



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Adopt-A-Highway Recognition Panel Design Guidelines

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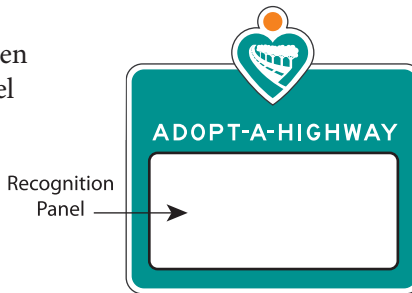


PURPOSE OF SIGNS

Although there is advertising value inherent in Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) signs, they are not intended to be an advertising medium. Their sole purpose is to identify the adopter, not to advertise what services the adopter provides, what products they sell, or where they are located. The appearance and content of recognition panels is solely determined by Caltrans.

RECOGNITION PANEL DOCUMENTATION

Although applicants should discuss their panel's design with their District AAH Coordinator when they submit an AAH Program Application, panel documentation is not needed until a requested site becomes available. At that time, the District AAH Coordinator will send an AAH Permit Application and a list of any needed documentation to the applicant. Permits will not be issued until all required documentation has been received and approved by the District AAH Coordinator.



WHAT CAN BE DISPLAYED ON RECOGNITION PANELS?

Usually, the name entered on the AAH Program Application will be displayed on the recognition panel. However, panel rules for individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses allow a few exceptions.

Individuals

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



Acceptable



Acceptable



Acceptable

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 AAH Program, are subject to panel rules for organizations.

- **Additional Text is Permitted Under the Following Circumstances:** If necessary to identify an organization as different from another same-named organization, the panel may display a community name or organization number. Same-named student organizations, may display the name or abbreviation of their campus.





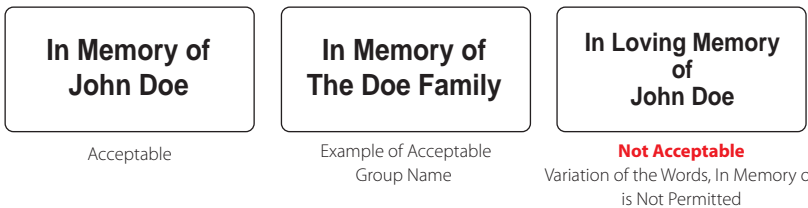
- Chapters of national or international organizations may display the parent organization's logo.



Memorials

Only the words, “In Memory of,” plus the deceased person’s name(s) can be displayed on the recognition panel. The AAH Program Application must exactly reflect the words to be displayed on the recognition panel. The deceased person’s first name(s) may be used without displaying the last name. A middle name or initial may be displayed along with a first name or a first and last name. If several persons are to be memorialized, a group name will be considered by Headquarters AAH Coordinators on a case-by-case basis.

- Additional Text is Not Permitted:** Variations of the words, “In Memory of,” will not be approved.



Caltrans will not place a new memorial panel, or will remove an existing memorial panel, if there is written opposition from an immediate family member of the deceased. An immediate family member is a spouse, child, stepchild, brother, stepbrother, sister, stepsister, mother, stepmother, grandmother, father, stepfather, or grandfather.

Note: Victims of DUI accidents may qualify for the Victims Memorial Sign Program offered by Caltrans Traffic Operations. For more information, refer to: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/signdel/victims.htm>

Shared Adoptions

Adoptions that are shared by two or more parties receive a single courtesy sign and a single recognition panel. Panel rules are applied separately for each adopter. For example, if an individual and an organization were sharing an adoption, the individual would need to abide by the panel rules for individuals and the organization would need to abide by the panel rules for organizations. Up to four adopter’s names may fit on an single panel.



Businesses and Agencies

Government agencies are subject to panel rules for 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.



Acceptable *If* This is a Business Name

- **Businesses Named After Individuals:** A person's name and title may be displayed only if that is the legal name of their 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 their business.
- **Names that Include Street or Community Names:** Names such as "Second Street Pharmacy" or "Granite Bay Surf Shop" are acceptable if that is the legal name of their business.
- **Additional Text is Permitted Under the Following Circumstances:**
 - **Same-Named Businesses:** If necessary to identify a business as different from another same-named business, the panel may display a community name. If two same-named businesses are in the same community, then the street name (not the address) may be displayed instead of a community name.



