



MEMO TO: Craven County Candidates
FROM: Craven County Board of Elections *Melba M. Nelson*
REF: Campaign signs, etc.

11/25/2019

We have had several inquiries on campaign signs. The inquiries have been: where and when can signs be placed; how long are signs to be up; complaints on signs on personal property without permission, etc. When a complaint is received we 1st direct them to you, the Candidate; 2nd to the Party headquarters; and 3rd to the proper municipality or DOT. If it is alleged signs are stolen, persons need to go to law enforcement and file a report. The County or State Board of Elections do not enforce the placement of signs or investigate complaints or alleged crimes associated with harming/removing signs.

As you know, there are numerous regulations and policies on campaign signs. You are urged to be familiar with all the town ordinances and DOT regulations as they pertain to campaign signs and also educate your committee as well. Many times you the Candidate are not aware of where your supporters have placed signs. Citations and penalties may be assessed for signs if the ordinances and regulations are not followed. Signs should not be placed anywhere that could restrict motorist's views of traffic or be a contributor to the result of a serious or fatal event. Signs should not be placed on private property or in the right-of-ways fronting the property without obtaining permission from property owners.

- Buffer Zones (No Campaigning 50 foot Zones) are mandated by law and handled by our office. There are now buffer zones for all curbside voting areas as well. Buffer Zone pictures are located on the web page and will be at the polling sites. Signs, tents, etc. will be removed if placed in the Buffer Zones. Sign placement is a sign "stuck" in the ground. **Signs and tents will be removed if placed in restricted areas.** *If you are campaigning for a candidate in any capacity, you are not allowed to walk, etc. for any reason in the "No Campaigning" zones. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW THE BUFFER ZONES AND THAT YOUR SUPPORTERS KNOW THEM AS WELL.*

Current Polling Sites with designated and restricted campaigning areas ([view buffer zone pictures on webpage](#)):

- #2-Havelock at Havelock Tourist Center does not allow any campaigning (signs, tents, etc.) around the memorials. Campaigning is Only allowed in the grassy areas in the parking areas across from the tourist center.
- #3-Trent Woods at Garber United Methodist Church has designated areas for tents on a first come/first server basis. Signs are not allowed to be placed in the ground anywhere on church property. Do not put any signs, etc. in the right-of-ways around the church. The church is private property and has the right to restrict campaigning areas including the right-of-ways fronting the property. Tables, etc. are not allowed to be in any of the pathways, driveways, etc. Tents and tables, etc. are not to be put up until after 12 midnight before the day of the Election and taken down immediately after the close of the polls on Election Day.
- #23-Grantham 2B at New Song Church has designated areas for sign placement and tents. The area from the entrance off W Grantham to the first row into the parking lot is the only areas tents and signs are allowed to be placed. The church is private property and has the right to restrict campaigning areas.
- N2-Fort Totten at the YMCA has designated areas for sign placement and tents. Signs are only allowed to be placed at the entrances to the parking lots. Tents are allowed in the grassy area adjacent to the 50' buffer zone. No tents are allowed in the parking lots. The YMCA is private property and has the right to restrict campaigning areas.
- N6-West New Bern at the Recreation Center has a designated area for campaign tents only. No tents in the parking lots. Tents are allowed in the grassy area adjacent to the parking lot. The designated area is adjacent to the Buffer Zone and therefore is allowable.

The cost of the signs and the possibility of bad publicity due to sign placement, signs not being removed timely, and campaigning may be an unwelcome burden to you and your committee. Please be considerate to the public that are at polling place locations doing business other than voting. Strongly urge your campaign workers to not "rush" these individuals with campaign information. **Do not park or have your campaign workers park in the closest parking spaces to the entrance of the polling location.** This includes the designated voter parking spaces, handicap voter parking spaces, and curbside voting areas. You will be asked to move to other parking if parked in these areas. We do receive complaints on these practices.

If you have any questions, please contact us and good luck with your campaigns.