

Knoxville Campus Policy: OP00029-K Temporary Signage & Pole Banners	
Version 2	Effective Date: 09/24/2025

## Objective

This campus procedure defines the appropriate use and approval steps for usage of temporary signage and pole banners on UT Knoxville property.

## Scope

This campus procedure applies to UT Knoxville administrative and academic units and their staff and faculty, as well as registered student organizations, for university-affiliated activities. Non-university or outside organizations, businesses, or individuals are not allowed to place signs or banners on university property. Temporary signage will not be approved or disapproved based on the sign's message or content.

This procedure does not include distributing of posters, fliers, or handbills on campus. Students, faculty, and staff should reference the Hilltopics "Literature Distribution" policy for more information.

## Roles

Facilities Services (FS) is responsible for reviewing and approving requests for temporary signage on university property. For certain types of signage, FS is responsible for the installation and removal of approved signs.

The Office of Communications and Marketing (OCM) and Facilities Services (FS) maintain, update, and utilize pole banners across campus. OCM is responsible for the content, schedule, design, and printing of pole banners on university property. FS is responsible for installing and maintaining pole banner hardware and hanging and removing banners based on the schedule defined by OCM.

## Definitions

"Temporary signage" includes any sign or display placed on any campus property that is not permanently installed by Facilities Services or a third-party contracted by the university. This includes, but is not limited to directional signs, yard signs, sandwich boards, A-frames, feather flags, vinyl banners, sidewalk stickers, and pennant streamers. This does not include pole banners, which hang from mounted posts installed on light or electrical poles along campus sidewalks and streets.

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“Pole banner” is defined as a banner made of vinyl or cloth material that hangs from mounted posts installed on light or electrical poles along sidewalks and streets.

“University property” is defined as any property owned or operated by UT Knoxville.

## **Procedure: Temporary Signage**

### **I. General Guidelines**

Signage must promote or support a specific event, series of events, or initiative.

Signage may not be displayed on, or attached to, building exteriors, structures, railings, or handrails (except by express permission from FS).

Signage that requires placing a spike, post, or base in the ground (including bow banners, feather flags) must be installed by FS to avoid damage to underground utilities. All other approved temporary signage (including yard signs) may be placed by staff, faculty, or students following approval, following the guidelines within this procedure.

Signage may be displayed no earlier than two weeks before the start of the event and must be removed within 24 hrs. after the event (or the next business day).

Signage installed by FS will be removed by FS following the event.

Signage promoting recurring events or ongoing initiatives may request standing approval. Extended display schedules will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Approval may be revoked if any of the guidelines within this procedure are not met.

### **II. Requesting Temporary Signage**

The Signage Request Form, located at <https://liveutk.sharepoint.com/sites/Facilities/SitePages/Service%20Requests.aspx>, must be submitted and approval received before placing temporary signage on campus. The Signage Request Form should be completed at least two weeks prior to the event for all types of signs.

Requests will be reviewed by FS, who may consult with OCM and/or the UT Institute for Agriculture Office of Marketing and Communications before approving temporary signage. A decision to approve, deny or modify the request will be returned to the requestor within 3 business days.

### **III. Basic Criteria for Approval**

FS will consider the following conditions of each temporary signage request to determine whether or not the request will be approved. Signage will not be approved or disapproved based on the sign’s message or content.

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- Adherence to general guidelines (above)
- Location requested (see **“No-Signage Zones”** below)
- Number of other requests in the same vicinity
- Timeframe requested.
- Adherence to university brand guidelines (academic and administrative departments only)

IV. **Additional Guidelines (Must also meet all General Guidelines above)**

**A. Yard Signs, Bow Banners, and Feather Flags**

- Must be placed in landscape beds where possible. Turf areas are maintained regularly, and removal may be necessary.
- Must be placed at least 36 inches away from sidewalks and curbs to avoid damage to irrigation systems. If damage occurs, responsible unit will be responsible for repair costs.
- Signage that requires placing a spike, post, or base in the ground (including bow banners, feather flags) must be installed by FS to avoid damage to underground utilities.
- Yard signs may be placed by the requestor.

**B. Sandwich Boards/A-Frames**

- May not be placed in locations that will impede pedestrian traffic or vehicle visibility.
- Must allow 5 feet of clearance around any sandwich board in an open paved area or sidewalk.
- May not be placed in landscape beds or turf areas.
- May only be secured with self-contained weighting systems.
- May not be chained or cable locked to University property (including, but not limited to trees, bollards, railings, street or lamp posts, and buildings).

**C. Sidewalk Stickers**

- Must have textured surface to be slip-resistant.
- **MUST** be removed after event by the requesting unit or the installer.

