

APPLICATION FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS DIRECTIONAL SIGN (OBDS)

FOR TIC USE

The undersigned hereby applies for an Official Business Directional Sign and encloses the required check or money order of \$175.00 per sign payable to VT Agency of Transportation. A separate application is required for each sign requested. A non-refundable annual renewal fee of \$100.00 per sign will be billed to applicant. The application must be filled out completely or it will be returned to you; please refer to the accompanying instructions. From the date the application is received until the sign is erected (provided it is approved) it will be 90 to 120 days, depending on the availability of crews to install signs.

DATE RECD

CK#

AMT RECD

APP#

9-DIGIT FEDERAL ID#

E-MAIL ADDRESS

- 1. Your own name and your business address or other post office address:
2. Legal name of business:
3. Business phone number:
4. If business offers public accommodations, approvals by agencies listed below are required before OBDS applications can be approved:
5. Business is located in town/city of on highway route # leading from (which town) to (which town) and miles (north south east west) of nearest intersection
6. We wish to have an OBDS located in town/city of on highway route # leading from (which town) to (which town) and feet (north south east west) of nearest highway/mileage marker number / / (see instruction sheet for definition of highway mileage marker)
7. Please state name and address of owner of property at proposed location of OBDS; See note in instructions.
8. An existing assembly of OBDS (stands does not stand) at proposed location, containing OBDS for:

- 9. I hereby certify that the proposed location meets the Vermont Transportation Board Traffic Safety Regulations, and that it is not within the following distances:
a. 200 feet of any traffic control sign or device
b. 750 feet approaching and 200 feet beyond the intersection of two numbered highways or a signalized intersection
c. 200 feet approaching and 200 feet beyond the intersection of a numbered state highway with a town highway or street
d. 100 feet approaching and 100 feet beyond the intersection of unnumbered highways
e. 750 feet approaching and 200 feet beyond a railroad grade crossing
f. 200 feet of another OBDS assembly, if an existing assembly at the proposed location already has three OBDS on it; three is the maximum; see instructions

The location of an existing traffic control device or the need for a new device, shall take precedence over the location of an official business directional sign, either existing or proposed. (Vermont Transportation Board Traffic Safety Regulations)

10. Wording desired on the OBDS (limited to legal name of business, directional arrow and mileage from sign to business. Each line takes approximately 13 characters if no TIC symbol or business logo is used on sign; a TIC symbol or business logo reduces the number of characters per line. Punctuation and spaces between words count as characters. NO DESCRIPTIVE ADVERTISING MAY BE USED. If a TIC symbol or business logo is used, it will appear in space marked 1 below. The TIC reserves the right to abbreviate text requested by applicant.

- 1. (Symbol or business logo) 2a. 3. (arrow)
2b. 4. (mileage)

- Key: 1. Optional TIC symbol or business logo. Circle appropriate TIC symbol below or request specifications for business logo.
2. 13 characters on each of 2 lines, counting spaces and punctuation as one character each; subtract 3 characters if symbol or logo used.
3. Arrow indicating left or right turn.
4. Mileage, including fractions in tenths, from requested sign location to place of business.

Standard symbols adopted by the Travel Information Council for use on Official Business Directional Signs; others may be available. No charge for standard symbols; distinctive business logos must be provided at applicant's expense.



Lodging - Food - Crafts/Antiques - Recreation - Goods & Services

On separate sheet of paper, attach a detailed diagram showing location of business and location of requested sign.

Return application to: VT Agency of Transportation, Travel Information Council, 2178 Airport Road, Unit A, Barre, VT

05641

Signature of applicant and title Date

**THIS SIDE FOR REVIEW BY DISTRICT COMMITTEE:**

This application was received on\_\_\_\_\_by the undersigned members of the Travel Information Council

District Committee for Transportation District No.\_\_\_\_and we have:

\_\_\_\_\_ Approved application                          Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved application                      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for disapproval: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Suggested alternative location proposed by District Committee:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Public Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Regional Planning Representative

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION FORM FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS DIRECTIONAL SIGN (OBDS)

Please complete all items on the application form. If you have questions about any of the items, please call the Sign Control Section at (802) 279-9599. First year license fee of \$175.00 per sign must accompany the application; make check payable to VT Agency of Transportation and mail to Agency of Transportation, Travel Information Council, 2178 Airport Road, Unit A, Barre, VT 05641. The renewal fee is \$100.00 per year per sign.

