

## **King County Assessor Policy On Web Advertising Guidelines and Security**

All advertisements on the King County Assessor's webpage must meet the following King County Assessor guidelines and security provisions for web advertising, as currently in effect or as may be revised from time to time.

### A. Advertising Guidelines

- The County is funded by a variety of sources, including property taxes, sales tax and user fees. Website advertising has the potential to be an additional source of revenue for King County.
- The primary purpose of the King County Assessor's website is to provide information and on-line services to the public regarding the assessment of property values and property taxes within King County. To generate additional revenue while also accomplishing this primary objective, the King County Assessor will allow advertising on its website that complies with these Advertising Guidelines and Security provisions. The Assessor's purpose in allowing paid advertising is to maximize such supplemental revenue to support assessment operations in a manner that does not interfere with primary website purposes.
- The Assessor's allowance of advertising on its website does not provide or create a general public forum for expressive activities. The Assessor does not intend its acceptance of web advertising to convert its website into an open public forum for public discourse and debate. Rather, as noted, the County's intent is to accept advertising as an additional means of generating revenue to support its overall operations. In furtherance of that discreet and limited objective, the County retains strict control over the nature of the ads accepted for posting on its website and maintains its advertising space as a limited public forum.
- In the County's experience, certain types of advertisements interfere with the primary purposes of Assessor web advertising: to generate revenue in a manner that does not undermine the purposes of the Assessor's website. This policy advances the advertising program's revenue-generating objectives by prohibiting advertisements that could detract from that goal by creating substantial controversy and interfering with and diverting resources from County government. Such advertisements create an environment that is not conducive to achieving increased revenue. The viewpoint neutral restrictions in this policy thus foster the maintenance of a professional advertising environment that maximizes advertising revenue.
- This policy is intended to provide clear guidance as to the types of advertisements that will allow the Assessor's Office to generate revenue by fulfilling the following goals and objectives:
  - Maximizing advertising revenue;
  - Maintaining a secure and orderly web environment;
  - Maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all persons who use the Assessor's website;
  - Minimizing the resources and attention that have been expended to resolve disputes relating to the permissibility of certain political advertisements, thus unnecessarily diverting the Assessor from performing its mission;
  - Avoiding identification of the Assessor with, and the appearance of Assessor

endorsement of, the advertisements of non-Assessor parties displayed in or on the Assessor's website, including the associated messages, products, services, or events being proposed or promoted.

- The Assessor's website is a limited public forum and, as such, the County will accept only advertising that falls within the categories of acceptable advertising specified in this viewpoint neutral policy and that satisfies all other access requirements and restrictions provided herein.
- The Assessor reserves the right to suspend, modify or revoke any of the standards in this Policy as it deems appropriate.
- Disclaimer of Endorsement. The Assessor's allowance of advertising does not constitute express or implied endorsement of the content or message of any advertisement, including any person, organization, products, services, information or viewpoints contained therein, or of the advertisement sponsor itself. This endorsement disclaimer extends to and includes content that may be found via internet addresses, quick response (QR) codes, and telephone numbers that may appear in posted ads and that direct viewers to external sources of information.
- Permitted Advertising: Advertisements are permissible on the Assessor's website if they fall under one or more of the following categories and are not otherwise prohibited by these guidelines:
  - 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.
  - Governmental advertising. Notices or messages from a governmental entity that advance specific governmental purposes.
- Prohibited Advertising: Advertising is prohibited on the King County Assessor's website if it includes any of the following content:
  - All advertisements for services relating to property tax assessment, collection, foreclosure actions, or exemption challenges or other appeals or actions involving the assessor's office or treasury division.
  - Political Campaign Speech. Advertising that promotes or opposes a political party, the election of any candidate or group of candidates for federal, state or local government offices, or initiatives, referendums or other ballot measures.
  - Is political or religious in nature, including but not limited to advertisements that either:
    - Are directed or addressed to the action, inaction, prospective action or policies of a governmental entity, except for those governmental advertisements that advance specific governmental purposes;
    - Prominently or predominately advocate or express a political or

religious message, including but not limited to an opinion, position, or viewpoint regarding disputed economic, political, moral, religious or social issues or related matters, or support for or opposition to disputed issues or causes.

