

COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SIGN REGULATIONS - AN EXCERPT FROM THE TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE -

Section 504 - Signs

504.1 Definitions

- A. Sign: Any object, device, display, structure, or part thereof, situated outdoors or indoors, and intended for viewing from the building exterior, which is used to advertise, identify, display, direct or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images. Signs do not include the flag or emblem of any nation, state, or city, also merchandise and pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display, works of art which in no way identify a product, or scoreboards located on athletic fields.
- B. "Off-premises sign": Any permitted sign, including billboards, not located on the land upon which the concern advertised by such sign is located.
- C. "Sign surface area": The size of any sign computed by multiplying its greatest length by its greatest height. Structural members not bearing advertising material or not in the form of a symbol shall not be included in the computation of surface area. Where a sign has two display faces back to back the area of only one face shall be considered the sign face area. In the case of signs with no definable edges (e.g. raised letters attached to a facade) surface area shall be that area within the perimeter of a rectangle enclosing the extreme limits of the advertising material.

504.2 General Sign Regulations

The following regulations shall apply to all permitted signs:

- A. No person shall erect, alter, or relocate within Covington Township any sign without obtaining a permit.
- B. The repainting, changing of parts and preventive maintenance of signs shall not require a permit unless the size or height of the sign changes.
- C. A sign shall be permitted only in connection with a permitted use.
- D. All signs shall be removed when the reasons for their erection no longer apply.
- E. Signs shall not be permitted on the roof or above the roof line of the building to which they are attached.
- F. No part of any sign shall project above the top or beyond the ends of the wall surface upon which it is located.
- G. Signs other than official traffic signs shall comply with side yard setbacks as established for principal structures in the district where the sign is located.
- H. No part of any sign, except official traffic signs, shall be closer than five (5) feet to any public road right-of-way.
- I. No signs shall be erected, installed, or maintained in a location which will constitute an obstruction to vision or endanger the safety of the traveling public.

- J. No sign, except a public sign, visible from a public street, shall use the words "stop," "danger," or any other word, phrase, symbol or character which could be interpreted by a motorist as being a public safety warning or traffic sign.
- K. No sign shall be so constructed, erected, or located as to obstruct the visibility of a motorist or pedestrian proceeding along the public way or entering or leaving a parking lot.
- L. No revolving sign or any other type of moving sign shall be permitted with the exception of barber poles.
- M. No sign shall be attached to any tree, fence, utility pole or other object not specifically intended for such use.
- N. Freestanding signs shall not exceed a height of twenty (20) feet to the top of the sign.
- O. Permitted on-premises business advertising signs for businesses with frontage on Route 307 and located within one-thousand (1,000) feet of the center line of either the north or south lanes of Interstate 380 may be erected to a height not to exceed fifty (50) feet to the top of the sign.
- P. Signs shall be constructed of durable material and be maintained in good condition.
- Q. Overhead signs shall be at least nine (9) feet high, measured from the ground or pavement to the bottom-most part of the sign.

504.3 Business Advertising Signs and Institutional Signs

A. Business Advertising Signs

1. Billboards or off premises advertising signs may be erected and maintained only in Highway Commercial and Manufacturing Districts. Such signs shall not exceed three hundred (300) square feet in area and not more than one such sign shall be located within one thousand (1000) feet of any other such sign.
2. Business identification signs bearing the name of the occupant and products manufactured, processed, sold or displayed may be erected and maintained on the premises in Highway Commercial and Manufacturing Districts. Such signs shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in area, and shall be limited to one sign per property if two display faces are used, and two signs per property of one display face is used on each sign.
3. In the General Commercial District, business identification signs may be erected on the premises of the commercial uses permitted in that District provided such signs do not exceed forty (40) square feet in area and shall be limited to one sign per property if two display faces are used, and two signs per property of one display face is used on each sign.
4. In addition to the sign permitted in Item A, B and C above, the signs actually physically attached to a business building shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the surface area of the facade to which the sign is affixed but in no case greater than eighty (80) square feet. Such signs shall advertise only the business or profession in the building.

B. Institutional Signs

Signs of schools, colleges, churches, hospitals, sanitariums or other similar institutions may be erected and maintained on the parcel with the principal permitted use provided such sign does not exceed forty (40) square feet in surface area.

C. Place of Business

The signs provided in Sections A and B above may only be placed on and maintained by the owner, lessee, or occupant of land upon which is located the main office or principal place of business or institution or where a legitimate branch

office, store or warehouse is maintained by the said owner, lessee or occupant of such land. A sign may not be erected on property rented or leased or owned only for sign purposes.

504.4 Directory Signs

The installation and maintenance of a central directory sign board not more than six (6) feet high and not more than ten (10) feet wide at the intersection of two or more roads advertising one (1) or more businesses and directional arrows thereto shall be permitted. An individual sign on this board advertising a single business shall not exceed a surface area of ten (10) square feet and shall be uniform with other signs on the sign board and shall require a permit. Evidence of the ownership and proposed operation and maintenance of such directory shall be submitted with the permit application. Not more than one directory sign shall be permitted on each corner of an intersection.

