



Sign Code Information Guide for Santa Monica Businesses

Permitted Signs* - Architectural Review Board (ARB) Approval Required

Permanent Window Signs



Ground Signs



Awning Signs



Marquee Signs



Wall Signs



Hand Painted Signs



Projecting Signs (see note)



Permitted Signs* - Permit/ARB Approval Exempt

Building Identification Signs- Identifying the name and/or location of the property, the hours of operation and emergency information, must not exceed two square feet.

Exterior Signs- Placed on or immediately adjacent to the facility, utility room or door with information such as, "Restrooms", "Telephone", "Entrance", "Exit", "Manager", "No Parking", etc.. Not to exceed two (2) signs per parcel and two square feet each.

Banners, Flags, or Pennants- That do not directly advertise the business or activity located on the building site, limited to no more than three such signs per site.

Change of Copy- Theatre/Marquee Signs, and Permanently Affixed Display Cases

Temporary Signs* | Permit Required, ARB Approval Exempt

Temporary Window Signs – Shall not exceed 20% of the first floor's total frontage glass area, and shall not extend above the second floor line. Limited to two thirty-day periods in any calendar year for each site.

Grand Opening Signs – One temporary banner sign on a business that is newly opened, limited to one (1) sixty day period. Banner may not exceed 20% of the business' façade or 100 sq. ft., whichever is less, and may not extend above the second floor line.

Please note: Temporary signs shall be kept neat, clean and in good repair at all times. They shall not be attached to trees, shrubs, utility poles or traffic signals, may not extend onto the public right of way, cause any hazardous visual obstruction or be illuminated.

Exempt Signs* - Exempt from the Sign Code

Internal Signs - All signs which are placed inside a structure or building, and are either not visible through windows or building openings, or are located a minimum of 5' from such windows or openings and from an adjacent window merchandise display base, if any, are allowed and will be exempt from the Sign Code.

Meritorious Signs – Existing "grandfathered" signs may be exempt from the Sign Code. Please confirm with City Planning staff for qualifications.

***Check with City Planning (310-458-8341) prior to sign installation and/or modification.** For a complete set of the City of Santa Monica Sign Code please refer to Municipal Code Section 9.61

<http://qcode.us/codes/santamonica/>



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Prohibited Signs* | Do Not Post These Signs

Animated or Emitting Signs 



Balloon Signs 



Banner Signs * 



*Advertising Commercial Content

Pole Signs 



Window Signs Exceeding 20% 



Portable Signs 



Roof Signs, Upper Level and High-Rise Signs 



INCLUDING: A-FRAME SIGNS, SANDWICH BOARDS (exception: Main Street Commercial Zoning District – see [SMMC Section 9.61.160\(D\)](#)).

Flag or Pennant Signs and Bunting (advertising the business or commercial content) 



Illegal Signs: Any sign placed without proper approval or permits as required by the Santa Monica Municipal Code at the time of sign placement. Illegal sign shall also mean any sign placed contrary to the terms or time limits of any permit and any nonconforming sign which has not been brought into compliance with the provisions of Sections [9.61.240](#) and [9.61.250](#) of City's Municipal Code.

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