

HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS
HIDALGO COUNTY ELECTIONS
DEPARTMENT COUNTY OWNED
PROPERTY ELECTIONEERING POLICY

Procedure:

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Date Authorized: XX/XX/2014

Supersedes:

1. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to comply with the Texas Election Code, as recently amended by the 83rd Legislative Session, Hidalgo County and the Hidalgo County Elections Department has established the following policy to regulate the time, place and manner of electioneering on County owned property.

2. DEFINITIONS

- A. Electioneering means the posting, use, or distribution of political signs or literature.
- B. Voting period means the period beginning when the polls open for voting and ending when the polls close or the last voter has voted, whichever is later. *(the "Voting Period")*.
- C. Early voting period means the period described by section 85.001 of the Texas Election Code. *(the "Early Voting Period")*

3. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- A. Electioneering will not be allowed at any time within 100 ft. of the polling location when that location is a County owned property in accordance with the Texas Election Code;
- B. Electioneering will be allowed outside the 100 ft. marker at polling locations owned by the County of Hidalgo, but only during the Early Voting Period and the Voting Period and at no time before, during, or after. This means electioneering on County owned property can only take place when ~~the polls are open and~~ signage, equipment, and literature cannot be left over night; *during the Voting Period and Early Voting Period.*
- C. Electioneering is prohibited at all times on County owned property not designated as a polling location;

Except as provided here

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- D. County of Hidalgo will not allow tractors, trailers, barbeque pits, food and drink distribution or consumption, use of loudspeakers, microphones, megaphone, amplified devices, or any other activity not defined as "electioneering" on County owned property at any time before, during, or after the Early Voting Period and the Voting Period;
- E. County of Hidalgo will not allow the consumption or distribution of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on County owned property at any time before, during, or after the Early Voting Period and the Voting Period;
- F. Threatening or harassing conduct, and the use of inappropriate language will not be allowed and may result in the removal of any candidate, measure, or political party;
- G. County of Hidalgo will not allow the placement of political signs, literature, or other political materials larger than four feet by eight feet (4ft x 8ft) on County owned property at any time before, during, or after the Early Voting Period and the Voting Period;
- H. County of Hidalgo parking lots are for public use and to conduct official County business; therefore, use of handicapped or designated parking spaces will not be allowed for electioneering purposes. All others parking spaces or available area will be limited to one (1) parking space or the equivalent of one (1) parking space per candidate, measure, or political party;
- I. ~~Poll locations open at 7:00a.m., and close at 7:00p.m., therefore,~~ persons with political signs and literature to distribute (i.e. to conduct electioneering) may not enter County *owned* property before ~~6:30p.m.~~ *thirty minutes before the Voting Period begins* and shall remove all materials by ~~7:30p.m.~~ *thirty minutes following the Voting Period.*

This policy does not supersede the Hidalgo County Courthouse Grounds Open Forum Policy designating the use of a site within the Hidalgo County Courthouse grounds as a place of public speech, political discussion, press conference, and as a place where an individual or an organization may express their views on various topics.