**1. Applicant's name and business address:** Please print or type your name and the mailing address of your business. You are the contact person unless you specify another individual by name. Please include your e-mail address if you have one, and the federal ID number for your business.

**2. Name/nature of business:** How are you listed with the Vermont Secretary of State's Office? **The only name we can use on the OBDS is your legal name; we need either a corporate name or a DBA.** If you aren't registered, you must do so; call the Secretary of State's Office at (802) 828-2386 to find out what to do. What kind of business do you operate?

**3. Phone numbers:** Please list two phone numbers where you can be reached if we have questions.

**4. Accommodations:** If you offer accommodations, you must be approved by the Vermont Department of Health and by the Department of Labor and Industry's Fire Prevention division before we can act on your application. **This is mandatory.** You can reach the Health Department at (802) 863-7221 and the Fire Prevention Division at (802) 828-2106.

**5. Business location:** What town or city is the business physically located in? What is the name or number of the street or highway on which the business is located? On which side of the street is the business located? Where does the highway lead (from what town to what town, or from what street to what other street)? How far is the business from the nearest intersection of two roads, and what are the names or numbers of those roads?

**6. OBDS location: Finding a location is the applicant's responsibility. Be specific in this section; tell us exactly where you want the sign. Our personnel cannot approve applications or install signs if they can't find the site. We will return incomplete applications for further information.** Where do you wish to have the sign placed? What town is the sign to be erected in, on what street or highway? A highway mileage marker is a green 6"x8" plaque with three rows of numbers, usually located every 2/10 of a mile on alternating sides of the road. This is the preferred way of locating the OBDS, but if you cannot find one in a reasonable distance, use another recognizable feature or building. How far is the sign location from the closest mile marker or other unique landmark, and in which direction? Is the proposed location on the same or the opposite side of the road as the marker or other feature? What is the E-911 address of the property at the location?

**7. Property owner:** Signs are erected in the highway right-of-way. In the case of new sign locations, we strongly recommend that applicants contact the abutting property owner to identify the best location for the sign in order to minimize the potential for conflict. If the identity of the landowner is not evident, you may contact the local town or city clerk to obtain the information.

**8. Existing sign:** If an OBDS for an individual business already stands at a location which would work for you, you may ask to have your sign placed on that assembly, provided there are no more than 2 signs on the posts already (no more than three signs are placed on one assembly). **PLEASE NOTE: OBDS for individual businesses are never placed on posts with Travel Information directional signs; these have a row of five logos on the top board, while the bottom board says "Travel Information" and gives specific directions to one of our information plazas, or to an information booth.** Please indicate whether an assembly is located at your preferred location, and if one is, list the signs on it.

**9. Certification:** Please check this list carefully to be certain that the location you select meets all the conditions; if you're not sure about any of them, please call us for assistance.

**10. Wording:** The text is limited to the legal name of your business (corporate or DBA) and any directional information (next left, 2<sup>ND</sup> right, etc.) **The distance in section 4 of the OBDS is from the sign location to your business – not from the OBDS to the turn to your business.** If you wish to use a logo other than one of the standard symbols supplied by us, you must have the logo made at your expense. If you plan to use a unique logo, please wait to have it made until we notify you that the application has been approved.

A diagram showing the location of your business and the proposed sign location is essential to the person from our District Committee who reviews the application, as well as to the AOT crew who installs the sign. Label the roads, landmarks, distances and directions clearly. Please be sure to sign the application.

**Note regarding your on premise sign:** Your business sign on your property **must** be in place before the District Committee can review your application. If it is not the District Committee will either disapprove the application or send it back to our office without taking action. **This is particularly important where an applicant has requested a sign on the same highway as the business.**

**Remember: Be complete, be specific, and include your check. Please call if you have any questions.** From the date we receive the application until the OBDS is installed (if it is approved), it will be 90-120 days, depending upon the availability of crews to install signs.

