



PVTA Advertising Standards

I. Purpose

Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (“PVTA”)’s advertising standards are established to provide uniform, view-point neutral standards for all displays of advertising on or in PVTA vehicles, terminals, information centers, and/or shelters. In permitting advertising subject to these standards, the PVTA balances the following objectives:

- A. Maximizing revenue generated by advertising, to support its provision of rapid, convenient, and accessible services to its ridership in a cost-effective manner;
- B. Maximizing revenue by attracting, maintaining, and increasing its ridership;
- C. Maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the PVTA;
- D. Maintaining a safe environment for all riders and passengers, current and prospective, and including those under eighteen years of age, who travel on or come into contact with PVTA’s vehicles, terminals, information centers, and/or shelters;
- E. Maintaining neutrality on political, religious, and other noncommercial and controversial subject matters that are the subject of public debate and concern;
- F. Avoiding claims of discrimination and maintaining a non-discriminatory environment for PVTA’s transit customers; and
- G. Avoiding identification of the PVTA with advertisements or the viewpoints of advertisers.

The PVTA may suspend, modify, revoke, or amend these standards at any time to accommodate its primary business function of providing cost-effective, safe, rapid, and convenient transportation services. All provisions of these standards are intended to be severable, should any part of the standards be declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction.

II. Advertising Program and Administration

- A. These standards shall apply to advertising spaces on all PVTA buses, vans, terminals, information centers, and/or shelters.
- B. All advertising display material shall be made to PVTA’s size and material specifications (as referenced in “PVTA’s Advertising Material Specifications” document).

- King: 144”W x 30”H on 4mm Coroplast Material
- Queen: 108”W x 30”H on 4mm Coroplast Material
- Princess: 88”W x 30”H on 4mm Coroplast Material
- Royal: 60”W x 30”H on 4mm Coroplast Material
- Tail: 50”W x 17”H on 4mm Coroplast Material
- Interior Car Cards: 28”W x 11”H on .030 Styrene Material

- C. All language and graphics for the advertising display material shall be subject to the final approval of PVTA’s Manager of Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations.
- D. The willingness to pay the going rate to run an advertisement, however, does not mean that PVTA will agree to run an advertisement.
- E. The PVTA may suggest changes to an advertisement that will allow it to comply with the foregoing standards.

III. Disclaimer

The PVTA reserves the right, in all circumstances, to require that an advertisement on or in its vehicles, amenities, equipment and facilities include a disclaimer indicating that it is not sponsored by, and does not necessarily reflect the views of, the PVTA.

IV. Advertising Standards

A. Permitted Advertising:

The PVTA will only display advertisements that fall under one or more of the following categories of permitted advertising. Anything not expressly included in this Policy is deemed prohibited.

1. Commercial advertising. Paid advertisements that propose, promote, or solicit the sale, rent, lease, license, distribution, or availability of, or some other commercial transaction concerning, goods, products, services, or events for the advertiser’s commercial or proprietary interest, or more generally promote an entity that engages in such activities, provided that the notice or message is not otherwise prohibited under section IV.(B) of this Policy.
2. Governmental advertising. Notices or messages from the PVTA that promote the PVTA or any of its functions or programs, and paid notices or messages of the United States government or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or its political subdivisions, provided that the notice or message is not otherwise prohibited under section IV.(B) of this Policy.

B. Prohibited Advertising:

Nothing in this policy should be intended as opening the PVTA's advertising spaces to the public for free expression; rather, the space is opened solely for advertising to achieve the above-referenced business purposes (Section I.) for the PVTA. Consistent with its historical practice, the PVTA intends that its equipment and facilities, including its buses, vans, and shelters, constitute nonpublic forums that are subject to reasonable, viewpoint-neutral restrictions, as set forth below. Certain forms of paid and unpaid advertising materials that adversely affect the ridership of PVTA and/or do not achieve the above-referenced business ends, therefore, will not be permitted to be displayed on or in PVTA buses, vans, terminals, information centers, and/or shelters.

To that end, the PVTA shall not display any advertisement that falls within one or more of the following categories.

