

City of Biddeford Recreation Department

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Banners & Signs on City-Owned Property

April, 2026

Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the guidelines and expectations for placing banners and signs on city-owned properties overseen by the Biddeford Recreation Department. The goal is to support local city departments, schools, and non-profit organizations in promoting events, programs, and community services while ensuring consistent communication, maintenance of public spaces, and equitable access.

Background

The Recreation Department provides designated spaces where community groups may display banners for approved events and activities. Recently, unapproved signs have increasingly appeared on fences and properties without authorization. Many remain for extended periods with no contact from the individuals or organizations that placed them. This SOP aims to correct these issues by clarifying the process and responsibilities for all parties involved.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all city, school, and non-profit organizations seeking to hang banners or signs on Recreation Department–managed property.

Definitions

- **Banner** – A temporary, non-permanent display made of vinyl, fabric, or similar material, typically used to promote a community event, public program, or organizational initiative. Banners are usually hung on designated fences or structures.
- **Sign** – Any temporary display, poster, board, or placard placed on city-owned property for the purpose of providing information, directions, or promotion. Signs may be smaller or more rigid than banners and include yard-sign-style displays.
- **City-Owned Property** – Any land, building, structure, fence, or facility owned, maintained, or overseen by the City of Biddeford and specifically managed by the Biddeford Recreation Department for the purposes of this SOP.
- **Authorized Organization** – Biddeford Recreation Department is the authorized organization that oversees signage in city parks.

- **Placement Authorization** – Written or emailed approval from the Recreation Department granting permission for an organization to hang a banner or sign at a designated location for a defined period of time.
- **Display Period** – The approved duration during which a banner or sign may remain in place on city property. The start and end dates are assigned during the authorization process.
- **Designated Locations** – Specific fences, structures, or spaces identified by the Recreation Department as suitable for temporary banners or signs. Only these locations may be used for display.
- **Installing Organization** – The group or individual responsible for physically placing and removing the banner or sign. This organization assumes responsibility for maintenance and timely removal.
- **Unauthorized Signage** – Any banner or sign placed on city property without prior written authorization or any authorized banner/sign that remains beyond its approved display period.

Location: Locations include any property operated and maintained by the Recreation Department. This includes all Recreation Parks and facilities. A complete list of locations can be accessed at this link: [Biddeford Recreation: Facilities](#)

Only these locations may be used for authorized banners and sign displays. Use of any other city-owned fence, structure, or space is prohibited unless additional written authorization is provided by the Recreation Department.

Placement Authorization

- All requests for banner or sign placement must be submitted by email to the Recreation Department at **recreation@biddefordmaine.org**.
- Requests must include the following information:
 - Name of the organization
 - Description of what you would like to display
 - Number of banners or signs being requested
 - Requested display dates
 - Preferred designated location(s)
- Please allow the department **a minimum of one (1) week** to review and respond to your request.
- Authorization is not guaranteed and may depend on space availability, scheduling, and adherence to these guidelines.
- Placement may occur only after written approval has been granted.

Display Period

Authorized banners and signs may be displayed for a **maximum of four (4) weeks**.

- Start and end dates will be assigned at the time of approval and must be followed as scheduled.
- Organizations are responsible for ensuring their banner or sign is removed **no later than the final approved date**.
- Extensions may be considered only if requested in advance and if space availability allows.
- Any banner or sign that remains beyond its approved display period will be classified as **unauthorized signage** and may be removed by the Recreation Department.

Signage Guidelines

- All banners and signs must maintain a standard of appropriateness suitable for public spaces and community use.
- **Profanity of any kind is strictly prohibited.**
- **Political content**, including campaign messages, endorsements, slogans, or imagery referencing political candidates, ballot questions, or advocacy positions, is not permitted.
- **Inappropriate or offensive graphics**—including imagery or language that could be considered discriminatory, vulgar, threatening, or otherwise unsuitable for a family-friendly environment—are prohibited.
- The Recreation Department reserves the right to deny or remove any signage that does not meet these standards or is deemed inconsistent with the mission of maintaining a safe and welcoming community environment.

Installation & Removal Responsibilities

• Installing Organization Responsibility

The organization receiving placement authorization is responsible for the proper installation and removal of its banner or sign. The Recreation Department does not install or remove signage on behalf of organizations.

• Installation Standards

- Banners and signs must be securely fastened using materials that will not damage city property (for example: zip ties, rope, or approved fasteners).
- Staples, nails, screws, adhesives, or any materials that puncture or permanently alter city structures are strictly prohibited.
- Displays must be installed in a safe manner that does not obstruct walkways, interfere with recreational activities, or create safety hazards.

• Maintenance During Display Period

- Organizations are responsible for checking their signage periodically to ensure it remains secure, intact, and visually appropriate.

– Damaged or deteriorating banners or signs must be repaired or removed promptly at the organization's expense.

• **Removal Requirements**

– All banners and signs must be removed **no later than the final day** of the approved display period.

– The installing organization must ensure all fasteners and installation materials are removed and the site is left clean and undamaged.

– Failure to remove signage on time may result in removal by Recreation Department staff and may affect future authorization requests.

• **City Authority**

The Recreation Department reserves the right to remove any banner or sign that:

– Becomes unsafe or damaged

– Violates these guidelines

– Appears without authorization

– Remains in place beyond its approved dates

FMI, please contact:

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