Acceptable
There is More Than One
Doe's Restaurant



Acceptable
There is More Than One
Doe's Restaurant in Barstow



Not Acceptable
Adopter May Add Only
One Identifier

- **Brokers, Agents, and Automobile Dealerships:** Commodities brokers, real estate agents, authorized automobile dealerships, and insurance agents may display the logo of the corporation they represent. The panel can recognize an individual agent or the business, but not both. (The application and subsequent permit must show the agent's name or the business' name, but not both.)

In the first example below, the name of the business is Doe's Insurance. The agent's name is Jane Doe.



Acceptable
Agent's Name and Agency Logo



Not Acceptable
Cannot Include Both
Agent's Name and Agency Name



Acceptable
Agency Name and Agency Logo



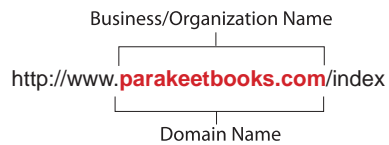
In the next example, “Cal-State Cars” is the name of an automobile manufacturer. “Doe’s Cal-State Cars” is the name of an authorized Cal-State Cars dealership; “Your Car Lot” is not an authorized dealership.



- **Displaying Logos of Multiple Franchises:** Increasing numbers of business owners are combining two or more franchise operations at the same location. For example, Jane Doe has a business license under the name of “Jane’s Gas Stop.” Jane also owns franchises for “Tank Up” gasoline and “Doe’s Burgers” restaurants and operates both franchises at Jane’s Gas Stop. Jane can display both the Tank Up and Doe’s Burgers logos on her panel along with the words, Jane’s Gas Stop.

Web-Based Organizations or Businesses

Entities that operate exclusively on the Internet and whose legal name is the same as appears in their web address’ domain name, may be permitted to display their name on their recognition panel.



District AAH Coordinators will examine web sites to ensure that applicants operate exclusively on the Internet. If the site lists the address of a meeting location or a location where customers can obtain goods or services, then the organization would be disqualified. Parakeetbooks.com would qualify because:

- Parakeetbooks.com is an Internet-based business. (There are no physical, Parakeetbooks stores.)
- Parakeetbooks.com is the domain name of their home page.
- Parakeetbooks.com has submitted proof that their business name is the same as their domain name.

Very few businesses or organizations can meet these requirements.

Web-based entities have the option of displaying their logo along with their name or displaying only their logo. Domain names that are acronyms of a business name are permitted. For example, SDGR.com would be permitted for an Internet business named StatewideDirectoryOfGourmetRestaurants.com.

Businesses Whose Names are Telephone Numbers

Entities that operate exclusively over the telephone and whose legal business name is the same as their phone number, may be permitted to display their phone number



on their recognition panel. Such entities will be examined on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to the same rules and restrictions as web-based entities.

COST OF SIGNS

AAH courtesy signs will be provided, installed, and maintained by Caltrans for each adoption at no cost to the adopter. Recognition panel “overlays” are attached to the courtesy signs when a site is adopted. Depending on the recognition panel style chosen, adopters may incur some cost for their recognition panel(s).

RECOGNITION PANEL STYLES

Standard Panel (Name Only)

Caltrans will provide standard recognition panels at no cost to the adopter. Standard panels display the group’s name in black, standard highway font (similar to Arial or Helvetica).



Standard Panel with Logo

Logos for organizations or businesses can be added to a standard panel. (Logos are not permitted for individuals.) Logos must have adhesive backing. The adopter must purchase the logo and then deliver it to Caltrans. There is no fee charged to place a logo onto a standard panel.



Not Acceptable

Note: Words in a logo may not be combined with part of a name to create the full name.

