

**EXTERIOR ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD SIGNS  
FOR COMMONWEALTH CAMPUSES**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of exterior electronic message board (EMB) signs is to communicate information regarding upcoming or ongoing events on campus. This policy establishes the design guidelines and content for electronic message board (EMB) signs at Commonwealth campus locations. This policy also outlines the process to secure approval of the design and content of each electronic message board sign.

*References:* Penn State Signage Standards Manual  
([www.opp.psu.edu/construction/standards/signage/index.cfm](http://www.opp.psu.edu/construction/standards/signage/index.cfm))

Penn State Visual and Editorial Standards  
(<http://publications.psu.edu/index.html>)

Policy AD61 University Communications Through Advertising  
Publications and Media Relations  
(<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/AD61.html>)

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE:**

1. Goals of the Policy:
  - To identify permitted locations for EMB signs.
  - To establish design guidelines for EMB signs.
  - To establish appropriate content for EMB signs.
  - To establish approval process for EMB signs.

2. Permitted Locations:

EMB signs are permitted on University property on the exterior perimeter of campus. This includes major roads that lead to the campus entrance. Off-site locations may be considered, if the campus is not adjacent to a major road.

EMB signs are not permitted within campus entrance signs. EMB signs are independent structures.

## 3. Design Guidelines:

- The EMB sign will be subordinate to the campus entrance sign.
- The design of the EMB sign will complement the design of the campus entrance sign, the architecture on campus, and the landscape.
- The design of the EMB sign will include the University's identity (i.e. the 1855 shield). It may also include the Penn State campus logo.
- The EMB sign will sit on a brick or stone base. The EMB sign will have brick or stone sides and back. A top cap will be stone or precast to simulate stone.
- One or two sided message boards are permitted. The University seal may be added to the back of a one-sided sign.
- The EMB sign will have a black background and white letters.
- The electronic message will be stationary (no animation).
- Electronic message may include up to 3 lines. Lettering height will not exceed 6", unless required.

## 4. Content:

- EMB signs will only communicate information regarding upcoming or ongoing events on campus.
- Commercial advertising is not permitted. Personal messages are not permitted.
- The EMB sign will not display the date and time, unless that information pertains to a specific campus event.

## 5. Approval Procedures:

The approval process for an EMB sign is as follows:

- Campus submits a proposal for an EMB sign to the Office of Physical Plant (OPP).
- Campus Planning and Design (within OPP) will review the proposal and assist the campus with the design of the sign. A final design will be recommended for approval.
- The final design will be first approved by AVP for PP and the AVP for Finance and Business.
- The final design will then be approved by the SVP for Finance and Business and the VP for Commonwealth Campuses.
- The campus Chancellor will approve the message content.
- EMB signs will conform to all local, state, and federal ordinances and regulations governing signage. The local zoning authority must approve all signs.