1. Demeaning or Disparaging: The advertisement contains images, content, or material that is demeaning or disparaging to an individual or group of individuals, or to the PVTA or its business partners. For purposes of determining whether an advertisement contains such material, the PVTA evaluates whether a reasonably prudent person, knowledgeable of the PVTA's ridership and business purposes, and using prevailing community standards, would believe that the advertisement contains material that ridicules or mocks, is abusive or hostile to, or debases the dignity or stature of, an individual or group of individuals, or to the PVTA or its business partners.
2. Profanity: The advertisement contains profanity or profane language, in whole or in part, including words, symbols or gestures commonly understood as profanity, even if they are mis-spelled or do not contain all their letters.
3. False and Deceptive Commercial Speech: The advertisement proposes a commercial transaction, and the advertisement, or any material contained in it is false, misleading, or deceptive.
4. Libelous, Copyright, and Unlawful Material: The advertisement or any material contained in it, is libelous or any infringement of copyright, or is otherwise unlawful or illegal or likely to subject the PVTA to litigation.
5. Political campaign speech: The advertisement contains political campaign speech. For purposes of these standards, the term "political campaign speech" is speech that (1) refers to a specific ballot question, initiative petition, or referendum, (2) promotes or opposes a political party for local, state, or federal election, or (3) promotes or opposes a candidate or group of candidates. For purposes of these standards, the term "candidate" shall include any person actively campaigning for office, any person who has filed their candidacy or declared their intent to run for office, or any person who has been reported in the media as likely to run for a particular public office.

6. Political Issues or Matters of Public Debate: The advertisement concerns political issues or expresses or advocates an opinion, position, or viewpoint on a matter of public debate about economic, political, moral, religious, or social issues.
7. Warfare: The advertisement prominently or predominantly supports, opposes, or comments on any international disputes or warfare among nations or religious, ethnic, or similar groups.
8. Smoking: The advertisement promotes the sale or use of tobacco or tobacco-related products, including depicting such products, products that simulate smoking or are modeled on tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco (e.g., chewing tobacco), flavored tobacco products, and electronic cigarettes, or promotes the sale, use or cultivation of marijuana or marijuana-related products or hallucinogenic mushrooms.
9. Unlawful goods or services: The advertisement or any material contained in it promotes or encourages or appears to promote or encourage the use or possession of unlawful or illegal goods or services.
10. Unlawful conduct: The advertisement or any material contained in it promotes or encourages or appears to promote or encourage unlawful or illegal behavior or activities.
11. Firearms: The advertisement either (a) advertises a firearm or a brand of firearms, or a firearm-related product; (b) contains an image of a firearm or a firearm-related product in the foreground of the main visual; or (c) contains image(s) of firearm(s) or firearm-related product(s) that occupy 15% or more of the overall advertisement.
12. Violence: The advertisement contains an image or description of graphic violence, or the depiction of weapons or other implements/devices used in the advertisement in an act of violence, including but not limited to: the depiction of physical harm to human or animal bodies, body parts, or fetuses in states of mutilation, dismemberment, decomposition, or disfigurement.
13. Obscenity or nudity: The advertisement contains obscene material or images of nudity, or the advertisement contains material that describes, depicts, or represents sexual activities or aspects of the human anatomy. For purposes of these standards, the terms “obscene” and “nudity” shall have the meanings contained in Massachusetts General Laws ch. 272, § 31.
14. Prurient sexual suggestiveness: The advertisement contains material that describes, depicts, or represents sexual activities or aspects of the human anatomy in a way that the average adult, applying contemporary community standards, would find appeals to the prurient interest of minors or adults in sex. For purposes of these standards, the term “minor” shall have the meaning contained in Massachusetts General Laws c. 272, § 31.

15. “Adult”-oriented goods or services: The advertisement promotes or encourages, or appears to promote or encourage, a transaction related to, or uses brand names, trademarks, slogans, or other materials which are identifiable with films rated X or NC17, video games rated M or AO, adult bookstores, adult video stores, nude dance clubs and other adult entertainment establishments, adult telephone services, adult internet site and escort services.
16. Endorsement: The advertisement, or any material contained in it, implies, or declares an endorsement by the PVTA of any service, product, or point of view, without prior written authorization of the PVTA, through its Manager of Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations.

C. Limited Display of Advertisements:

1. Alcohol: Advertisements related to the sale of alcoholic beverages shall contain a statement, occupying at least 3% of the area of the advertisement, that indicates the legal drinking age in Massachusetts and warns of the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and in connection with the operation of heavy machinery or while driving. In addition to these standards, the advertisement must comply with the Outdoor Advertising Association of America’s Code of Industry Principles as they concern alcohol advertisements.

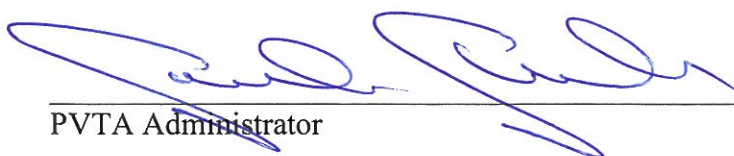
PVTA’s Advertising Standards:
Adopted: August 4, 2011
Amended: August 2, 2022



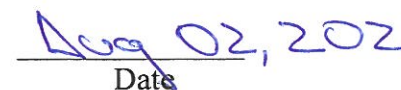
PVTA Manager of Marketing, Advertising, & Public Relations



Date



PVTA Administrator



Date