Custom Panel (Name Only, Logo Only, or Name and Logo)

If all panel elements are purchased by the adopter, the panel is called a “custom” panel. Elements can be delivered to Caltrans for application onto a blank panel, or, a completed panel can be delivered. Caltrans will supply blank recognition panels at no cost to participants who choose the latter option. If the logo and/or lettering is silk screened onto the panel, the entire panel must have graffiti protection. Adopters can obtain a list of approved protective sheeting and coatings from their District AAH Coordinator. There is no fee charged for installation of completed panels. If the adopter chooses to deliver panel elements to Caltrans, they must have adhesive backing. There is no fee charged for placing panel elements onto a panel.

Reducing a panel design to one-half inch in height will help to determine how a panel will appear to passing motorists.

A standard panel will often provide better recognition than a custom panel as shown in the examples at right.



Adopter Supplied
Name-Only Panel



Caltrans Supplied
Standard Panel



Adopter Supplied
Logo-Only Panel

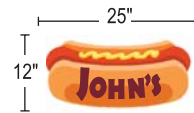


RECOGNITION PANEL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

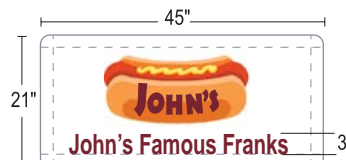
Design Proof

A design proof is required for any panel item to be provided by the adopter.

- If there will be colored items on the panel, the design proof must be in color.
- Scaling must be proportional. Elements must not be pulled, stretched, squeezed, condensed, or otherwise altered or embellished to fit a particular space.
- Logos with lettering and graphics must be scaled as a unit so that all parts are re-sized proportionately.



Scaled Design Proof of Logo to be Placed on Standard Panel



Scaled Design Proof of Entire Panel to be Supplied by Adopter

Logo Verification

A logo may contain a graphic only, text only, or both. For example, these are all acceptable versions of the Caltrans logo.



- **Individuals:** Individuals may not display logos on their panels.
- **Businesses, Agencies, and Organizations:** Businesses, agencies, and organizations must provide a colored example of the proposed logo being used in a corporate document. The following documents can be used to verify a logo:
 - Business card
 - Letterhead
 - Photo of store signage
 - Web site heading
 - Corporate identity document
 - Other corporate document

NOTE: Advertisements may not be used for logo verification.

Logos Containing Advertising Elements

Logos containing the following items are not permitted unless they are a part of a verified business name:

- Slogans
- Services provided
- Products and product descriptions



-
- Telephone numbers, addresses (e-mail, Internet, street, etc.), directions, or exit ramps
 - **Any other form of advertisement**

Exceptions will not be granted even if the prohibited item is part of a trademarked logo. If a business or organization cannot provide an example of a commonly used logo that meets AAH panel design criteria, they must use a name-only panel.

Name Verification

- **Individuals:** No name verification is required.
- **Organizations:** No name verification is required unless the proposed panel design contains an item listed on the previous page in “Logos Containing Advertising Elements.” In addition to the documents listed for business name verification, organizational bylaws may be used to verify an organization’s name.
- **Businesses:** Business applicants must provide proof of legal business name when an AAH Program Application is submitted. The following documents can be used to verify a business name:
 - Business license
 - City or county tax certificate
 - Articles of incorporation
 - Screen print from the Secretary of State’s business portal, <http://kepler.sos.ca.gov/list.html>, showing an active status for domestic (in California) or foreign (out of state or country) corporation, LP, or LLP
 - Certificate of Registration (issued by the Secretary of State) is acceptable verification for out-of-state web entities
 - **Subsidiaries and Franchises:** Subsidiaries and franchises may not be able to provide any of the documents listed above for name verification. In this case, one of the documents listed above must be submitted for the parent company along with a fictitious business name statement showing the parent company “doing business as” the subsidiary or franchise.

For example, Jane’s Cookie Shop, a subsidiary of Doe’s Foods, Inc., wants to adopt a section of highway but they do not have any of the documents listed above. In order to proceed with the adoption, an AAH Program Application must be submitted using both their name and the name of their parent company. Then a business license for Doe’s Foods, Inc. and a fictitious business name statement showing that Doe’s Foods, Inc. is doing business as Jane’s Cookie Shop can be provided to satisfy the name verification requirement. The recognition panel can display the Jane’s Cookie Shop name or logo or both.