- Prohibited Products, Services or Activities. Any advertising that (i) promotes or depicts the sale, rental, or use of, participation in, or images of the following products, services or activities; or (ii) that uses brand names, trademarks, slogans or other material that are identifiable with such products, services or activities:
  - Tobacco. Tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless (e.g., chewing) tobacco;
  - Alcohol. Beer, wine, distilled spirits or any alcoholic beverage licensed and regulated under Washington law; however, this prohibition shall not prohibit advertising that includes the name of a restaurant that is open to minors;
  - Marijuana. Marijuana, marijuana-infused products or drug paraphernalia.
  - Firearms. Firearms, ammunition or other firearms-related products.
  - Adult/Mature Rated Films, Television or Video Games. Adult films rated "X" or "NC-17", television rated "MA" or video games rated "A" or "M"<sup>11</sup> ;
  - Adult Entertainment Facilities. Adult book stores, adult video stores, nude dance clubs and other adult entertainment establishments;
  - Other Adult Services. Adult telephone services, adult internet sites and escort services.
- Sexual and/or Excretory Subject Matter. Any advertising that contains or involves any material that describes, depicts or represents sexual or excretory organs or activities in a way:
  - that the average adult person, applying contemporary community standards, would find, when considered as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest of minors in sex; or
  - which is patently offensive to contemporary standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for minors to see; or
  - that depicts, or reasonably appears to depict, a person under the age of eighteen (18) exhibiting his or her sexual or excretory organs or engaging in sexual or excretory activities.
    - For purposes of this subsection, "sexual or excretory organs" shall mean and include the male or female pubic area, anus, buttocks, genitalia, or any portion of the areola or nipple of the female breast and "sexual or excretory activities" shall mean and include actual or simulated sex acts of every nature (including but not limited to touching of one's own or another's clothed or unclothed sexual or excretory organs), urination and defecation.
- False or Misleading. Any material that is or that the sponsor reasonably

should have known is false, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive or would constitute a tort of defamation or invasion of privacy.

- Copyright, Trademark or Otherwise Unlawful. Advertising that contains any material that is infringement of copyright, trademark or service mark, or is otherwise unlawful or illegal.
- Illegal Activity. Any advertising that promotes any activity or product that is illegal under federal, state or local law.
- Profanity and Violence. Advertising that contains any profane language, or portrays images or descriptions of graphic violence, including dead, mutilated or disfigured human beings or animals, the act of killing, mutilating or disfiguring human beings or animals, or intentional infliction of pain or violent action towards or upon a person or animal.
- Demeaning or Disparaging. Advertising that contains material that demeans or disparages an individual, group of individuals or entity. For purposes of determining whether an advertisement contains such material, the Assessor will determine whether a reasonably prudent person, knowledgeable of the County's web users 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 any individual, group of individuals or entity.
- Additional specifications that amend or supersede these general guidelines may apply for individual ad products.

#### B. Advertising Security and Functionality

- The Assessor reserves the right to reject or to suspend any advertisement that is deemed by the Assessor to disrupt site service or performance or is reported to negatively affect user experience.
- Advertising content cannot mislead the user. For example, advertisements cannot be designed to appear as though they are a functional part of the County's websites or mimic or resemble operating system or Internet browser error message or dialog boxes (dropdown menus, search boxes, etc.).
- All advertisements, including any javascript and/or tracking code, placed on any King County website must be served from a secure location/server. As applicable, ads shall be served through third party ad-serving software. Advertisers must certify that content is free from any virus, infection, malware, or other code that places the website, its users, or any County resources in jeopardy.
- Advertisements that include links to websites outside of the County's control must allow users to return the County's websites by using their browser's "back" button; trap door effects are not permitted. Advertisements cannot launch multiple browser windows upon a user click.
- No links to sites that contain malicious software that may be uploaded and/or downloaded to the internet user's computer, including but not limited to spyware, adware, malicious pop-ups, and/or viruses.
- Audio events in advertisements must be initiated by a user click, include a clearly labeled button or link to stop audio, and cannot loop.
- No Pop-up or Pop-Under Advertising.
- Ads are to load after web page is fully loaded.

- No mouse over ads or roll over ads.
- No Site takeovers.
- No additional ad code on any other pages of website other than URLs provided.
- Non-malicious “Cookies”, a very small text document which often includes anonymous unique identifiers, are accepted.
- All parties that serve ads to Municipal Media Services (MMS) for King County must scan all ads for malware, using a program such as Media Trust, and perform human review of the ad before posting after scanning.
- MMS shall only place ads on the King County website from partners that have had reference and background checks. MMS shall also perform pilot testing on ads from partners before placing on the King County website.
- MMS shall not place ads from AppNexus on the King County website until AppNexus has met the requirements in this document.
- If a potential incident of unsafe/inappropriate advertising should occur on the King County Assessor’s website, MMS will:
  - Disable all advertising on the site within 15 minutes of the incident being reported. In this case, commercial ads shall be replaced with House Ads supplied by King County.
  - Investigate the source of alleged violation until a conclusion has been reached about the incident.
  - If an incident is confirmed, add the problem source to a blacklist of advertising partners.