## VERMONT'S OFFICIAL BUSINESS DIRECTIONAL SIGN PROGRAM

Vermont's landmark sign law was adopted in 1968. It banned off-premise advertising (small signs as well as billboards) and provided for a system of State-owned Official Business Directional Signs (OBDS) and information plazas to replace them. The law applies to town highways as well as to State highways. No signs are allowed on limited-access highways (the interstates and parts of other Federal or State highways) or on their ramps.

The OBDS is directional in nature and is intended to direct travelers from one highway to another. Signs are limited to the town in which the business is located, except in instances where no appropriate location within the town is available.

Signs are not put up on the same highway on which a business is located unless a business can demonstrate that its own on premise sign is not adequately visible to the traveler for reasons over which the business has no control. These include obstructions on adjoining property, contours of the land or other geographic features. Visibility simply means being able to **see** a sign, not necessarily to **read** it; the readability of a sign is something which a business can control. Adequate visibility is 500 feet in a 50 MPH zone (400 feet at 40 MPH, 300 feet at 30 MPH and so on). **If a business is requesting an exception to this rule, it should submit a letter explaining what the circumstances are.**

Any legally-registered Vermont business may apply for up to four signs at different locations in its town. Only one sign is permitted in either direction on the same highway. The text on an OBDS is limited to the legally-registered name of the business (recorded by the Secretary of State) and to directional information (2<sup>nd</sup> left, next right, etc.).

Signs are available with or without a symbol. If a business has a distinctive logo it wishes to use, the logo must be provided by the business, and made to State specifications. Specifications are available upon request. It is advisable **not** to have logos made until you have been notified that the application has been approved. **Use of a symbol reduces the number of characters which can be used by 25%.**

The business selects the sign locations. If an OBDS stands at a place which would serve the applicant's needs, and if there are no more than two OBDS already on the posts, the applicant may request that its sign be placed at that location. If the posts are full, the applicant must find another site at least 200 feet away (see item #9 on the OBDS application form).

Signs are erected in the highway right-of-way. In the case of new sign locations, we strongly recommend that applicants contact the abutting property owner to identify the best location for the sign in order to minimize the potential for conflict. If the identity of the landowner is not evident, you may contact the local town or city clerk to obtain the information.

The approval, fabrication & installation process takes 90-120 days. Applications are reviewed by a citizen committee in the transportation district in which the business is located. If the district committee recommends approval, the sign is ordered and installed by the Agency of Transportation.

If an application is denied by the district committee, the applicant is notified by certified mail and may appeal the denial to the State Travel Information Council (TIC). The TIC meets at least four times a year. If the Council approves the appeal, the signs are fabricated and installed; if the appeal is denied, the applicant's license fee is refunded.

All signs are reviewed periodically for conformity to the TIC's Rules of Procedure. A review may find that conditions exist at the time of the exception have changed (visibility of the on premise sign has improved, obstructions have been removed, or additional on premise signing has been added). In this event, the TIC may order removal of the OBDS if it is not in conformance with the guidelines for making exceptions to the Rules. Before final action is taken, the business is notified and may appeal the decision to deny renewal.

Application forms must be filled out completely and signed by the applicant. A fee of \$175.00 per sign is payable with the application. This covers the license fee for the first twelve months. Subsequently, businesses are sent a renewal notice. The renewal license fee is \$100.00 per sign per year.

