

PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO
GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW
AND APPROVAL OF SIGNS & MURALS

I. Application of Guidelines and Exemptions

- A. Port Design Committee Review and Approval. No person shall place or erect any sign or mural that is subject to these Guidelines on projects within Port jurisdiction without first obtaining review and approval by the Port Sign Committee in accordance with these Guidelines.
- B. Application. Except as specifically exempted in Section I.C. hereof, these Guidelines shall apply to all permanent and temporary signs installed on property within Port jurisdiction which are visible from public streets, sidewalks or waterways, including interior signs designed or arranged to be primarily visible from the outside of any building or structures.
- C. Exemptions. These Guidelines shall not apply to the following:
 - 1. Public Service signs displayed on the inside of windows or glass doors for a limited time which are no more than 6 square feet in area. A public service sign shall be defined as a non-commercial sign devoted to a religious, charitable, cultural, governmental or educational purpose.
 - 2. Political Signs limited to 6 square feet in area and removed within 10 days after the election.
 - 3. Legally required posters, notices or signs.
 - 4. International, national, state, city, county (or other political subdivision), or maritime house flags.
 - 5. Port or City signs, or State-installed traffic or directional signs.

II. Permit Submittal and Review Process.

- A. The following procedures shall be applicable for the review of all proposed signs that are subject to these Guidelines:

1. Applications for Port Sign Committee review shall be submitted on Port Building Permit Application Forms and shall include detailed specifications and drawings as follows:
 - a. Building Site Plan, drawn to scale, and showing:
 - (1) Location of proposed sign.
 - (2) Location of existing landscaping.
 - (3) Location of existing adjacent signs and other signs in the vicinity of the premises that are to remain in place.
 - b. Exterior elevation drawings, drawn to scale, of the building, structure, or principal open space features, showing location of existing adjacent signs to remain and the proposed sign.
 - c. Details of sign, drawn to scale, which include:
 - (1) Sign dimensions.
 - (2) Plan view.
 - (3) Elevation view.
 - (4) Colors. A sample of each proposed color to be used must be submitted for review and approval.
 - (5) Materials. Material samples may be required.
 - (6) Letter size and type style.
 - (7) Lighting or illumination.
 - (8) Name, address and telephone number of manufacturer as well as manufacturer's specifications.
 - (9) All structural details, which shall comply with the San Francisco Building Code.
 - (10) All electrical details, which shall comply with the San Francisco Electrical Code. Provide UL Labels where applicable.
 - d. Photograph of the building, structure or open space features, marked to show proposed sign location.
 - e. The application fees required shall be as listed in the San Francisco Building Code.
2. After receipt of a completed application, together with all supporting documentation, the Port Sign Committee shall review the application in accordance with the Port's Waterfront Design and Access Element and also in accordance with the following considerations:

- a. The design of a sign shall be integrated with the architectural design of the building or site.
 - b. Adjoining and surrounding improvements shall be equally considered, taking into consideration the architectural character of any adjoining improvements and existing views or view corridors.
 - c. Signs shall be consistent with the character of the Port waterfront setting or neighborhood location.
3. The Port Sign Committee, upon review of an application, may approve, conditionally approve, or deny such application.
- a. In those instances where the Port Sign Committee has denied an Application; the Committee shall inform the applicant, in writing why the application has been denied.
 - b. The applicant may resubmit a revised application addressing the deficiencies which led to the denial of the application or may appeal the Port Sign Committee's decision to the Port Executive Director or his/her Designee. The appeal must be in writing and must state the reasons why the application should be approved. The determination of the Director or his/her Designee shall be final.
4. The Port Sign Committee may recommend review by the Port's Design Review Committee, if it determines that the sign may have significant implications for the urban design of the waterfront setting. The review is coordinated by the Port's Planning and Development Division.

III. Temporary Signs and Banners. In addition to any permanent signage permitted herein, tenants or licensees may be permitted up to two temporary signs as described below. Except as provided in sections C and D below, temporary signs will be permitted for a two-week period, with additional two-week extensions possible to a maximum of 8 weeks. Each extension will require additional approval by the Port Sign Committee.

- A. Signs Noticing Public Events which are removed immediately after the event has taken place.
- B. Sign in Anticipation of Permanent Signs for businesses which are open to the public prior to delivery of a permanent sign.

- C. Real Estate Signs no larger than 16 square feet in area that are displayed for a limited period of time. The duration of display must be specified in the permit but will be individually determined in accordance with the project's needs.
 - D. Construction Signs Construction signs for construction projects stating the names and addresses of those individuals or firms directly connected with the design or construction project and/or the name of the owner, the leasing agent and/or ultimate user. Construction signs are limited to 32 square feet in area and one sign per street frontage.
- IV. Murals. Murals or extensive paint treatments applied or affixed to the exterior of a building or lease premise shall require a Port permit.

