

# GENERAL ELECTION SIGN GUIDANCE

External guidance

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING TEAM

31 AUGUST 2020

FINAL VERSION 1

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## **More information**

NZ Transport Agency  
August 2020

If you have further queries, call our contact centre on 0800 699 000 or write to us:

NZ Transport Agency  
Private Bag 6995  
Wellington 6141

This document is available on the NZ Transport Agency's website at <http://www.nzta.govt.nz>

## Contents

GENERAL ELECTION SIGN GUIDANCE .....	1
<b>Requirements for Signs Visible from a State Highway</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Signs located on the State Highway</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Additional Notes .....	6



# REQUIREMENTS FOR SIGNS VISIBLE FROM A STATE HIGHWAY

The *Electoral (Advertisements of a Specified Kind) Regulations 2005* (the Electoral Regulations) sets out the requirements for electoral signs displayed in any public place (including those visible from the State Highway) or on a private property that do not exceed 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area. Signs greater than 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area are subject to the relevant District Plan standards and any bylaw managed by a local authority.

The Electoral Regulations sets out the following requirements for signs (including sandwich boards) that are located on the road, or are visible from the road:

<b>Lettering size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed limit less than 70 km/hr: At least 120 mm</li> <li>• Speed limit 70 km/hr or more: 160 mm</li> </ul>
<b>Spacing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spacing between lines of text: at least 50 mm</li> </ul>
<b>Reflective materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs must not be made of materials likely to reflect headlights from an approaching vehicle</li> </ul>
<b>Colour/layout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must not be similar or the same as any traffic sign in shape and colour, and unlikely to be mistaken for a traffic sign or signal</li> </ul>
<b>Moving parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No moving parts, flashing or revolving mechanisms to attract attention permitted</li> </ul>

The Electoral Regulations apply to any advertisement that encourages or persuades someone to vote for a registered political party or is used to promote or procure the election of a constituency candidate. The Electoral Regulations apply to the general election only, they do not apply to local election signs.

Local Election signs on or within the State Highway must comply with the New Zealand Transport Agency (Signs on State Highways) Bylaw 2010.

Note: The Electoral Regulations do not apply to signage related to a referendum matter.

## SIGNS LOCATED ON THE STATE HIGHWAY

In addition to the *Electoral (Advertisements of a Specified Kind) Regulations 2005*, the *New Zealand Transport Agency (Signs on State Highways) Bylaw 2010* (the SH Bylaw) applies to election and referendum signage on a state highway. However, it does not apply to signage visible from a state highway but located on private property, or signage located on any section of state highway where the speed limit is 70 km/hr or less.

Electoral signage displayed on a state highway where the speed limit is above 70 km/hr will require approval from Waka Kotahi under the SH Bylaw. Signage in a location where the speed limit exceeds 70 km/hr will be considered in more detail than those located where the speed limit is less than 70 km/hr.

The following table sets out the requirements for signs under the SH Bylaw.

<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fixed sign must be located at least 5 m from the edge of the carriageway</li> <li>• The bottom edge of a sign must not be more than 2.5 m above road level or ground</li> <li>• Speed limit exceeds 70 km/hr: Must have an unrestricted view for a minimum of 180 m</li> <li>• Not be located within 100 m of an intersection or pedestrian crossing</li> <li>• Must be positioned at a right angle to the State Highway</li> </ul>
<b>Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Area:</b> Maximum of 1 m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>Edge dimension:</b> 2 m maximum</li> </ul>
<b>Lettering size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Speed limit 70 km/hr or less:</b> At least 120 mm</li> <li>• <b>Speed limit over 70 km/hr:</b> 160 mm</li> </ul>
<b>Spacing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Spacing between lines of text:</b> at least 50 mm</li> </ul>
<b>Reflective materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No reflective materials are permitted</li> </ul>
<b>Illumination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No external or internal illumination permitted</li> </ul>
<b>Sandwich boards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Speed limit 70 km/hr or less:</b> Must be located at least 2 m from the carriageway</li> </ul>
<b>Moving parts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No moving parts, flashing or revolving mechanisms to attract attention permitted</li> </ul>
<b>Sign supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be frangible and meet the Waka Kotahi requirements regarding strength, rigidity and impact performance.</li> </ul>

## Additional Information

- The size of lettering and spacing requirements do not apply to the lettering on any party logo that is registered by the Electoral Commission under the Electoral Act 1993, the promoter statement or an advertisement of a specified kind published in a poster form that is less than 1,500 cm<sup>2</sup> in size.
- Electoral signage less than 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area is not required to meet the relevant district plan or local authority bylaw standards as this is managed by the Electoral Regulations.
- All signage exceeding 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area is subject to the relevant district plan and any local authority bylaw standards.
- Although the content and language cannot be further restricted by the SH Bylaw, general guidance on the number of words, symbols or graphics is set out in the SH Bylaw as follows:
  - Maximum of 6 words, symbols or graphics.
  - Characters: Maximum of 40 characters
  - Font: Acceptable (clear legible font) where the speed limit is more than 70 km/hr.
- The *State Highway Control Manual* provides further guidance for managing electoral signs on state highways. While the *State Highway Control Manual* and the *Traffic Control Devices Manual 2008* are guidelines only, there is a legal obligation for landowners to consult with Waka Kotahi and meet the Waka Kotahi general sign requirements.