APPLICANT INFORMATION (*Businesses must submit a*

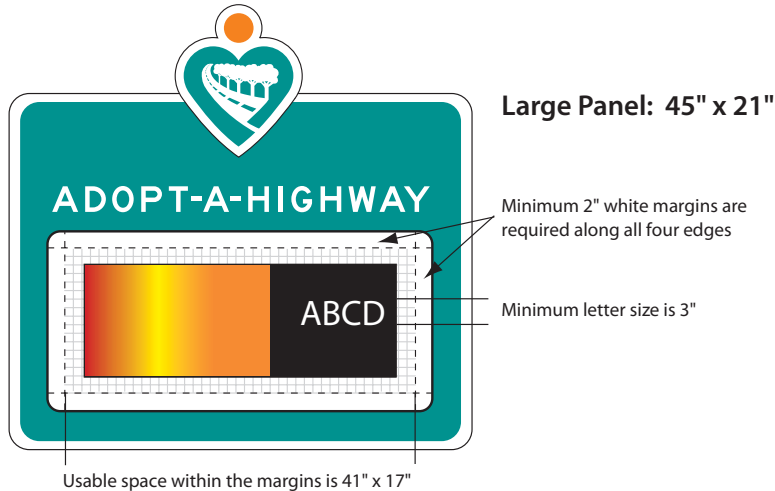
INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATION, OR BUSINESS NAME

Doe’s Foods, Inc./Jane’s Cookie Shop

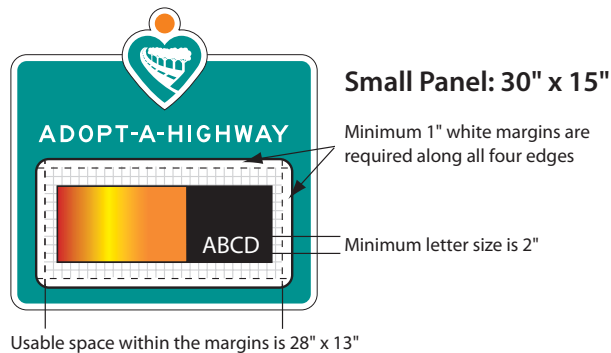


COLOR AND COVERAGE

- **Margins:** White margins along the perimeter of a small panel must be a minimum of one inch. White margins along the perimeter of a large panel must be a minimum of two inches.
- **Reflective White Background:** At least 50 percent of the recognition panel's reflective white background must remain uncovered. White margins are counted toward the 50 percent requirement, however, lettering or graphics cut out of a vinyl image (and therefore white and reflective), may not be counted toward the 50 percent requirement.
- **Use of Color:** Fluorescent, metallic, or reflective colors are prohibited. However, use of transparent ink (ink that allows the reflective white panel to show through the image) is permissible.
- **Bright Colors:** The use of red, orange, or yellow (or any combination thereof) for logos and lettering shall not exceed 30 percent of the entire panel area.



The large panel example contains a solid rectangle covering 50 percent of the panel. The solid rectangle is approximately 36.5" x 13" (472.5 sq. in.). The white margins around the solid rectangle are 4" on the top and bottom and 4.25" on the right and left. The bright colored portion covers 30% (283.5 sq. in.) of the panel and is approximately 22.5" x 13".



The small panel example contains a solid rectangle covering 50 percent of the panel. The solid rectangle is 25" x 9" (225 sq. in.). The white margins around the solid rectangle are 3" on the top and bottom and 2.5" on the right and left. The bright colored portion covers 30 percent (135 sq. in.) of the panel and is approximately 15" x 9".



LETTERING REQUIREMENTS FOR NAMES AND MEMORIALS

Lettering for adopter's names and memorials must be the same font, the same case, a single color, and a single size. These rules do not apply to text in logos.

- **Font:** All lettering must be Standard Highway Signs alphabet series or similar sans-serif font (i.e., Arial, Helvetica, etc.).



Not Acceptable
Not Standard Highway Font



Acceptable

- **Case:** All capital letters may be used. Initial capitals and lower case letters may be used. Combining large and small capitals or displaying some words in all capitals and some in upper and lower case is not permitted.



