



Placement of Political Signs Town of North Yarmouth

Excerpts from the Secretary of State's Candidate's Election Guide

The Department of Transportation would like to inform all candidates and their co-workers of the present statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to placement of roadside posters and signs advertising their candidacy. Under the provision of 23 MRSA §1913-A and Department Regulations, political posters and signs may be erected and maintained as follows:

1. May be erected on private property outside the Right-of-Way limits of public ways at any time prior to an election, primary or referendum, limited in size to a maximum of 50 square feet.
2. May be erected within the Right-of-Way limits of public ways no sooner than six (6) weeks prior to an election, primary or referendum and must be removed no later than one (1) week following the date of the election, primary or referendum.
3. **Prohibited Practices:** political posters and signs shall not be erected or maintained on any traffic control signs or devices, public utility poles or fixtures, upon any trees or painted or drawn upon any rocks or other natural features.
4. No person shall place, maintain or display upon or in view of any highway any unauthorized sign, signal, marking or device which purports to be or is an imitation of or resembles an official traffic-control device, such as a stop sign.
5. Political signs may be displayed to view to all public ways except for the Interstate Highway System. Title 23 MRSA §1913-A, paragraph 3 (Regulations), and paragraph 6 (Interstate System) states that: **Signs may not be placed within the limits of any controlled access highway nor erected within 660 ft. of the nearest edge of the Interstate Highway System in such a manner that the message may be read from the Interstate Highway System.** All signs located at interstate exchanges are in violation and will be removed.
6. Municipal ordinances advocating stricter control take precedence over state law. Check with the municipal clerk for any such local ordinances.

Most violations are the result of the efforts of ardent campaign workers who do not know the law. It is therefore suggested that this information be passed on to them. Maine Department of Transportation employees will have instructions to remove all improperly placed or maintained political posters and signs.

Traffic safety should be of the utmost consideration in placement of political signs. Candidates and campaign workers should take great care not to place signs or posters where same could create a traffic hazard. For example, signs or posters should not be placed at or near intersections where they could obstruct the view of on-coming traffic to the motorist entering the intersection. Also, signs or posters should not be erected on or in any manner so as to interfere with the effectiveness of traffic control devices. Acceptable display would be those posters or signs affixed to their own stake or post and set in the ground well outside the traveled portion of the highway, or with the owner's consent and permission, attached to a building or dwelling, or displayed on vehicles or in the windows of business establishments, and in other like manner.



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Excerpts from the Secretary of State's Candidate's Election Guide continued:



The unauthorized removal or destruction of political signs is a civil violation under Maine law (Title 23, Section 1917-A), and may carry a fine of up to \$250. Specifically, the law states that “a person, who takes, defaces or disturbs a lawfully placed sign bearing political messages relating to a general election, primary election or referendum commits a civil violation for which a forfeiture of up to \$250 may be adjudged.”

The law does not apply to a person authorized by a candidate or political committee to remove signs placed by or at the direction of that candidate or political committee. It also does not apply to the landowner, or agent of the landowner, on whose property a sign has been placed.

A candidate or candidate's committee would file a complaint with the local police and/or brought to the District Attorney's office for appropriate action.

Political signs or posters are prohibited within 250 feet of the entrance of the voting place. The voting place is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (247 Walnut Hill RD) on Election Day. The voting place also includes the North Yarmouth Town Office for 45 days preceding an election during which time the office may be conducting absentee voting. The display or distribution of any advertising material intended to influence a voter's decision is prohibited within the clerk's office and on public property within 250 feet of the entrance to the Clerk's Office.

Additional Town of North Yarmouth Regulations & Guidelines:

Signs shall be located so as not to create a hazard or impediment to visibility, particularly at intersections. No signs may be placed at the Veteran's Park at the intersection of Parsonage Road and Memorial Highway except for municipal or state signs.

Political signs are prohibited from being placed on the following Town owned properties: **Town Office** - located at 10 Village Square Road – tax map 7 lot 64; **Fire Station** – located between Routes 9 & 115 (463 Walnut Hill Road and Memorial Highway) – tax map 7 lot 66; **Public Works Garage** – located at 40 Parsonage Road – tax map 7 lots 84 & 92.