

Recognition Sign Guidelines



Although there is inherent advertising value in Adopt-A-Road signs, they are not a forum for advertising or public discourse. Their purpose is to recognize who is providing the adoption service, not what services they provide, what products they sell, or where they are located.

Usually, the name entered on the Adopt-A-Road Permit Application will be displayed on the recognition sign. However, sign rules for individuals, organizations, and businesses allow a few exceptions.

In all circumstances, the items to be displayed on recognition signs are solely determined by the County.

The County of San Luis Obispo will only produce black block letters on a white background.

Participants may elect to provide customized recognition panels at their own expense; the County will provide blank signs at no charge. A scaled and colorized design proof must be submitted for review and approval by the County prior to receiving blank signs. The Adopt-A-Road Coordinator will review all customized panels prior to sign placement.

Summary of Sign Design Rules

- **Logos:** Businesses and organizations may display logos on their recognition signs. Logos containing words other than the organization or business name are not permitted.
- **Decorative Type:** Only logos can contain stylized lettering. Otherwise, group names must be displayed sans-serif lettering such as Helvetica or Arial. Lettering must be either all capitals or all upper and lower case.
- **Use of Colors:** Colors are permitted, however, the use of red, orange, or yellow (or any combination thereof) for logos and lettering shall not exceed 30% of the panel. Fluorescent, neon, reflective, or 'dayglow' colors may not be used. Unless part of a logo, group names must be a single color.
- **50% White Background:** The area covered by the name and/or logo cannot exceed 50% of the panel. In other words, at least 50% of the panel must retain its reflective white background. The panel design must allow for white margins on all four sides of the panel. Margin area is counted toward the 50% white background requirement, but white lettering is not.
- **Same-Name Entities:** If necessary to distinguish a business or organization from another with the same name, the panel may display a community name. If there is more than one same-named business in a community, the business' street name may be displayed instead of the community name. If an organization can be uniquely identified by a number, such as a club or post number, they may display either the number or community name but not both.
- **Memorials:** Only the words "In Memory Of" plus a deceased person's name(s) are permitted.
- **Web-Based Entities:** Only entities that operate exclusively on the internet and whose legal business or organizational name is the same as appears in their web domain name are permitted to display their domain name on their recognition signs.

Adopters are not guaranteed a Recognition Sign. In the event a Recognition Sign is not authorized, it will be disclosed before the AAR Permit is processed.

Individuals

Individual adopters may display their first and last name, first name only, or first name and last initial. A middle name or initial may be displayed along with a first and last name.

Additional text is not permitted. Salutations or titles, including abbreviations of academic degrees, are not permitted. Graphics are not permitted. Individuals may not display logos on their panels.

Organizations

Organizations have the option to display their name, their logo along with their name, or to display only their logo. Informal groups of individuals, established for the purpose of participating in the AAR Program, are subject to sign rules for organizations.

Chapters of national or international organizations may display the parent organization's logo.

Additional text is permitted under the following circumstances: if necessary to identify an organization as different from another same-named organization, the sign may display a community name or organization number.

Businesses

Businesses have the option to display their logo along with their name or to display only their logo. Businesses can choose to display or omit corporate indicators, such as Inc., Co., etc.

- **Businesses named after individuals:** A person's name and title may be displayed only if that is the legal name of the business.
- **Names that include products or services:** Names such as "Doe's Burgers" or "Doe's Plumbing" are acceptable if that is the legal name of the business.
- **Names that include street or community names:** Names such as "Second Street Pharmacy" or "Five Cities Shop" are acceptable if that is the legal name of the business.

Additional text is permitted under the following circumstances: if necessary to identify a business as different from another same-named business, the sign may display a community name. If the two same-named businesses are in the same community, then the street name (not address) may be displayed instead of a community name.

Documentation Requirements for Recognition Signs

The following documents must be submitted:

- Businesses must submit a copy of their business license.
- If a business or organization elects to provide a customized decal displaying a logo, the participant must provide a copy of the logo being used in a corporate document (i.e. business card, letterhead, website, etc.)
- All groups planning to provide decals to be placed on their recognition sign must submit a scaled and colored proof of the proposed design.