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- May not be placed on steps or stairs due to visibility/ADA issues.

#### V. “No-Signage” Zones

Temporary signage may not be placed in the following campus locations. Exceptions may be allowed under special circumstances, but only with express permission from FS.

- Torchbearer Plaza
- Circle Park Lawn
- Ayres Hall lawn
- Pat Summitt Plaza
- Campus Gateway Entrances (Neyland Dr/Lake Loudoun Blvd, Neyland Dr/Joe Johnson, Neyland Dr/Kingston Pk, and Cumberland Ave/Estabrook Rd)
- Seal on Johnson-Ward Pedestrian Walkway
- Engraved “Torch” on the pedestrian mall by Haslam College of Business
- Blueberry Falls
- Student Union (north side along Cumberland Ave)
- Median on Volunteer Boulevard
- UT Gardens (except by the UT Gardens staff)
- The Indian Mound

### Procedure: Pole Banners

#### I. General Guidelines

Pole banners bring vibrancy and life to our campus landscapes. Their primary purpose is to elevate and celebrate the university’s brand identity. They may occasionally celebrate major milestones, highlight points of pride, or deliver core messages about strategic initiatives. The primary intended audience for pole banners is university visitors.

Pole banners are not signs and are not intended to be used as a medium for communicating specific information about programs, events, or units. They should not be used to provide wayfinding information or to establish the specific identity or physical location of an individual office or unit.

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Pole banners are university-owned assets and are to be utilized to support and enhance the brand of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. They constitute official university speech and, as such, are managed centrally.

OCM is responsible for the content, schedule, design, and printing of pole banners on university property. OCM regularly designs and updates the university's pole banner inventory to make the university look its best and to advance the institution's reputation.

OCM works very closely with FS to ensure pole banner inventory is up to date, installation schedules are maintained, and that we are delivering on a high-quality brand experience. The appropriate, standard size and materials of pole banners are defined by OCM and FS.

## **II. Requesting Pole Banners**

Occasionally, an administrative or academic unit may utilize campus pole banners to help celebrate initiatives or major milestones of interest to university visitors. These situations will have defined start and end dates, at which point university inventory will roll back into those locations. Recent examples include Homecoming and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College of Nursing.

Length of display will depend on factors such as the purpose and the timeline of the initiative. In general, pole banners are not appropriate for short durations. Pole banners for major initiatives and milestones are displayed for a predetermined length of time, which will be decided upon before the banner is installed.

Very rarely, an academic or administrative unit may have a compelling need for specific content to appear on specific pole banner locations for an indefinite or indeterminate time period. There are two determining factors used by OCM when considering these requests. (1) Use of space: Is the location specific or contained to the unit, or is it often used more generally? (2) Audience interactions: Is the location mostly used by specific audiences engaging in specific activities, or is it used broadly by general audiences? Examples of specific use of space and interactions include the Research Park at Cherokee Farm, the UT Space Institute campus, and the Clarence Brown Theatre plaza.

If a unit or department would like to discuss utilizing campus pole banners, in accordance with this procedure, the lead communicator should [contact OCM](#) at least six weeks before the desired installation date. Following the request, OCM will reach out to discuss alignment, approach, schedule, and availability of inventory.

## **III. Installing Pole Banners**

FS is solely responsible for installing and maintaining pole banner hardware and hanging and removing banners. No campus unit other than FS is allowed to install banner hardware or hang pole banners on university property.

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OCM coordinates directly with FS to schedule installation of pole banners. The exact dates when pole banners are installed and removed may be determined by FS availability.

FS may charge a fee for both installation and removal of pole banners. If a campus unit requests pole banners (see above) and that request is approved, the requesting unit is responsible for all costs associated with producing, hanging, and removing the banners.

#### IV. Adhering to Brand Standards

Pole banners must be designed in alignment with the university's published brand identity standards and in a way that ensures a consistent visual experience across campus. All banner designs must be created or approved by OCM before being installed.

#### Campus Responsible Officials & Additional Contacts

**\*If you have questions about temporary signage, [contact Facilities Services](#).**

The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Planning and Design is responsible for temporary signage procedures and for the decisions made by FS regarding temporary signage. Contact William Maffett at [wmaffett@utk.edu](mailto:wmaffett@utk.edu).

**\*If you have questions about pole banners, [contact the Office of Communications and Marketing](#).**

The Associate Vice Chancellor of Marketing and Communications is responsible for pole banner procedures and for the decisions made by OCM regarding pole banners. Contact Jacob Rudolph at [jrudolph@utk.edu](mailto:jrudolph@utk.edu).