Questions about the forms, the sign law in general or the TIC Rules of Procedure may be addressed to Sign Control at (802) 279-9599. Applications should be submitted to:

**VT Agency of Transportation  
Travel Information Council  
2178 Airport Road, Unit A  
Barre, VT 05641**

**TRAVEL INFORMATION COUNCIL  
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Rule 14. Location of Official Business Directional Signs**

a. Except where a hardship to the traveling public can be demonstrated by the applicant, the location of official business directional signs, in addition to those restrictions contained in Title 10 V.S.A. Chapter 21, and in the Traffic Safety Regulations adopted pursuant to Section 490 thereof, shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. Official business directional signs shall be located in the same town as the applicant/business, service or point of interest to which the sign directs attention, unless one or more of the following conditions are present:

(a) The location of the sign must be in a town other than that of the applicant business in order to satisfy the Traffic Safety Regulations. In such a case the sign shall be located as close to the business' turnoff as possible;

(b) (1) The business is located on a highway which does not have a state-assigned route number, and (2) the turnoff from the numbered route is in another town, and (3) this turnoff is the business' only access point from the nearest highway with a state-assigned route number;

(c) There is an absence of State destination signs directing travelers to the town in which the business is located; or

(d) The absence of an official business directional sign creates a safety hazard to the traveling public.

2. Official business directional signs shall be located prior to those intersections of public highways where the traveler must change direction from one highway to another highway in order to reach the business or point of interest. However, individual business directional signs shall not be approved on highways where there is an information directional sign which directs travelers to a state or locally operated information plaza or information office or booth and travel to that information source will cause neither undue inconvenience to the traveler nor traffic congestion.

3. Signs may be approved on the same highway as the business, or its legal on premise signing, only when, in the opinion of the Travel Information Council, the traveling public is subject to an unsafe situation without one or more official business directional signs. For the purposes of these Rules, an unsafe situation shall exist when there is insufficient visibility of the business' on premise signing which cannot be improved by the applicant/business, such as; (a) obstructions on applicant/business' property which cannot be removed; (b) obstructions on adjoining property which the adjoining property owner cannot or will not remove; (c) physical or natural features which the Travel Information Council finds cannot be altered or removed by the applicant business; or (d) some other circumstance over which the applicant/business has no control.

4. Consideration will be given to limitations placed on the size, location or design of on premise signing by local zoning ordinances which cannot be waived. The safety hazard may exist which a traveler who is specifically looking for the applicant/business has insufficient advance visibility of the business' on premise signing to allow the traveler to signal, slow and turn into its driveway safely. Adequate visibility shall be determined by the Travel Information Council in consultation with the Agency of Transportation.

b. In all cases where the applicant believes that the proposed location for an official business directional sign should be approved because of hardship to the traveler, where the proposed location fails to satisfy conditions 1, 2 or 3 of Section a above, the applicant shall submit to the district committee

a claim of hardship together with any evidence he/she wishes to present in support of his/her claim. Where hardship has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the district committee, it may approve locations for official business signs which are otherwise in violation of subsections 1, 2 or 3 of Section a of this rule. Where hardship has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the district committee, it shall disapprove the application. In all cases where the applicant claims exception to subsection 1, 2 or 3 of Section a because of hardship, the district committee shall state with particularity the reasons for which it approves or disapproves the application.

c. In all cases where hardship is claimed by the applicant, the determination of the district committee shall be subject to review by the Travel Information Council.

d. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to limit the right provided by law to any applicant or other person to appeal any decision of a district committee.

e. Pursuant to Title 10 V.S.A. Section 499(c), the following procedure is established whereby all official business directional signs previously approved as hardship exceptions to Section a, subsections 1, 2 or 3 will be reviewed periodically with conformance with current policies and regulations, and those found to be non-conforming will be removed at the end of their current license year. On or before March 1 of each year, the Sign Control Section and the Travel Information Council district committees will review approximately one-third of all official business directional signs and determine which appear to be non-conforming with present policies and regulations of the Travel Information Council and the Traffic Safety Regulations adopted pursuant to title 10 V.S.A. Section 490. They will submit recommendations to the Travel Information Council as to which official business directional signs are non-conforming. The Council will determine which signs are non-conforming and will so advise the applicant/business by letter. The letter will notify the applicant/business of its opportunity to petition the Travel Information Council for review of the determination of non-conformance.