504.5 Signs Requiring No Permits

- A. Signs advertising the sale, lease, rental or development of the premises upon which they are erected and signs bearing the words "sold" or "rented" or similar phrases, together with the name of the person effecting sale or rental. The following standards shall apply:
1. The area of each sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet;
 2. Not more than two (2) signs are placed upon any property unless the property fronts upon more than one (1) street, in which event two (2) such signs may be erected on each frontage;
 3. Such signs are not illuminated;
 4. Such signs shall be removed within fourteen (14) days after the sale, rental, or lease of the subject property.
- B. Signs to provide for the normal and safe flow of traffic into and out of the place of business such as entrance, exit, and parking signs. Such signs shall not be of a size greater than necessary for persons of normal visual acuity to observe.
- C. Signs indicating the location and direction of premises available for or in process of development, but not erected upon such premises and having inscribed thereon the name of the owner, developer, builder or agent may be erected and maintained, provided: (1) the size of any sign is not in excess of sixteen (16) square feet; and (2) not more than one such sign is erected on each five hundred (500) feet of street frontage. Signs shall be removed immediately upon completion of the development.
- D. Signs of mechanics, painters and other artisans may be erected and maintained during the period such persons are performing work on the premises on which such signs are erected, provided: (1) the size thereof is not in excess of twelve (12) square feet; and (2) such signs are removed promptly upon completion of the work.
- E. Trespassing sign, or sign indicating the private nature of a drive-way or property provided that the size of any sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet.
- F. Signs advertising the sale of farm products grown on the premises provided: (1) the size of any such sign is not in excess of six (6) square feet; (2) not more than two signs are used; and (3) the signs shall be displayed only when such products are on sale.

504.6 Home Occupation Signs

Signs advertising home occupations shall not be larger than twelve (12) inches by twenty-four (24) inches, and may

include the name, occupation, and logotype or trade mark, if appropriate, of the practitioner. Such signs shall not be illuminated.

504.7 Multi-Family Residential Project Signs

One (1) sign identifying a multi-family dwelling project is permitted on the premises of such project providing the sign does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in surface area. Signs identifying each building shall also be permitted and such signs shall not exceed one (1) square foot and shall be attached to the building facade.

504.8 Cluster Commercial, Multiple Occupant and Shopping Center Signs

- A. One (1) free standing sign identifying the cluster commercial or multiple occupant project or shopping center is permitted on the premises of such project provided the sign complies with Section 504.3 of this Ordinance.
- B. One (1) sign identifying each business or profession located in the project is permitted provided the sign does not exceed sixteen (16) square feet surface area. Such signs shall be attached to the same frame as the project sign.
- C. One (1) additional sign identifying each business or profession in the project is permitted provided the sign does not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in surface area and the sign is attached directly to the facade of the structure housing the business or profession.

504.9 Industrial Park Signs

- A. One sign identifying the industrial park provided the area of the sign does not exceed forty (40) square feet in area.
- B. One sign identifying each occupant of the industrial park provided the sign does not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area. Such signs shall be attached to the same frame as the sign provided for in Section 504.2.
- C. One sign identifying each occupant of the industrial park provided such sign does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and is situated on the occupant's lot.
- D. One sign identifying each occupant of the industrial park provided such sign does not exceed twenty (20) square feet in area and is attached directly to the facade of the principal structure.

504.10 Temporary Signs

The following temporary signs shall be permitted in all Districts upon obtaining a permit: Special advertising or business identification signs or banners not exceeding forty (40) square feet in total surface area; including, but not limited to, signs announcing to the general public any special events such as commercial sales days, cultural or entertainment attraction, or charitable activities. These shall be permitted for the length of the activity, but in no case exceeding twenty-one (21) days.

504.11 Illumination

- A. Signs shall be illuminated only by a steady, stationary (excepting for indicators of time and temperature), shielded light source directed solely at the sign, or internal to it, without causing glare for motorists, pedestrians or neighboring premises.
- B. No light shall be permitted that by reason of intensity, color, location, movement or direction of its beam may interfere with public safety including flashing, oscillating, and spot lights when improperly placed. No sign shall resemble traffic signals.

504.12 Non-Conforming Signs

- A. Non-conforming signs shall be those existing prior to the effective date of this Ordinance or any amendments hereto.
- B. No non-conforming sign shall be changed, expanded, or altered in any manner except for changing the advertising material on the face of the sign, or to bring the sign into conformity. No non-conforming sign shall be moved in whole or in part to any other location where it would remain non-conforming.
- C. Termination of non-conforming signs
 - 1. Immediate termination - The following signs or sign features shall be terminated within six (6) months after the effective date of this Ordinance, except as otherwise expressly permitted by this Ordinance. Termination of the non-conformity shall consist of removal of the sign or its alteration to eliminate fully all non-conforming features: flashing signs, animated and moving signs, signs which obstruct free ingress to or egress from a fire escape, door, window, or other required access way, signs which by reason of size, location, content, coloring, or manner of illumination obstruct the vision of drivers or obstruct or detract from the visibility or effectiveness of any traffic sign or control device on streets and roads within Covington Township, and signs which advertise a business no longer conducted or a product no longer sold on the premises where such sign is located.
 - 2. Termination by abandonment - Any non-conforming sign structure the use of which as a sign is discontinued for a period of forty-five (45) consecutive days, regardless of any intent to resume or not to abandon such use, shall be presumed to be abandoned and shall not thereafter be reestablished except in full compliance with this ordinance.
 - 3. Termination by damage or destruction - Any non-conforming sign damaged or destroyed, by any means, to the extent of one-third (.333) or more of its replacement cost new shall be terminated and shall not be restored.

504.13 Nuisance Signs

- A. No owner of any sign or lessee or owner of any land upon which the sign is located shall permit such sign to become unsightly or in disrepair so as to endanger the public or to become a public nuisance.
- B. In the event such a sign is not repaired or properly restored or removed within thirty (30) days after written notice has been given to the owner of the sign or the owner or lessee of the land upon which the signs located, the Township Supervisors may institute appropriate actions to prevent the violation or abate the nuisance.

504.14 Permit Applications

An application for a permit to install or repair a non-conforming sign or relocate a sign shall be made on the Township Sign Permit Application form and submitted to the Township Zoning Officer along with the fee established by resolution of the Township Board of Supervisors.