Telephone:** (709) 637-2200  
**Fax:** (709) 637-2681

Government Service Centre  
9 Queensway  
Grand Falls-Windsor, NL  
A2A 1W9  
**Telephone:** (709) 292-4206  
**Fax:** (709) 292-4528

Government Service Centre  
Thomas Building, 13 Churchill Street  
P. O. Box 3014, Stn. AB@  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL A0P 1E0  
**Telephone:** (709) 896-5428  
**Fax:** (709) 896-4340

Application forms are also available from the Regional Offices of the Department of Transportation and Works:

Dept. of Transportation and Works  
P. O. Box 8700, White Hills  
St. John=s, NL  
A1B 4J6

Dept. of Transportation and Works  
P. O. Box 2008, Wight=s Road  
Deer Lake, NL  
A0K 2E0

Dept. of Transportation and Works  
P. O. Box 70, Manitoba Drive  
Clarenville, NL  
A0E 1J0

Dept. of Transportation and Works  
P. O. Box 3014, Stn. >B=  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, LB  
A0P 1E0

Dept. of Transportation and Works  
P. O. Box 10, Duggan Street  
Grand Falls-Windsor, NL  
A2A 2J3

## **7. Where do I submit my application?**

Applications for off-site promotional signs should be submitted to the nearest office of the Government Service Centre (as listed previously). Applications for fingerboard signs must be submitted to the Director of Maintenance, Department of Transportation and Works, P.O. Box 8700, St. John=s, NL, A1B 4J6.

## **8. What are my responsibilities?**

For **Off-Site Promotional Signs** the applicant, upon receipt of an approved permit, is responsible for designing, constructing, installing and maintaining the sign in accordance with the conditions attached to the permit and to affix the permit sticker to the bottom left-hand corner of the sign(s) when erected. These signs must be a minimum size of 1.2m X 2.4m (4ft X 8ft) to a maximum size

of 2.4m X 3.6m (8ft X 12ft). It should be noted that any approved sign that is erected without full compliance with all the conditions of the original permit may be subject to removal.

For **Fingerboard Signs** the applicant has no responsibility after the application is approved - once the fee is paid, the sign will be manufactured, installed and maintained by the Department of Transportation and Works.

## **9. Where are off-site promotional signs permitted?**

The Department of Transportation and Works has established specific signage corridors (commonly referred to as ACorridor No. 2") for off-site promotional signs. These corridors are established a minimum of three (3) km from an intersection maintained by the Department of Transportation and Works. Signs relating to short term events may be approved for locations other than in Corridor No. 2. The applicant should identify a site where the sign would be preferred. However, if that site cannot be approved, the Department of Government Services will provide information on an alternate location where the sign can be installed.

## **10. What information can I put on the signs?**

The only restriction for sign content and design is with respect to the types of services offered. A sign owner cannot display on an approved sign any type of service that would not qualify for a separate off-site promotional sign (ie, the owner of a restaurant, convenience store and gas bar would only be permitted to advertise the **restaurant** portion of the business).

All off-site promotional signs must be **single-sided**, with all information facing oncoming traffic. **To increase the readability of a sign it should be designed with the largest lettering and fewest words possible per line.**

**To ensure compliance to the regulations, all preliminary signage designs must be submitted and approved by the Department of Government Services before permits are issued. Signs should not be manufactured or installed until the proper approvals have been obtained.**

## **11. When do I apply?**

Applications for new signs can be submitted anytime during the year, however, the permit **must** be issued before these new signs can be erected.

**12. What happens to unapproved existing off-site promotional highway signage?**

All non-conforming signage should be removed by the sign owner by **September 30, 2006**. Any signs that remain erected without a permit after that date will be removed by the Department of Transportation and Works **and immediately destroyed**

**13. Will operators with applications pending have to reapply?**

Any person who has submitted an application for an off-site promotional sign and is awaiting a decision or a permit from the Department of Government Services need not reapply.

**14. Will I have to relocate my existing sign?**

If your existing sign is erected at the correct location and in compliance with **ALL** other conditions of your permit, there is no requirement for you to relocate your sign. However, if you chose to erect your sign at a location other than the approved site, you are required to relocate the sign to the correct location. Failing to do so may result in your sign being removed and destroyed.

**15. How can I obtain an off-site promotional sign permit if my business is not listed in the criteria outlined in the Highway Signage Policy?**

If your type of business is not contained in the criteria of the Highway Signage Policy, you cannot obtain a permit for an off-site promotional sign.

**16. Under the policy do I need to obtain a permit for a **Apremises@** sign?**

Permits will not be required for **APremises@** signs provided it is erected **on the active site of the business**. It is recommended that before Premises signs are erected, the sign owner contact the local depot of the Department of Transportation and Works to ensure the sign is not being placed on the highway right-of-way and that the sign will not pose a hazard to traffic. Staff of the Department of Government Services and the Department of Transportation and Works will monitor the placement of these signs to ensure there are no safety concerns.

**17. Are portable signs permitted?**

All off-site promotional signs in Corridor No. 2, Community Welcome Signs, and Community Service Signs must be on a fixed foundation. Portable signs will be permitted for **Premises signs and all temporary signs**. All portable signs erected in violation of the regulations must be removed by the sign owner before September 30, 2006. After that date these signs will be removed by the Department of Transportation and Works and immediately destroyed.

