

## **Political Sign Information**

Pursuant to Section 102.031 (4)(a) Florida Statutes, “No person, political committee, or other group or organization may solicit voters inside the polling place or within 150 feet of a secure ballot intake station (vote-by-mail ballot drop-off) or the entrance to any polling place, a polling room where the polling place is also a polling room, an early voting site, or an office of the supervisor where vote-by-mail ballots are requested and printed on demand for the convenience of electors who appear in person to request them. Before the opening of a secure ballot intake station (drop box), a polling place or an early voting site, the clerk or supervisor shall designate the no-solicitation zone and mark the boundaries.”

### **Important Contact Information**

Placement of political signs is governed by various state, county and municipal ordinances and regulations. Candidates and their representatives are strongly encouraged to read and comply with all applicable regulations.

#### **Florida Department of Transportation – The Office of Right of Way**

Tel: 850-414-4545  
[www.fdot.gov/rightofway](http://www.fdot.gov/rightofway)

#### **Sarasota County - Sarasota County Code Enforcement**

Tel: 941-861-6403  
[www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net)

#### **Municipal - Code Enforcement Offices**

##### City of North Port

Tel: 941-429-7186  
[www.CityofNorthPort.com](http://www.CityofNorthPort.com)

##### City of Venice

Tel: 941-486-2626  
[www.VeniceGov.com](http://www.VeniceGov.com)

##### City of Sarasota

Tel: 941-263-6417  
[www.SarasotaFL.gov](http://www.SarasotaFL.gov)

##### Town of Longboat Key

Tel: 941-316-1966, ext. 2520  
[www.longboatkey.org](http://www.longboatkey.org)



August 15, 2023

Dear Candidate:

The purpose of this courtesy letter is to bring to your attention Sarasota County's requirements regarding the size, placement, location, and number of political signs allowed in the unincorporated area of the County. These standards are contained in the Sarasota County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 124 – Unified Development Code, Article 11, Sections 124-211 and 124-212. A copy is included with this packet, and you can also view online at [www.municode.com](http://www.municode.com) by following the links to their “Library”, then “Florida”, and then “Sarasota County”.

For your convenience, below is a summary of the requirements:

- Political signs may only be placed on private property;
- Political signs may not block any intersection or driveway clear sight triangle;
- Political signs may be displayed no sooner than 60 days prior to the qualifying date for an election;
- Political signs shall be removed within 21 days after the election; and
- Signs erected, overhanging, infringing upon the right-of-way of any public street, road, or way, are prohibited.

The Sarasota County Code of Ordinances also contains standards for political signs placed in residential districts as follows:

- Political signs less than six square feet in area may be placed in residential districts in unlimited numbers; and
- Political signs up to 16 square feet in area may be placed in residential districts provided the total aggregate area of such signs does not exceed 80 square feet.

Please be advised that Sarasota County may remove any sign at any time when not in compliance with the Sarasota County Code of Ordinances. These removed signs will be held for pick up at our office located at 1001 Sarasota Center Boulevard for a period of ten days. After this timeframe, the removed signs will be disposed.

Thank you for ensuring the placement and removal of political signs meets the requirements outlined above. Please contact the County's Code Enforcement staff at (941) 861-6403 if you have any questions.

**Sarasota County Code of Ordinances**  
**Chapter 124 – Unified Development Code, Article 11**

**Sec. 124-211. - Prohibited Signs.**

(7) **Signs in Rights-of-Way.** Signs erected on the right-of-way of any public street, road, or way, or signs overhanging or infringing upon the right-of-way of any public street, road, or way, are prohibited except as specifically provided in this Article shall satisfy the following additional criteria:

- a. The sign shall not create a traffic hazard or a detriment to traffic safety by reason of its size, location, movement, coloring, or method of illumination, or by obstructing the vision of drivers, or by obstructing or detracting from the visibility of any official traffic control device by diverting or tending to divert the attention of drivers of moving vehicles from traffic movement on streets, roads, intersections, or access facilities.
- b. The sign shall not obstruct the vision of pedestrians.
- c. The sign shall meet FDOT visibility standards at intersections, driveways, or other access points.
- d. The sign(s) shall not present an unreasonable danger to the health or safety of the applicant or the public.

**Sec. 124-212. - Signs Allowed Without a Sign Permit.**

(a) **Signs Allowed Without a Sign Permit.** The following descriptions and illustrations define the types of signs that may be erected in the County, subject to the specified standards, without the issuance of a Sign Permit. The standards applicable to each type of sign are set forth in the table below. The signs identified in this Section shall not be considered in determining a property's permitted allotment of permanent ground signs or permanent wall signs pursuant to Sections [124-216](#), [124-217](#) and [124-218](#).

