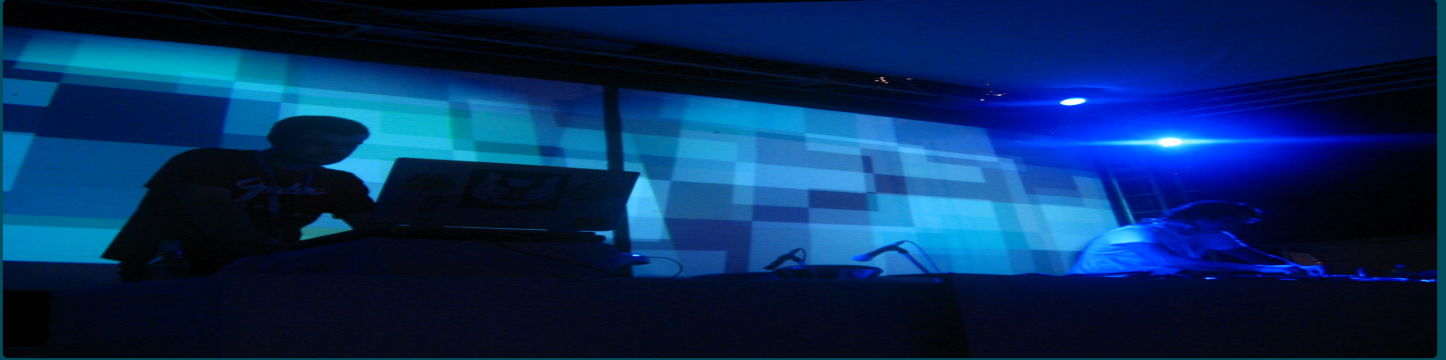




REGULATORY

BBMP Advertisement Bye-Laws, 2024: A New Legal Framework for Bengaluru's Outdoor Advertising

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Introduction

On 17 July 2025, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) notified the Advertisement Bye-Laws, 2024 under the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024. This comprehensive legal framework governs all forms of outdoor advertising in the Greater Bengaluru area and replaces the earlier 2006 and 2018 bye-laws.

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Legislative Context

The BBMP Advertisement Bye-Laws, 2024 have been issued under:

- **Section 318** (power to make bye-laws),
- **Section 160** (regulation of advertisements and hoardings), and
- **Section 161** (control over display of advertisements on private property) of the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024.

These bye-laws are intended to standardize advertising practices, protect urban aesthetics, prevent unauthorized displays, and ensure transparent commercial exploitation of advertising spaces in public and private domains. These bye-laws formally repeal the Bangalore Mahanagara Palike Advertisement Bye-Laws, 2006 and the BBMP Outdoor Advertisement and Public Message Bye-Laws, 2018, subject to savings of past actions and existing rights under Clause 27 of the new framework.

Key Regulatory Features

1. Structured Licensing and Registration

Only licensed or registered advertisers can display advertisements on behalf of others. A license is valid for five years (renewable for three-year terms), subject to conditions specified by the Chief Commissioner. Display by unlicensed agencies is treated as unauthorized and invites immediate removal and penal consequences.

2. Auction-Based Allocation of Advertising Rights

The right to install paid advertisements on notified roads, circles, and areas is granted solely through public auction or tender via the e-procurement platform, as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999. Upset fees are based on minimum per square foot rates in Schedule-II of the bye-laws, and winning bidders must deposit five months' advertisement fee as security.

3. Spatial Restrictions and Density Norms

Advertisement installations are governed by strict limits depending on:

- **Road width**,
- **Zoning classification** (e.g., commercial or industrial under the master plan), and
- **Maximum permissible area** per 200 meters of road length (or per 100 meters in designated "Business Roads").

Inter-se spacing of hoardings must be at least 175 meters, and no advertisements are permitted on roads less than 18 meters wide, barring specific exceptions for commercial areas.

4. Ownership, Taxation, and Ground Rent

Payment of advertisement fee to BBMP does not confer any right over land. Advertisers must secure agreements from landowners, private or public, and are liable for additional property tax when erecting hoardings on private land. Heavier

penalties apply to B-register properties or lands without khata, including double the applicable property tax and penalties for non-compliance.

5. Environmental and Safety Compliance

Advertisements must be made of biodegradable materials and may not use plastic or PVC flexes. Diesel generators are prohibited. Illumination must comply with luminance and timing restrictions (e.g., switch-off after 11:00 p.m.). Moving videos or rapidly flashing LED content is disallowed to reduce visual distraction.

6. Legacy and Infrastructure Advertisements

Advertisements permitted under previous bye-laws ("legacy advertisements") are temporarily protected, subject to compliance with new size and clearance limits within six months. Public-private partnership models for infrastructure (e.g., Metro pillars, footbridges, toilets, charging stations) will be tendered separately, and fees apply as per Schedule-II.

7. Permitted Self-Advertisements and Exemptions

Self-advertisements within size limits (e.g., name boards, business identifiers) are exempt from advertisement fees. However, any excess in size makes the entire display liable for advertisement fees at the applicable rate. Advertisements by public utilities (e.g., railways, government agencies) on their own premises are also exempt in defined cases.

Enforcement and Penalties

The BBMP has codified a stringent enforcement mechanism:

- Unauthorized advertisements (without license or beyond allotted area/term) are subject to immediate removal, and both the advertiser and property owner are jointly liable to pay:
 - Penalty at twice the advertisement fee (per square foot),
 - Cost of removal, and
 - Retrospective dues from the date of erection.
- Delay in fee payment for authorized displays attracts 18% annual interest from the due date.
- In case of continued default, BBMP may initiate recovery under property tax recovery procedures, including seizure, attachment of property or accounts, distress sale, and criminal prosecution under Section 326 of the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024.
- Repeat violators, defaulters, or those obstructing enforcement may face license suspension or blacklisting for up to three years.

Institutional Oversight and Governance

A high-powered Advertisement Regulatory Committee (ARC) has been constituted to supervise implementation, resolve disputes, and hear appeals. It consists of senior functionaries, including:

- Additional Chief Secretary (Urban Development) – Chairperson
- Commissioner of Police (Traffic)
- Managing Director, BESCOM
- Tax & Finance Committee Chairperson, BBMP
- Chief Engineer (Road Infrastructure), BBMP
- Special Commissioner (Advertisements) – Member Secretary
- Representatives from the advertising industry and relevant BBMP wings

The ARC is the final appellate authority for decisions made by the Chief Commissioner, including refusals, cancellations, or orders relating to safety and enforcement. It also meets monthly to review compliance and direct enforcement strategies citywide.

Advancing Consumer Protection and Public Interest

The bye-laws safeguard consumer rights by:

- Prohibiting misleading, indecent, or unsafe advertisements (see Negative List),
- Ensuring content clarity, legibility, and minimal distraction to motorists,

- Mandating QR-code-based approvals on each display for traceability and transparency, and
- Requiring all electronic and static license-holders to allocate 10% of display time or 20 days annually for free public interest messaging (e.g., health campaigns, civic awareness, emergency alerts).

Conclusion

The BBMP Advertisement Bye-Laws, 2024 are a turning point in municipal regulation, introducing structured commercialization of outdoor advertising while embedding principles of transparency, environmental accountability, and public safety. For advertisers, property owners, and urban infrastructure developers, these bye-laws demand immediate compliance, strategic participation in tenders, and responsible stewardship of the city's visual environment.

For more details, write to us at: contact@indialaw.in

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