If the applicant/business so petitions within 30 days of the date of the letter, an appeal hearing will be scheduled. If the applicant/business is able to prove that there is sufficient hardship on which to base continued approval of the official business directional sign as a hardship exception to this Rule, the Council may vote to renew the license for one more year or until the next scheduled review. If the applicant/business is not able to show that there is sufficient justification on which to approve the hardship exception, the council may vote not to renew the license in which case the sign will be removed at the end of the current licensing year. The applicant/business has the right to judicial review of the Council's decision under Title 10 V.S.A. section 484(d).

Approved by the Travel Information Council January 18, 1989  
Filed with the Secretary of State's Office February 16, 1989  
Adopted as a Final Rule May 26, 1989  
Effective date June 7, 1989

**VERMONT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION  
Business Sign Program**

**Specifications for business logos to be provided by  
applicant for Official Business Directional Sign**

- NOTE:** Use of a business logo or standard symbol is not guaranteed; if directions to the site are required, there may not be room for a logo or symbol. Do not have a logo made unless or until you are notified to do so.
- SIZE:** 13-3/4" wide by 14" high with 1-1/2" radius on all four corners  
Please note on the back of the logo which side is the top.
- MATERIAL:** Scotchlite #3290 engineer grade vinyl sheeting – Reflective Silver (VT 28), self-adhesive, with pressure-sensitive backing;
- OR** Scotchcal #3650 vinyl sheeting – Non-reflective white, black, red, *etc.*, self-adhesive, with pressure-sensitive backing;
- OR** equivalent; adhesive-backed paper is *not* acceptable.  
Cover the face of the logo with transfer tape to ensure that it can be smoothly applied to the sign board.
- PAINT:** Good quality, bulletin grade or weather-resistant exterior grade.
- COLORS:** No restrictions on background or foreground colors.
- BACKING** The finished logo **must** be mounted on a piece of background material of one of the types listed above, trimmed to the dimensions shown; cut-outs with no backing behind them are unacceptable. The area of the sign reserved for logos is covered with white, non-reflective vinyl.
- RESTRICTIONS:** Logo may **not** contain telephone numbers, web sites or advertising.
- MAIL TO:** Vermont Agency of Transportation-D7  
Attn: Dustin Horne  
1068 US Route 5, Suite 2  
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
- Ship the logo(s) flat, not rolled; this will prevent wrinkling or curling.**
- WHEN:** **After** you have been notified that the application has been approved and that space is available. **Do not send logos with the application.**
- QUESTIONS:** Call the Travel Information Council, Business Sign Program:  
Phone: 802-279-9599  
E-mail: SOV.OBDSProgram@vermont.gov

# SAMPLE OBDS INFORMATION SHEET

This is a version of the sheet used by the Transportation Agency to order OBDS; it is provided to give applicants guidance on how to lay out the text for their signs.

BUSINESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

ROUTE # \_\_\_\_\_ BACKGROUND COLOR: BLACK

#1 A BOARD WITH STANDARD SYMBOL OR BUSINESS LOGO - LENGTH 72" 13-15 characters, depending on width

LOGO SUPPLIED BY BUSINESS  OR STANDARD SYMBOL																		←  ←  DIRECTIONAL ARROW - UP, LEFT, RIGHT OR DIAGONAL  TOTAL MILEAGE TO BUSINESS FROM SIGN
EITHER LOGO OR SYMBOL TAKES 15" OF SPACE																		

#2 B BOARD WITH TEXT ONLY, NO SYMBOL OR LOGO - LENGTH 72" 16-18 characters, depending on width

																		←  ←  DIRECTIONAL ARROW - UP, LEFT, RIGHT OR DIAGONAL  TOTAL MILEAGE TO BUSINESS FROM SIGN

One block is required for each letter, punctuation mark, and space between words. A directional arrow and mileage are required in the spaces indicated. Text is limited to the name of the business as registered with the Secretary of State; advertising, phone numbers and web addresses are not permitted. A logo or symbol takes 15" of space on an A board; if directions to a business are required, there may not be room for a logo or symbol. Your proposed layout may be altered by VTrans staff if necessary. If you have any questions, call VTrans staff at 802-279-9599.