(13) **Political Sign.** A temporary sign installed during a political or referendum campaign. The following standards are required in all zoning districts.

- a. Political signs shall be placed only on private property and shall not contain any commercial advertising.
- b. Such signs shall not block any intersection or driveway clear sight triangle.
- c. Political signs may be displayed no sooner than 60 days prior to the qualifying date for an election. The signs shall be removed within 21 days after the election. In cases where a final election follows within 75 days of a primary election, the signs may remain during the interim period and up to 21 days after the final election.

(14) **Additional Standards for Political Signs in Residential Districts:**

- a. Political signs, each less than six square feet in area, may be placed on in unlimited numbers.
- b. Political signs up to 16 square feet in area may be placed in residential districts provided the total aggregate area of such signs does not exceed 80 square feet.



## *Florida Department of Transportation*

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

KEVIN THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

May 12, 2020

### **Notice to candidates for election to offices in the State of Florida**

The Department of Transportation's Office of Right of Way would like to remind you of State Law regarding political campaign signs:

- (1) Signs placed on the state rights of way — Political campaign signs may not be placed in the right of way of any state or national highway [Chapter 479.11(8), Florida Statutes]. A joint effort by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Highway Patrol produced a brochure explaining that the unauthorized use of the public right of way is prohibited by Florida law. This brochure further outlines how the right of way is regulated and how to recognize the location of the right of way line. The brochure is available on our website, <http://www.fdot.gov/rightofway/>. Please feel free to print and copy the brochure for distribution. We recommend campaigns make this brochure required reading for volunteers who post candidate signage.
- (2) Signs placed on private property — Temporary political campaign signs may be placed on private property with the permission of the owner. Such signs do not require a permit under state law.

Please advise your campaign workers to ensure that signs are placed on private property. Signs placed on the state rights of way must be picked up by Department staff and placed in one of the Department's maintenance yards. We will make every effort to place a courtesy call to your campaign office advising of sign removal and the location of the maintenance yard where the signs have been stored.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact the Department's Outdoor Advertising Office in Tallahassee at (850) 414-4569.

Sincerely,

Scott Foltz, Director  
Office of Right of Way

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## FOR THE USE OF FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION RIGHTS OF WAY



*Unauthorized use of the public right of way is prohibited by Florida law. Illegal use of the right of way is a crime. Each day a violation continues is a separate offense.*

Section 337.406, Florida Statutes

### PROHIBITED USES OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY

Any use which interferes with the safety and efficiency of the road.

• Display of advertising of any sort.

• Solicitation, including for charitable purposes.

• Sale, display, or free distribution of any merchandise, goods, property or services.

• Storage, servicing or non-emergency repairing of vehicles.

### USES OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY THAT MAY BE ALLOWED BY PERMIT

**Note: None of these uses are allowed on Interstate Highways.**

**Art festivals, parades, fairs, or other special events.** These may be allowed with a permit from the appropriate county or city government. Road closure by the county or city government requires FDOT approval. Temporary banners or similar devices may be allowed upon approval by local government and FDOT.

**Temporary uses allowed by cities and counties.** Cities and counties may issue permits within their limits to allow uses which are ordinarily prohibited if the use is of limited duration, will not interfere with the safe and efficient movement of traffic and will cause no danger to the public.

**Sales from vehicles standing on the right of way to occupants of abutting properties.** Such sales are permitted by persons holding valid peddlers' licenses issued by a county or city.

**Solicitation for non-profit organizations.** Permits for solicitation for non-profit organizations may be issued by local governments.

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### WHY IS THE USE OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY REGULATED?

Regulation of activities occurring within the right of way is necessary to help prevent:

- Distractions to motorists
- Unsafe pedestrian movement within travel lanes
- Sudden stoppage or slowdown of traffic
- Rapid lane changing and other dangerous traffic movements
- Increased vehicular accidents
- Motorist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities

### WHAT IS THE RIGHT OF WAY AND HOW DO I KNOW WHERE IT IS?

The right of way for a road or other transportation facility is the paved area of the road, the road shoulders, sidewalks, swales, and all the other property adjacent to the road owned by the government for the construction and operation of the road or other facility. It may extend far beyond the paved road surface and may or may not be mowed or fenced.

Maps showing the location of the right of way for state roads are available from the Florida Department of Transportation. Maps for local streets and roads are available from the appropriate county or city offices.

