

Christchurch City Council

2026 General Election Signage Guidelines

This information summarises the rules applying to temporary election signage (election signage) in the Christchurch City Council area for the 2026 General Election on 7 November 2026.

Rules relating to election signage for local elections, general elections and referendums are defined within the Christchurch District Plan and Christchurch City Council and New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) bylaws.

The [Electoral Act 1993](#) and [Electoral \(Advertisements of a Specified Kind\) Regulations 2005](#) include requirements and specific conditions for election signage. Candidates and interested parties should refer to information from the Electoral Commission: [Election signs | Elections NZ](#)

Election signage is only permitted under the Christchurch District Plan during the nine weeks before the start of voting and must be removed by midnight prior to election day.

There is no fixed date in the Electoral Act when election signs are allowed to go up. Election signs can go up as soon as they are allowed to be displayed within the council area.

For the 2026 general election, advance voting commences on Monday 26 October 2026 and continues until election day. Election signage that complies with these guidelines and electoral legislation is permitted to be displayed from Monday 24 August 2026 and must be removed by midnight on Friday 6 November 2026.

There may be exceptions to the permitted timeframe and size requirements for lawfully established sign frames or billboards, including digital signage, where these have been consented for the display of advertising.

It is the responsibility of the owner of each election sign to ensure that their sign and any supporting structure is compliant with the legislation and rules. Compliance action may be undertaken to remove any sign that does not comply.

Questions regarding election signage can be directed to the Duty Planner phone 03 941 8999 or dutyplanner@ccc.govt.nz

Landowner permission to display election signage

All election signage must have the permission of the landowner (not the occupier) of the property on which it is displayed. This includes any private, commercial, Council and Crown owned land, and roads under the control of NZTA (motorways and state highways).

Signage is not permitted to be erected on Council land, including roads, footpaths and berms, road structures, buildings, in parks, land areas or on structures or boundary fences facing into a park or reserve.

There are no permitted hoarding/signage areas on Christchurch City Council land for the display of temporary election signage (election signs).

Requirements for election signage

The District Plan has rules that control the area, height and number of all signs including election signs.

In the period nine weeks before the start of voting, from 24 August 2026, additional signage, being temporary election signage, is permitted under the District Plan. All election signage must be removed by midnight on 6 November 2026.

A maximum additional area of 3m² of election signage per site may be placed in addition to any other legal signage lawfully established or permitted by the District Plan.

In zones where more than 3m² of signage per site is permitted by the District Plan (e.g. some commercial or industrial zones), election signage may be placed up to the normal signage area limit or 3m², whichever is greater.

On a property located on a corner, election signage of up to 3m² is permitted on each of the road frontages of the property.

No new individual temporary election sign may be more than 3m² in area.

The maximum height for any part of the sign is 4m above ground level or the façade height of any building, fence or structure it is attached to, whichever is lower. Building consent is required for signs over 3m above ground level whether freestanding or attached to a building.

Election signage on protected heritage items or in heritage settings must meet more restrictive standards regarding placement, size and use of protective material. Details are included in the District Plan.

Freestanding election signs may not be erected in certain areas identified in the District Plan as having special environmental or cultural values (for example, wahi tapu, sites of ecological significance, outstanding landscape features, including significant trees etc). Details of these areas and significant trees are contained in the District Plan.

There may be exceptions to the permitted timeframe and size requirements on lawfully established sign frames or billboards, including digital signage, where these have been consented for the display of advertising. A candidate is required to confirm this with the owner/supplier of the sign before displaying any election signage.

Temporary election signs may not be:

- Flashing or digitised unless they are on existing legally established and consented billboards or digital displays.
- Similar to or the same as any traffic sign or controls in shape or colour.
- Erected in a way that impairs visibility of any traffic or regulatory sign.
- Erected in a way that impacts on or reduces visibility to a vehicle access or driveway.
- Protrude out from or above the body of any vehicle.
- Increase or add to the size of any trailer or other structure attached to a vehicle.
- Erected on or attached to any Council property or land, including fences, trees, structures and buildings.
- Affixed to any significant tree as defined in the District Plan.

Election advertising on vehicles

Candidate or party signage on a vehicle is a temporary election sign. Use of a vehicle as a sign must comply with all rules, including the Council's Traffic and Parking Bylaw 2017 and Public Places Bylaw 2018.

