

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

Procedure:

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Date Authorized: 10/9/2018

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. Except as provided herein Electioneering is prohibited at all times on County owned property not designated as a polling location;
- B. 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;
- C. 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 during the Early Voting Period and Voting Period. Signage, equipment, and literature can only be left over night during the Early Voting Period or Voting Period, but not later than one hour after the Early Voting Period or Voting Period ends.

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- D. County of Hidalgo will not allow tractors, trailers, tents, 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. The use of any type of incendiary equipment such as but not limited to barbeque pits or any flammable or combustible equipment or supplies are strictly prohibited on County owned property;

- E. County of Hidalgo will allow prepared food and beverages such as water or drink that does not contain alcohol. 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 is strictly prohibited;

- 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 allow the placement of one political sign, no larger than four feet by eight feet (4ft x 8ft) on designated County owned property during the Early Voting Period and the Voting Period. The distribution of literature or other political materials will not be allowed within the 100 ft. marker;

- 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.

- I. Persons with political signs, literature, or other political material (i.e. to conduct electioneering) may enter County owned property no earlier than 12 noon of the day before the Early Voting Period or Voting Period begins, and shall remove all signage, literature or materials no later than one hour after the Early Voting Period or Voting Period ends.

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.