The Port Sign Committee may recommend that the design is reviewed by the Port's Design Advisors (See Section II.5.)

- V. Prohibited Signs. The following signs are prohibited on Port property:
- A. Portable signs, such as sandwich boards, except signs for intermittent parking uses, (e.g. valet parking signs).
 - B. Wind signs, revolving signs, reflecting signs, blinking signs, balloon signs and other tethered signs.
 - C. General Advertising Signs. General Advertising shall not be permitted on Port property, unless authorized by the Port Executive Director.

VI. Signage Restrictions.

A. Sign Area

- 1. Except as provided otherwise herein, the total area of signs shall be limited to one square foot for each linear foot of street frontage for each street frontage.

B. Sign Height

- 1. Signs affixed to buildings. The maximum height of a sign affixed to a building shall be the eaveline of the building to which it is affixed. In a multiple-use building (such as a building with ground level retail and office uses above) the signage shall not extend above or below the level of the signed use.

2. Free-standing signs. Free-standing signs shall be limited in height to ten feet above the grade, measured at the horizontal center line of the sign.

C. Sign Projection from the face of the building.

1. Signs attached to buildings or structures shall project out from the face of the building no more than two inches when the lowest part of the sign is seven feet or less above the grade directly below the sign and no more than six inches when the lowest part of the sign is more than seven feet above the grade directly below the sign.

D. Total Number of Signs.

1. No more than two signs per single-tenant building will be permitted. No more than one sign per tenant in a multiple-use building will be permitted. If a single-tenant building has a frontage on more than one street, an additional sign to the two allowed on the main frontage may be permitted on each additional street frontage. In a multi-tenant building, the Port Sign Committee may recommend guidelines for the design and placement of a building directory.

E. Sign Location.

1. Except as provided in V.E.4 below, all tenant signs shall be placed within the boundaries of the leased or licensed space.
2. When feasible, tenant signs should be affixed to buildings or structures.
3. Signs will not be permitted on or over public sidewalks or any other public passage areas, unless the owner has received a sidewalk encroachment permit or similar agreement from the Port, and such signs are characteristic of the neighborhood or area, as determined by the Sign Committee.
4. Off-site signage may be permitted only in the case of a business that has no street frontage.

F. Illumination.

1. Use of high-intensity, unshielded or undiffused lights shall not be permitted. Lights shall be shielded or diffused so as to eliminate glare and annoyance.
2. No electrical or illuminated sign shall blink or be intermittently lighted.

VII. Maintenance; Removal of Signs.

- A. The owner of any sign shall maintain the sign in a sound and safe condition and so that the sign does not become unsightly. The Port Sign Committee, upon notice, may revoke the permit for any sign which is not so maintained.
- B. A sign which no longer serves the purpose or the establishment for which the sign was originally permitted must be removed by the sign owner and the removal area restored to the original condition prior to the installation of the sign. This must be done within 10 days after the discontinuance or abandonment of the use or premises.

VIII Abatement of Non-Conforming Signs.

- A. Any sign in Port jurisdiction which does not conform to these Guidelines or which is erected without Port Sign Committee review and a Port Building Permit or is hereafter erected or constructed in violation of the requirements of these Guidelines shall be considered a non-conforming sign.
- B. The Port may declare any non-conforming sign to be a public nuisance and may require the sign owner to remove the sign. If not removed as requested, the Port may remove the non-conforming sign at the sign-owner's expense.

IX Variance Procedure.

- A. Applications for variances from these Guidelines shall be made in writing to the Port Sign Committee. The Applicant shall submit a detailed explanation why the specific guideline challenged should not apply.
- B. To grant a variance, the Port Sign Committee must make all of the following findings:

1. The proposed sign will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of these Guidelines;
 2. That there are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances applying to the sign application involved that do not apply generally to other similar uses or property; and
 3. That owing to exceptional or extraordinary circumstances, the literal enforcement of specific provisions of these Guidelines would result in practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship not created by or attributable to the applicant.
- C. In those instances where the Port Sign Committee has denied a variance application, the Committee shall inform the applicant, in writing, why the application has been denied.
- D. The applicant may resubmit a revised application addressing deficiencies which lead to the denial of the variance, or may appeal the Port Sign Committee's decision to the Port Executive Director or his/her designee. The appeal must be in writing and must state the reasons why the variance should be approved. The determination of the Director or his/her designee shall be final.

X. Penalties.

- A. No sign shall be placed, erected or constructed without first obtaining a Port Sign Committee approval and a building permit from the Port. Any sign installed at a site or building within Port jurisdiction for which approval and a Permit have not first been obtained shall constitute a violation of the San Francisco Building Code as described in Section 205 therein. Penalties for any such violation shall be as provided in Section 205.