



INFORMATION GUIDE FOR:

Sign Code

- **PROHIBITED SIGNS:**
 - "A" frame, sandwich board and sidewalk or curb signs, except as allowed in 26.510.110
 - Permanent banners and pennants
 - Billboards and other off-premise signs
 - Flashing signs
 - Moving/Variable Message signs
 - Neon and Neon Appearing signs
 - Obsolete signs
 - Portable and wheeled signs, except as allowed in 26.510.110(D)(1)
 - Roof signs
 - Search lights or beacons except as allowed in 26.575.150(H)
 - Signs causing direct glare
 - Signs containing untruthful or misleading information
 - Signs creating optical illusion
 - Signs obstructing egress
 - Signs on parked vehicles
 - Signs in public right-of-way
 - Street blimps
 - Strings of light and strip lighting
 - Television monitors
 - Unsafe signs
 - Temporary Use Signs

- **Signs not requiring a permit :**
 - Preventive maintenance or repainting
 - Banners for non-profits or approved special events – no more than 10 days
 - Construction signs (No more than 2 with each not exceeding 6sq.ft.)
 - Designated public posting signs
 - Directional, instructional, or courtesy signs (not exceeding 2 sq. ft. in size)
 - Fine art
 - Flags
 - Garage, estate, yard sale or auction signs
 - Government signs
 - Historic designation
 - Holiday decorations
 - Incidental signs on vehicles
 - Interior signs

- Memorial signs
- Menu sign boxes (no larger than 4 sq. ft.)
- Movie theater and performance venue signs
- Political signs
- Property management/Vacation Rental/Timeshare identification signs
- Public notices
- Practical Purpose Signs
- Real estate for sale or rent sign, and photo boxes (with restrictions)
- Regulatory signs
- Religious symbols
- Residential name and address signs (not exceeding 2 sq. ft.)
- Street addresses on mailboxes
- Signs carried by a person (Only 1 allowed at any time)
- Security signs (not exceeding 6" x 6")
- Temporary food vending signs
- Temporary sale signs and going out of business signs (not exceeding 3 @ 3 sq. ft.)
- Vending machine signs
- Temporary Signs for a New Business (must be in the permitting process)

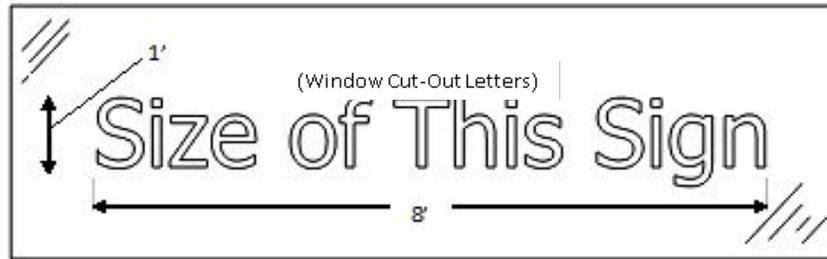
- **SIGN MEASUREMENT:**

- Sign area shall be the area of the smallest four-sided geometric figure which encompasses the facing of a sign including copy, insignia, background and borders. *Figure 1* displays a solid wall sign that is 2' x 10' and is calculated as 20 sq. ft. of sign area.

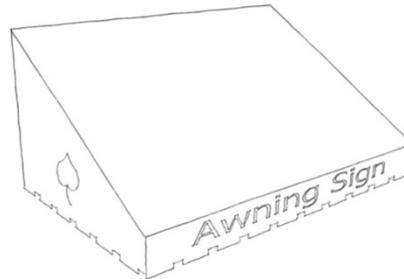


- **Cut Out Letter Signs:** Signs that consist of cut-out letters, for example a sign affixed to glass as shown below in *Figure 2*, shall have a calculated sign area that is half of the aggregate area of the letters. Cut out wall signs must be made out of wood, metal, stone or glass, and window signs may use laminate adhesive lettering. *Figure 2* has cut-out letters with an aggregate area of eight (8) sq. ft, but is only counted as four (4) sq. ft. of sign area.