**18. What happens if the site I apply for is not available?**

If the site you apply for is not available, every effort will be made to provide an alternate location as close as possible to the site which you requested. However, there are some areas of the province where off-site promotional sign corridors are not available or the distance to the nearest sign corridor from the establishment may be too great for the clientele you wish to attract. In such circumstances, you may wish to list your services on the nearest highway sign plaza/kiosk or on a fingerboard sign.

**19. Can I erect several signs to accomplish my directional requirements if the location of my facility is such that it requires a series of highway signs to direct business to my facility?**

The policy provides for one off-site promotional sign on each approaching route up to a maximum of four signs per operation. If any additional signs are required, you may wish to consider the fingerboard signage program or to avail of a sign kiosk/plaza.

**20. In what order of priority are off-site promotional sign applications processed?**

All applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

**21. Can a request for an off-site promotional sign be actioned via telephone?**

All requests for off-site promotional signs must be made through regular channels utilizing the prescribed forms and with the proper supporting documentation (ie, location plans and plans of the proposed signs). Applications and supporting documentation can be submitted by facsimile but telephone requests cannot be actioned until the supporting documentation is received.

**22. How long does it take to action an application for off-site promotional**



## **signage?**

Under normal circumstances, applications can be processed within two weeks of receipt for signs in available sites within existing sign corridors. However, applications for signs in other locations will take somewhat longer.

### **23. Once I obtain my sign permit, how long do I have to get the sign erected?**

The initial development permit is valid for a one year period. If the signs are not erected within this time frame, then you must reapply for a new permit. Once the sign has been erected in accordance with all the regulations and prior to the expiration of the one year period, renewal applications must be submitted in order for the signs to remain erected. If all conditions of the development permit have been met, a renewed permit and sticker(s) will be issued for a three (3) year period.

### **24. How will I know my approved sign will not be removed?**

When a permit is issued, it will contain a number of conditions relating to the erection of the sign and you will receive a sticker to be affixed to the bottom left-hand corner of each approved sign. It is your responsibility to ensure the sign is erected in accordance with these conditions and that the sticker is affixed to the sign when it is erected. Signs which have a valid sticker affixed will not be removed provided the sign is erected in accordance with **all** the conditions contained in the original permit.

### **25. Are there any licences that my business must have or are there any preconditions which must be met before I can obtain a permit for my sign?**

The following are some of the prerequisites that certain businesses must meet before a sign permit can be issued:

1. All Accommodations@ related facilities must have a valid Tourist Establishment Licence.
2. All eating establishments must have seating capacity for at least ten (10) persons.
3. All museums, art galleries and archaeological sites must be approved by the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation.
4. All craft shops must be approved by the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural

Development.

**26. Am I permitted to install a fingerboard sign which is not manufactured by the Department of Transportation and Works?**

Private fingerboard signs are not permitted.

**27. Do I need to contact the municipal council if I am erecting a sign within that municipality's boundaries?**

If a sign is to be erected within the boundaries of a municipality, the Department of Government Services will issue the permit to the sign owner, but will forward the permit to the respective municipality to be issued to the sign owner in addition to any permit that the municipality may require. Therefore, it is recommended that a potential sign owner provide the municipality with information regarding the sign application which has been submitted to the Department of Government Services.

**Please note that a municipality does not have the authority to approve the erection of a sign within its boundaries if this sign placement is in contravention of the Highway Sign Regulations. However, in some circumstances, municipalities have the authority to refuse the erection of signs that may be permitted under the Highway Sign Regulations.**

**28. If I own a seasonal business will my sign have to meet the same criteria as for a year-round business?**

The policy contains a classification of **Short term event** which pertains to an undertaking which is for a period less than one month. Businesses and/or organizations which qualify in this category, and other businesses which qualify for temporary signage do not have to meet the same construction standards relating to the size of the sign, do not have to be in Corridor No. 2, and do not have to be on a fixed foundation. However, a permit must first be obtained from the Department of Government Services before the sign can be erected.

The size restrictions in the policy apply only to the off-site promotional signs. Therefore, Community Welcome Signs, Community Service Signs and Trail Head Signs are also exempt from the size restrictions.

**29. If a sign corridor is established on private property does this affect the processing of my application?**

There are some areas of the province where sign corridors are established on private property. In these circumstances, the sign owner must obtain the prior written approval of the property owner and attach this written permission to the sign application. It should also be noted that sign position markers will not be placed on private property. Therefore, it is the permit holder=s responsibility to properly determine the exact location for the erection of this sign in conjunction with the information provided by the Department of Government Services.

**30. What are my options if I cannot obtain a position for my sign in a location that meets my needs or if my business is not eligible for an off-site promotional sign?**

In both these circumstances, the best option would be to submit an application for the construction of a sign kiosk/plaza at a location approved by the Department of Government Services in consultation with the Department of Transportation and Works. It should be noted that the applicant for a sign kiosk/plaza must be a municipality, regional tourism development organization, regional economic development board or some similar organization, and the applicant must accept all responsibility for the construction and maintenance of this structure in accordance with the conditions attached to the original permit. The kiosk/plaza does not have to be in a Corridor No. 2 and may contain signage for businesses that would not otherwise be permitted to have off-site promotional signs.

Another option would be to apply to the Department of Transportation and Works for permission to erect a fingerboard sign.