

ADC Info #62

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Considering TDOT Road Signs?

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A key to the success of any business is the use of effective marketing tactics. This may include newspaper and radio advertisements, the creation of a brochure/flyer, or the sponsorship of a local charity event. However, there is one marketing tactic that is often overlooked – the use of signs. Whether a retail shop, pick-your-own or agri-entertainment enterprise, if potential customers cannot find their way, they will not be able to make their first purchase.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides tourist-serving facilities with the opportunity to participate in two separate sign programs, the Tourist Oriented Directional Sign Program and the Logo Sign Program. The official rules and regulations associated with each program should be carefully examined and a completed application must be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Transportation to determine eligibility for the programs.

The following sections provide an easy to understand overview of these programs as well as contact information for each program.

Tourist Oriented Directional Signs



The Tourist Oriented Directional Sign Program, also known as the TODS Program, provides tourists traveling within the state of Tennessee with identification and directional information for attractions, services and businesses related to a tourist's needs or interests.

There are some items that a business seeking to participate in the TODS program must adhere to. Below is a summary of the eligibility requirements, criteria, and restrictions that are stated in the official rules and regulations for the program.

Eligible tourist oriented businesses and service facilities must comply with all laws, rules and regulations when providing public accommodations without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability and any other category protected by Federal or State constitutional or statutory law.

To be eligible to participate in the TODS program, a business:

- ø Must be located off the principle state route, but within ten (10.0) miles of the state highway.
- ø Can not be within the limits of an incorporated city with a population greater than 5,000 people as designated by the 1990 Census of the United States Bureau of Census provided appropriate locations for signs are available
- ø Must be established as a permanent business or attraction
- ø Must be licensed and approved by the appropriate state and local agencies regulating the particular type of business or activity
- ø Must be in continuous operation
- ø Should have a telephone and rest room facilities available for public use
- ø Must provide to families and the public, activities of interest in which visitors participate for purpose, enjoyment, enrichment, or amusement
- ø Must provide notice of any admission costs on the outside of the main entrance to the facility

As of November 26, 2001 the following fees were associated with the TODS program:

Application Fee	\$25.00
Initial Permit Fee (each sign)	\$200.00
Annual Permit Fee (each sign)	\$50.00
Sign Change-out or Replacement	\$200.00
Seasonal Closure Covering/Uncovering	\$25.00

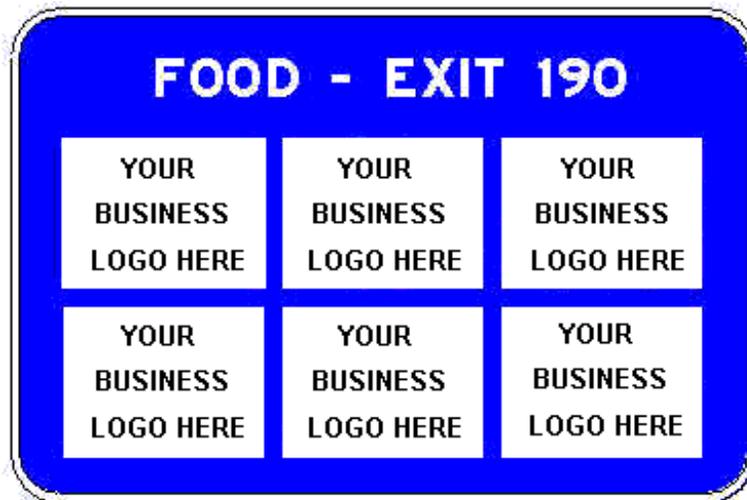
Those interested in participating in the TODS program should obtain a copy of the rules and regulations and complete and submit a TODS program application. These items can be found on the Tennessee Department of Transportation's website at:

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/Chief_Engineer/assistant_engineer_operations/mainte~1/TODSProgram.htm>

Or by contacting:

Sue Melton, Administrative Services Assistant
Suite 400 James K. Polk Building
Nashville, TN 37243
phone: (615) 532-3452
fax: (615) 532-5995

Specific Service Signs



Specific service signs, also known as Logo signs, are intended to provide the traveling public with business identification and directional information for essential motorist services. Logo signs are located prior to each interchange ramp on rural interstate highways where motorist services are provided.

There are four different types of logo signs that direct motorists to a specific type of service. The four types include GAS, FOOD, LODGING, and CAMPING. On each sign, there is space for six individual business logos to alert the traveling public to the available services that are located at each interchange.

Smaller signs are located along the off-ramps at each interchange that indicate the direction and distance to each business from the exit ramp. This allows the motorist to quickly and easily locate important services such as gas stations, restaurants, lodging facilities, and campgrounds.

Eligible tourist oriented businesses and service facilities must comply with all laws, rules and regulations when providing public accommodations without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability and any other category protected by Federal or State constitutional or statutory law.

The following is a summary of the requirements that a business must have to be eligible to participate in the Logo Sign Program.

GAS

- ø Must provide vehicle services such as fuel, oil, air and water
- ø At least two clean restrooms and drinking water
- ø Be open for business at least 16 hours per day, 7 days per week

- ø Have a telephone
- ø Not be located more than 3 miles from the exit ramp

FOOD

- ø Have all valid permits and licenses as required by governing bodies
- ø Be open to serve 3 meals a day and seat at least 25 people
- ø Have a telephone and two or more clean restrooms
- ø Not be located more than 3 miles from the exit ramp

CAMPING

- ø Have all valid permits and licenses as required by governing bodies
- ø Be open at least 6 months out of the year
- ø Have at least ten 300 square feet campsites with parking spaces for each
- ø Provide a sanitary disposal system
- ø Provide separate shower and rest room facilities for men and women
- ø Have a full-time attendant on duty 24 hours a day
- ø Have a telephone
- ø Not be located more than 15 miles from the exit ramp

As of November 26, 2001 the following fee was associated with the Logo Sign Program:

Cost to Business \$657.00 per year

This included four signs - two on the approaching interstate and two on the associated exit ramps.

Those interested in participating in the Logo Sign Program should obtain a complete copy of the rules and regulations and a copy of the Logo Sign Program application. These items can be found on the Tennessee Department of Transportation's website at:

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/Chief_Engineer/assistant_engineer_operations/mainte~1/Logo%20Sign%20Program.htm>

Or by contacting:

Danny Thomas, Operations Specialist 3
 Suite 400 James K. Polk Building
 Nashville, TN 37243
 phone: (615) 532-3439
 fax: (615) 532-5995