Figure 2



- **Awnings:** The cut-out letter sign credit will be given to lettering on awnings that use the awning's primary color for the backing, for example, white lettering placed on an awning that is completely red. The credit would not be given to white lettering in front of a black background on an awning that is otherwise completely red.



Awnings must project at least 3 feet from the building and no more than 5 feet. Awnings are required to be functional and sized to match the window they are attached to. The point of attachment must be no higher than the top of the storefront and the awning must be no wider than the storefront. For specific questions on awnings in the downtown core please consult with the City Historic Preservation Officer.

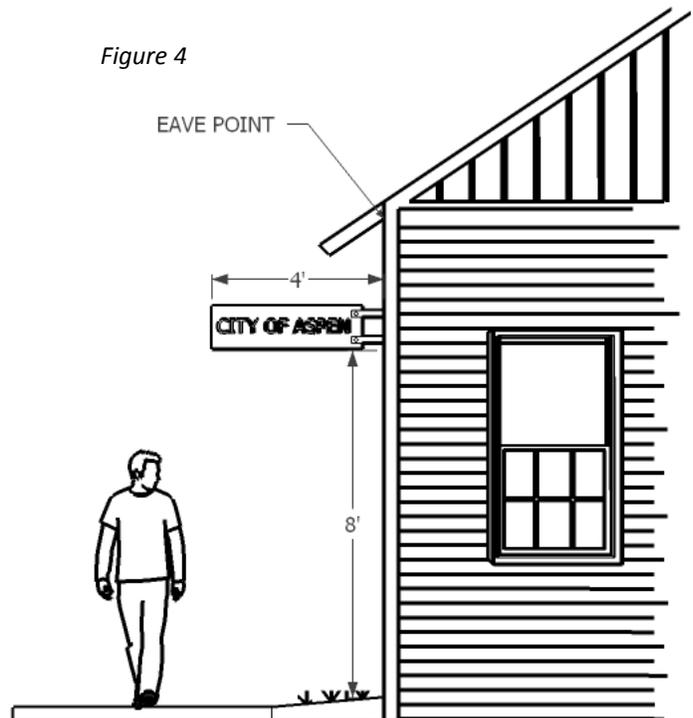
- For signs that have two or more faces, the area of all faces shall be included in determining the area of the sign, except where two (2) such faces are placed back to back and are at no point more than two (2) feet from one another.
- **SIGN ILLUMINATION:**
 - Illumination of signs shall be designed, located, shielded and directed in such a manner that the light source is fixed and is not directly visible. Illumination shall comply with Section 26.575.150, Outdoor Lighting. Backlit signs shall be lit from a source mounted on the sign or on the wall behind the proposed sign with a non-visible point-light-source. The sign shall be made out of a solid and non-transparent material.

- **SIGN LETTERING, LOGOS, AND GRAPHIC DESIGNS:**
 - No lettering on any sign, including cut-out letter signs, shall exceed twelve (12) inches in height, except that the initial letter in each word shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches in height
 - No logo on any sign, including cut-out letter signs, shall exceed (18) inches in height and eighteen (18) inches in length.
- **Definitions, Sign Types and Characteristics:**
- Freestanding signs: Freestanding signs shall not be higher than the principal building or Six (6) feet, whichever is less, and cannot project into the public or pedestrian right-of-way.
 - Projecting signs (blade signs): Projecting signs shall not be higher than the eave line or parapet wall of the top of the principal building, shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet above grade when located adjacent to or projecting over a pedestrian way and shall not extend more than four (4) feet from the building wall to which they are attached. See *Figure 4* for example.
 - Wall signs: Wall signs may not be higher than the eave line or parapet wall of the top of the principal building, and no sign part, including cut-out letters, shall project more than six (6) inches from the building wall.
 - Materials: Signs shall be made primarily out of wood, glass, metal, or stone. Sandwich board signs must contain a fixed message or be made out of chalkboard. Dry erase boards are prohibited.