Signage may be painted on or attached flush to vehicles (to a maximum of 10mm) but must not protrude out from or above the vehicle body or obstruct visibility for the driver from any windows of the vehicle.

Election signage on trailers or other structures attached to a vehicle cannot increase the size of the trailer or structure.

Vehicles, including trailers, must be parked in accordance with the Traffic and Parking Bylaw and the Public Places Bylaw. This includes being parked legally and compliant with any parking restrictions, including posted duration limits.

Vehicles, including trailers, cannot be parked on a grass berm, or any part of the road separated by a kerb.

Depending on the size of the vehicle, the area covered in signage may be larger than 3m², provided it complies with all other rules.

Election signs on or adjacent to state highways and motorways

Restrictions apply to election signs erected on or adjacent to state highways under the control of New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

NZTA approval is required for general election signs that will be placed on or next to a state highway. Signs must comply with NZTA's general election sign guidance and any applicable state highway bylaw requirements.

NZTA issued the following electioneering sign guidelines in 2025. The objectives of the guidelines are to minimise the potential for road crashes arising from drivers being distracted by indiscriminate installation of electioneering signs and to ensure consistency of application of NZTA policy on such signs with minimal involvement by NZTA.

There are some fundamental considerations to make when erecting electioneering signs adjacent to state highways. These are:

In rural areas (where speed limits are 70km/h or above):

- Signs should be located off the highway reserve and must have property owner consent.
- If the sign requires resource consent, approval will likely be required from NZTA as an affected party under section 95 of the Resource Management Act. Your local authority will be able to advise on this.
- Signs must not be reflectorised or erected in such a location that will create an obvious conflict with existing road signs.
- Signs must not imitate or be of a form similar to any traffic signs. (This is a legal requirement in terms of the Land Transport Act 2003.)
- The location of signs must consider visibility and other traffic safety aspects.
- Signs must be located at least 100m from intersections, bends in the highway and from other regulatory signs.
- Signs are not permitted on or adjacent to motorways.
- For the above noted safety reasons, vehicle mounted signs situated on state highways are not permitted.

In urban areas (where speed limits are 70 km/h or less), the Council's signage rules and requirements apply to any signs adjoining or fronting the road reserve.

Signs erected on rural state highways in a location or manner likely to cause distraction or danger to road users may be removed by NZTA or its agents without prior notice. Where a sign is removed the party will then be advised of the action taken and may be required to pay a fee to recover the sign and cover NZTA's costs.

If you have any questions regarding signage on or adjacent to state highways, including approval requirements, please contact NZTA at environmentalplanning@nzta.govt.nz

Compliance

Any signage not compliant with these rules or legislation must be removed or made compliant by the candidate or owner of the sign. Any request for removal must be actioned within 24 hours. Unsafe signage must be removed immediately.

Compliance action may be undertaken by Council's Compliance and Investigations Team, NZTA or its agents.

Where electoral signage does not comply with the Electoral Act 1993 or Electoral (Advertisements of a Specified Kind) Regulations 2005 it may be referred to the Electoral Commission.

Any complaints about the placement of election signage should be reported to Council Customer Services: 03 941 8999 or 0800 800 169 or via: [Contact us : Christchurch City Council](#)

Any complaints about the content of election advertising, promoter statements, or Electoral Act compliance should be reported to the Electoral Commission: 0800 36 76 56 or enquiries@elections.govt.nz or via: [Contact | Elections NZ](#)

Reference documents:

- [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council](#)
 - o [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council - Rule 6.8.4.2.7 Temporary election or referendum signs](#)
 - o [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council - Rule 6.8.4.2.2 Traffic safety](#)
 - o [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council - Rule 6.8.4.2.3 Integration with building design](#)
 - o [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council - Rule 6.8.4.2.5 Projecting signs and signs attached to or on verandas](#)
- [Christchurch District Plan : Christchurch City Council - Property Search](#)
- [Public Places Bylaw 2018 : Christchurch City Council](#)
- [Traffic and Parking Bylaw 2017 : Christchurch City Council](#)
- [State highway bylaws | NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi](#)
- [Requirements for general election signage on or near state highways | NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi](#)