The Florida Highway Patrol, the Florida Department of Transportation, and local law enforcement agencies monitor the use of the public rights of way and may issue citations when unauthorized uses are found.

Courts may impose a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment of up to 60 days or both for each offense. Local ordinances may impose additional fines.

Each day an unauthorized use continues is a separate offense.



To order more brochures please contact the FDOT Office of Right of Way at (850) 414-4569



Revision 1008  
(ver al reverso en Español)



**NORMAS DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE TRANSPORTE DE LA FLORIDA PARA EL USO DEL DERECHO SOBRE LA VÍA**



*El uso no autorizado del derecho sobre la vía pública está prohibido por las leyes de la Florida. El uso ilegal del derecho sobre la vía es un delito. Cada día de violación continua constituye una infracción por separado.*

Sección 337.406 de los Estatutos de la Florida

**USOS PROHIBIDOS DEL DERECHO SOBRE LA VÍA**

**Cualquier uso que interfiera con la seguridad y el buen funcionamiento de las carreteras.**

**Exhibición de anuncios publicitarios de cualquier índole.**

**Solicitud de donaciones, incluso para fines benéficos.**

**Venta, exhibición o distribución gratuita de todo tipo de mercancía, bienes, propiedades o servicios.**

**Almacenamiento, mantenimiento o reparación (salvo que sea por emergencia) de vehículos.**

**USOS DEL DERECHO SOBRE LA VÍA QUE PUEDEN SER AUTORIZADOS MEDIANTE UN PERMISO**

Nota: Ninguno de estos usos está permitido en autopistas interestatales

**Festivales de arte, desfiles, ferias y otros eventos especiales.**

Pueden ser autorizados mediante un permiso otorgado por las autoridades del condado o ciudad correspondiente. Para el cierre de vías por parte de las autoridades del condado o de la ciudad se requiere la aprobación del FDOT. Puede permitirse la colocación temporal de banderillas o artículos similares mediante previa aprobación del gobierno local y el FDOT.

**Permisos para usos temporeros por las ciudades y condados.**

Las ciudades y los condados pueden otorgar permisos dentro de sus límites para autorizar un uso usualmente prohibido, siempre que dicho uso tenga una duración limitada, no interfiera con la circulación segura y efectiva del tráfico y no represente un peligro para el público.

**Ventas desde vehículos estacionados en el derecho sobre la vía a ocupantes de propiedades colindantes.**

Estas ventas se permiten a aquellas personas que posean licencias vigentes de vendedor ambulante otorgadas por la ciudad o el condado.

**Solicitud de donaciones para organizaciones sin fines de lucro.**

Los permisos para estos fines pueden ser otorgados por las autoridades locales.

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**¿POR QUÉ ESTÁ REGLAMENTADO EL USO PÚBLICO DEL DERECHO SOBRE LA VÍA?**

La reglamentación de las actividades que se desarrollan en el derecho sobre la vía es necesaria porque permite la prevención de:

- Distracciones para los conductores
- Circulación peligrosa de peatones dentro de carriles de tránsito
- Interrupción o congestión repentina del tráfico
- Cambio rápido de carriles y otras maniobras peligrosas en el tráfico
- Aumento de accidentes vehiculares
- Lesión y muerte de conductores y peatones

**¿QUÉ ES EL DERECHO SOBRE LA VÍA Y CÓMO PUEDO SABER DÓNDE ESTÁ?**

El derecho sobre la vía de una carretera u otra vía de transporte es el área pavimentada de la carretera, los arcones, las aceras, las cunetas y demás terrenos adyacentes al camino que son propiedad del estado y están destinados para la construcción y funcionamiento de la carretera y otros servicios. Puede extenderse más allá de la superficie pavimentada de la carretera y puede estar o no estar segado o cercado.

El Departamento de Transporte de la Florida tiene a la disposición mapas que indican la ubicación del derecho sobre la vía en las carreteras estatales. Los mapas de calles y carreteras locales pueden obtenerse a través de las oficinas del condado o ciudad correspondiente.

Las autoridades de Patrullaje de Autopistas de la Florida, el Departamento de Transporte y las fuerzas policiales locales supervisan el uso del derecho sobre la vía pública y pueden imponer sanciones en caso de hallar algún uso no autorizado.

Los tribunales pudiesen imponer una multa de hasta \$500 o encarcelamiento hasta por sesenta días, o ambas medidas para cada ofensa. Las ordenanzas locales pueden estipular multas adicionales.

Cada día de uso no autorizado continuo constituye una infracción por separado.



Para pedir más folletos puede comunicarse con la Oficina FDOT Derecho de Paso al (850) 414-4569.