- **Sign Allotment**

- General Rules:

- The amount of signage an arts, cultural, academic, recreational, retail or restaurant business may display is based on the net leasable space the business occupies.
- Projecting/Hanging/Blade signs are exempt from sign allotment if they are 6 sq. ft. or less in size.
- Buildings with 4 or more tenants may have a business directory sign. There may be 2 business directories per building, and they may be freestanding or sandwich board signs.



- Allotment:
 - *Arts, cultural, academic, recreational, restaurant and retail uses* - The sign allotment will be based on the square footage of the business as follows:
 - For a space with 2,500 square feet or less of Net Leasable Space, the sign allotment will be six (6) square feet.
 - For a space of greater than 2,500 square feet, but less than 24,000 square feet, of Net Leasable Space, the sign allotment will be eight (8) square feet.
 - For a space of 24,000 square feet or more of Net Leasable Space, the sign allotment will be twenty (20) square feet.
 - *Residential Uses* –
 - Identification Sign. A multi-family complex, subdivision entrance, or mobile home park shall be allotted one wall, freestanding or monument identification sign with a maximum area of 20 square feet
 - Bed and Breakfast or Home Occupation. A Bed and Breakfast or Home Occupation shall be allotted one (1) sign with a maximum area of six (6) square feet
 - *Lodge Uses* – Lodge uses shall receive a sign allotment of twelve (12) square feet per business.
- *Office and Service Uses* – Office and Service uses shall receive a sign allotment of six (6) square feet per business

- **SANDWICH BOARD SIGNS:**

- Sandwich Board signs are only permitted for retail and restaurant businesses within the City of Aspen. These signs are not permitted for businesses that have an incidental retail component to their operations.
- Sandwich board signs must be made primarily of wood or metal and must have a professional finish. Incorporated inserts must contain a fixed message or be made out of chalkboard. Dry erase boards are prohibited. Sandwich board signs shall not be used as merchandise displays. The size is not to exceed six (6) square feet per side.
- Sandwich board signs may only be displayed on or adjacent to the parcel that contains the business. A six (6) foot travel width must be maintained on sidewalks and pedestrian malls. This does not allow for signs aligned on edge with one another, thus creating a solid line of sandwich board signs, unless the six (6) foot travel width is maintained on both sides, and they shall not be left out overnight.
- All commercial parcels may display one sandwich board sign per parcel, per street inclusive of directory signs in the form of a sandwich board sign. Parcels that face directly onto two streets (corner properties) may display two sandwich board signs. If a building has 6 or more retail businesses, then two signs per street may be displayed. These signs may be maintained year-around. Multiple businesses may be advertised on one sign. An annual permit must be obtained.

- Restaurants may display one sandwich board sign per establishment. These signs are in addition to the one-per-parcel allowance stated above, and a parcel may have multiple sandwich board signs for restaurants. These signs may be maintained year-around. Multiple businesses may be advertised on one sign. An annual permit must be obtained.
- In order for any business to display a sandwich board sign, the Community Development Department must receive a completed license, along with appropriate fees as amended from time-to-time, and a signed letter of approval from the property owner or property manager.
- **SIGNS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY:**
 - For the rules concerning signs on public property (Over main street, light posts, parks, etc.) please consult with the City of Aspen Planning and Zoning Department on the 3rd floor of city hall at 130 S. Galena St. – 970-429-2764
- **PROCESS:**
 - It shall be unlawful to erect, place, construct, reconstruct, or relocate any sign without first obtaining a sign permit from the Community Development Director.

This is only a guide for the Sign Code in the City of Aspen. The full and official regulations can be found in **Chapter 26.510, Signs of the Land Use Code. **