

## **Permitting a Sign**

This document provides an introduction to permitting a sign in Pierce County and explains the general requirements for signs. Everyone is welcome to visit or call the Department of Land Management to get more detailed information about specific sign requirements.

### **Permits to Obtain**

Directional signs; on-premises signs for advertising, residential neighborhood signs, temporary new development signs and all off-premises signs need a permit from the Pierce County Zoning Office. The changing or altering of the sign face area shall require a new sign permit.

### **Types of Signs**

#### **Freestanding signs**

Directional signs shall not exceed 3 square feet in sign face area.  
Nameplates or address signs shall not exceed 4 square feet in sign face area.  
On-premises signs shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.  
Off-premises signs, except directional signs, shall not exceed 32 square feet in sign face area.  
Signs shall be located at least 5 feet from all side lot lines.

#### **Wall signs**

Wall signs shall not exceed 15% of the area of the side of the building to which it is attached.  
Wall signs can be expanded to 20% of the area of the side of the building if such side is greater than 250 feet from the road right-of-way.  
Wall signs shall not extend more than 6 inches from the buildings wall surface nor beyond the end of the wall.

#### **Window signs**

The sign face area shall not exceed 20% of the glass area of the window.

#### **Projecting signs**

Size of the sign face area shall not exceed 24 square feet.  
The sign shall not extend more than 5 feet from the wall to which it is attached.  
The bottom of such sign shall be at least 7 feet above the grade directly below the sign.  
The top of sign shall not extend above the buildings roof.

### **Specific Requirements for Particular Signs**

#### **On-premises advertising signs**

The maximum number of on-premises advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting signs shall be a total of 3 such signs per business.  
Sign spacing shall only apply to freestanding or projecting signs. Signs shall be located no closer to any advertising sign than a distance equal to one-half of the required minimum lot width for new lots in the zoning district in which the sign is located.

#### **Off-premises advertising signs**

No more than 2 signs shall be permitted for each business establishment, commodity or product.  
Signs shall be located no closer to any advertising sign than a distance equal to one-half of the required

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minimum lot width for new lots in the zoning district in which the sign is located.  
Only allowed in the Commercial, Light Industrial and Industrial districts unless sign exempted in ordinance.

Signs must be approved by Wisconsin DOT if located along a State Highway.

### **Election campaign signs**

Signs located on residential property shall not be erected or displayed prior to the election campaign period and shall be removed within 7 days after the election.

Signs located on property other than residential property shall:

- not be placed on public property.
- not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.
- not be erected or displayed earlier than 60 days prior to the election which they pertain.
- be removed within 7 days after the election.

### **Temporary real estate signs**

Signs shall be located at least 15 feet from lot line.

Signs shall be removed within 10 days of the sale, rent or lease of the property.

Signs shall be limited to one along each road that abuts the property.

Signs shall not be illuminated.

### **Temporary on-site construction signs**

Only one construction sign per construction project.

Sign shall exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.

No sign shall be erected prior to beginning of construction.

All signs shall be removed within one week after completion of construction and prior to occupancy.

Freestanding signs shall be located at least 15 feet from any public right-of-way.

Signs shall not be illuminated.

### **Temporary new development signs**

Shall not exceed 32 square feet in sign face area.

Shall be located on the premises of the new development.

The permit shall expire after 2 years.

Signs shall not be illuminated.

### **On-premises residential neighborhood signs**

Shall be only freestanding.

Limited to identifying the name of the neighborhood.

Shall not exceed 32 square feet in sign face area.

Shall only be placed at the entrance to the neighborhood.

### **Directional signs**

Signs may be in addition to off-premises advertising signs.

Only permitted where a change in travel direction is required.

No more than 4 such signs shall be permitted for each use.

Shall only contain information identifying the name of the establishment, distance, and directional arrow.

Shall only be permitted in proximity of road intersections.

Shall not exceed 3 sq. ft. in sign face area.

### **General Sign Requirements**

No undulating, swinging, rotating, or otherwise moving sign shall be permitted.

No flashing or fluttering signs shall be permitted except flashing time/temperature signs.

No sign shall project over or be located within any public right-of-way or obstruct clear visibility of traffic.

No sign shall resemble or imitate traffic signs or signals.

Signs shall not be illuminated.

No sign shall prevent free ingress or egress.

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No sign may be placed on or over the roof of any building.

No sign shall be painted or mounted on rocks or other natural features, except for nameplates and/or addresses and "No Hunting, Trespassing" and signs of a similar nature may be affixed to trees.

No sign shall contain obscene or derogatory language, symbols, or pictures.

### **The following signs shall be except from the requirements of the sign ordinance**

Memorial signs and tablets displayed on public property or in cemeteries.

Official traffic and parking signs, and information, legal or directional notices erected by federal, state, or local units of government.

Guidance signs authorized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Official government entity flags.

Outdoor murals or other outdoor artwork determined by the Zoning Administrator not to be signs.

Temporary incidental signs not to exceeding 9 square feet in sign face area which advertise items such as personal belongings or produce for sale, provide that such signs are displayed no more than 6 months in any calendar year.