Acceptable
Initial Capitals and Lower Case



Acceptable
All Capitals

- **Color:** Adopter names must be a single color. Standard panels, manufactured by Caltrans, will have black lettering. The color rules on page 9 apply to custom panels.



Not Acceptable
Two Different Case Combinations



Not Acceptable
Large and Small Capitals



Acceptable
Name is Single Color



Not Acceptable
Name is Mixed Colors



Not Acceptable
Name is Mixed Colors

- **Size:** Adopter names must be a single size. Words in names may be stacked.

Lettering on the small panel must be a minimum of 2 inches high. Lettering on the large panel must be a minimum of 3 inches high. Larger lettering is highly recommended.

If the lettering is upper and lower case, the capital letter(s) must meet the minimum height.

There is no maximum lettering size, however, the coverage rules on page 9 apply.



Acceptable



Acceptable



Acceptable
Stacking is Permissible



Not Acceptable
Margin Requirement Not Met



Not Acceptable
Business Name is Mixed Size



LETTERING REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDED TEXT

Added text must be black. Lettering style and size requirements for added text are the same as for adopter's names, with one exception. The added text can be smaller than the adopter's name as long as it meets minimum lettering height.

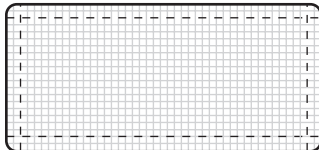
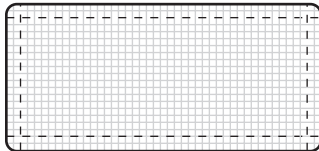


LETTERING SIZE GUIDE

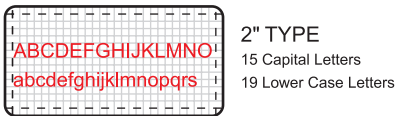
LARGE SIGNS (Freeways)



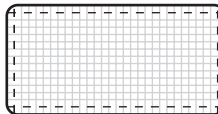
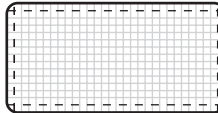
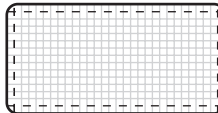
Try Out Your Ideas!



SMALL SIGNS (Conventional Highways)



Try Out Your Ideas!



LOGO REQUIREMENTS

Words in a logo may not be combined with part of a name to create the full name. Graphics or borders that are not part of a verified logo are not permitted.

- **Font and Case:** There are no font or case restrictions for logos.
- **Size:** Recommended minimum height for logos on **small panels** is 8 inches. Recommended minimum height for logos on **large panels** is 12 inches. There is no maximum logo size, however, the coverage rules on page 9 apply.
- **Color:** The color rules on page 9 apply. Large logos that consist of light-colored lettering on solid, dark-colored backgrounds are permitted. However, adopters must be warned that such logos **will not be visible at night**.



Acceptable, But
Not Visible at Night.



Not Acceptable
Even Though Margin Requirements
Are Met, More Than 50% of
the Panel is Solid Color



Not Acceptable
Even Though Panel is 50% White,
Bright Colors Exceed 30%
of the Panel.

SAFETY-RELATED PANEL RESTRICTIONS

- Messages, lights, symbols, and trademarks that resemble any official traffic control device are prohibited.
- Light-emitting diodes, luminous tubing, fiber optics, luminescent panels or flashing, moving, or animated features are prohibited.

RECOGNITION PANEL DISQUALIFICATION

Adopters are not guaranteed a courtesy sign. If a courtesy sign will not be authorized, this will be disclosed before the AAH Permit Application is processed.

- Signs will not be installed or recognition panels placed to recognize Supplemental Litter Removal or "Spot" Wildflower Planting adoptions.
- Recognition panels shall not display graphics or borders that are not part of a logo.
- Because AAH signs are viewed by children, recognition panels shall not display wording or a logo that implies or is obscene or sexually explicit.
- Recognition panels shall not display adopter names or logos that violate the law or Caltrans' policy.*

* Caltrans Director's Policy DP-01-R6 Equal Employment Opportunity.

