

Use of Signs in Salem, NH

The Town of Salem, NH regulates the use of signs and other forms of outdoor advertising through a Sign Ordinance. The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide for advertising in an orderly and safe manner, to prevent visual clutter, and to create an attractive environment for business and tourism.

This brochure is a general guide and is not all-inclusive. For more information please refer to the Sign Ordinance in the Salem Land Use Controls book.

Permit Required

Permits are required from the Building Division prior to installing, replacing, or moving any sign. Permit applications are available on the Building Division web page.

Signs Not Requiring a Permit

Certain types of temporary signs are allowed without permits. These are listed below:

- **Real Estate Signs** - Real estate signs are allowed, up to 6 square feet in residential zones and 20 square feet in commercial zones. Such signs are allowed only on the site they advertise.
- **Construction Signs** - Temporary construction signs may be posted only during active on-site work such as construction and landscaping. They are restricted to 20 square feet in residential zones and 32 square feet elsewhere.
- **Political Signs** - These signs must comply with State laws.

Temporary Commercial Signs

The following types of temporary commercial signs are allowed up to 14 days at a time up to 4 times per calendar year:

- A poster or banner that does not exceed 20 square feet that is located on a building or wall or on an existing freestanding sign.
- An A-frame or sandwich board sign up to 9 square feet that is no taller than 3 feet.
- One flag sign that does not exceed 6 feet in height and 2 feet in width located at least 5 feet from a property line.
- The signs noted above, are allowed for 30 days upon the opening of a new business.

Temporary commercial signs must receive a permit from the Building Division.

Prohibited Signs

- Animated, moving, flashing signs including electronic reader-boards
- Off-site signs and billboards
- Parking of vehicles for advertising purposes
- Signs on public property, unless permitted by Salem Board of Selectmen
- Pennants, searchlights, balloons, or outdoor display of products in parking lots or lawns
- Signs on trees or utility poles or road signs

Window Signs

Window signs are not regulated.

In-Home Business Signs

No signs or advertising displays are allowed for home occupations.

Sign Area

Sign area is measured by enclosing all parts of the sign within a regular geometric figure.

Freestanding Signs

The Sign Ordinance regulates the size, number, and height of freestanding signs for each zoning district. For the Commercial-Industrial Districts (along Rt. 28), these signs cannot exceed 100 square feet, or be over 20' tall, and must be located at least 20' from the property line. For the Business-Office Districts (along Main Street), the maximum size is 16 or 32 square feet, maximum height is 15', and minimum setback is 5'.

An incentive provision allows freestanding signs to be located 10' to the property line if the size is reduced by at least 50%. All new freestanding signs must be approved by the Planning Board. They must include the property's street address. The maximum portion of changeable copy area on a freestanding sign is 20%.

Wall Signs

Each business is allowed a wall sign. The allowable size of wall signs is typically based on the linear frontage of the storefront. Along Rt. 28, 1.5 square feet of signage is allowed for each linear foot of storefront. Along Main Street, the maximum size of wall signs is 16 square feet.

Illumination

Signs that are visible from residential properties must not be illuminated between the hours of 11 PM and 7 AM unless the premises are open for business during those hours.

Please contact the Community Development Department at Town Hall if you have questions about sign regulations in Salem, NH.

Where to find additional information:

Community Development Department
Town Hall
33 Geremonty Drive,
Salem, NH 03079
603-890-2080

Internet Access:

Go to www.townofsalem.org and choose Departments, then Planning Division, then Regulations and Ordinances. The Sign Ordinance is contained within Section 309-7:2 of the Land Use Code. The sign permit application is available on the Building Division page.



Town of Salem, NH
33 Geremonty Drive
Salem, NH 03079

Sign Regulations for Salem, NH

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