

# Permit Parking Guidelines

*Issued under section 120(3) of the Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021*

##### 2025

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Legal context.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Definitions and abbreviations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Strategic context.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Relationship with land use planning .....	5
Parking strategies .....	6
<b>5. Design, implementation, and operation.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Roles and responsibilities.....	6
Eligibility and fees .....	6
Managing demand .....	7
Fairness and transparency.....	8
Permit format and content.....	8
Signage.....	8
<b>References .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Example of a printed long-term permit .....	11
Example of a printed short-term permit.....	12
Examples of pay and permissive parking signs.....	13
Examples of special event parking signs .....	14

## 1. Introduction

These guidelines are issued under section 120(3) of *Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) to guide the issuing of parking permits by parking authorities.

The guidelines are structured thematically as indicated by relevant headers. Obligations and requirements are highlighted and numbered in boxes throughout the document.

Per s120 of the Regulation, parking authorities may issue a permit authorising the parking of a vehicle without charge or time restrictions in a parking space —

- (a) located within a parking area or road specified in the permit, and
- (b) designated by the parking authority for use by holders of the permit.

1. Where a parking authority plans or operates a permit parking scheme, it must comply with Division 1 (Parking permits) of Part 8 of the Regulation and these guidelines.
2. Permits issued after these guidelines come into force must be consistent with these guidelines.
3. Where a permit has been issued prior to this version of the guidelines for a vehicle for which on-site parking is available, a parking authority may continue to renew the permit only if the holder remains at that address – provided terms (inc. fees and application processes) are otherwise consistent with these guidelines.
4. Any time controls on permit parking scheme signs – whether existing or proposed – must be consistent with these guidelines.

Parking authorities are welcome to seek advice directly from Transport for NSW (Transport).

## 2. Legal context

The legal framework for permit parking schemes is provided under the following instruments:

<b>Transport Administration Act 1988</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Section 3I provides Transport the authority to delegate functions to an authorised person</li></ul>
<b>Transport Administration (General) Regulation 2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sections 19-20 prescribe additional classes of people to whom Transport may delegate functions</li></ul>
<b>Road Transport Act 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Division 2 in Part 5.3 in Chapter 5 sets out the requirements relating to prescribed traffic control devices and the authority for installing, displaying, or removing them</li></ul>
<b>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Division 1 of Part 8 provides detail regarding the issuing of parking permits, with s120(3) empowering Transport to issue guidelines and s120(5) specifying that a parking authority must not issue a permit except in accordance with these guidelines</li><li>Sections 161-162 provide offence provisions for failing to comply with requirements or giving false or misleading information</li><li>Schedule 2 lists declared organisations</li><li>Schedule 4 prescribes authorised officers for the purposes of the Regulation</li><li>Schedule 5 prescribes penalty notice offences for the purposes of the <i>Road Transport Act 2013</i></li></ul>
<b>Road Rules 2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Division 7 of Part 12 describes the application of signs and driver responsibilities relating to permissive parking signs and fees</li></ul>

- Rules 317-318 describe the information that may be depicted on signage and to what extent it applies

### 3. Definitions and abbreviations

<b>Area of operations</b>	For a council – the council’s local government area.  For a declared organisation – the area of operations specified in relation to the organisation in Schedule 2 of <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .  Refer to <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>Bus</b>	A motor vehicle built mainly to carry people that seats over 12 adults (including the driver). Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>Declared organisation</b>	A body constituted by or under an Act or a government department specified in Schedule 2 of <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>Motor vehicle</b>	A vehicle (other than a bicycle) that is built to be propelled by a motor that forms part of the vehicle. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>On-site parking</b>	Parking within the lot occupied by the applicant or parking which the applicant is entitled to use by virtue of their occupancy of the lot.
<b>Park, parking, or parked</b>	Where a driver stops a vehicle and allows the vehicle to stay (whether or not the driver leaves the vehicle). Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>Parking area</b>	A length of road or area designed for parking vehicles. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .  As per section 120 of <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> , parking area means the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pay parking area</li> <li>• permissive parking area</li> <li>• special event parking area</li> </ul>
<b>Parking authority</b>	A council or declared organisation. Refer to <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>Parking permit</b>	A mechanism by which a parking authority authorises the parking of a vehicle without charge or time restrictions in a parking space – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• located within specified parking areas or roads</li> <li>• designated – whether or not correctly signposted – by the parking authority</li> </ul> Refer to section 120 of <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>Pay parking area</b>	A parking area designated by one or more permissive parking signs where information on or with the sign indicates a fee is payable for parking in the area; but does not include a part of the parking area in which the parking of vehicles is prohibited by another provision of the road transport legislation. Refer to <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>Permissive parking sign</b>	A traffic sign that permits parking for a specified period of time. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .

<b>Road and road related area</b>	Refer to rules 12-13 of <i>Road Rules 2014</i> . Unless otherwise stated, references to a road also include a road related area.
<b>Special event parking scheme</b>	A scheme established under Division 3 of Part 8 of <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> .
<b>the Regulation</b>	Abbreviated reference to ' <i>Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021</i> '.
<b>Tractor</b>	Any motor vehicle constructed principally for the purpose of supplying motive power for machinery or of hauling any vehicle, but that is not capable of carrying any loading (other than tools, spare parts, fuel, water, oil, or other accessories necessary for use in connection with the vehicle) or any part of the weight of a vehicle being drawn or its loading. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>Trailer</b>	A vehicle that is built to be towed, or is towed, by a motor vehicle, but does not include a motor vehicle that is being towed. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>Transport</b>	Abbreviated reference to 'Transport for New South Wales'.
<b>Truck</b>	A motor vehicle with a GVM over 4.5 tonnes, except a bus, tram, or tractor. Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .
<b>Vehicle</b>	Refer to <i>Road Rules 2014</i> .

## 4. Strategic context

Parking supply and management can have wide-ranging effects on the local area and transport network. Effective parking policies can influence;

- **Equity**, by ensuring space on streets and roads is managed as a public resource.
- **Accessibility**, by prioritising those who need to drive whilst contributing to the viability of public transport services and the safety of active transport.
- **Travel choices and behaviour**, by reducing dependence on private vehicles and increasing mode share of public transport, walking, and cycling.
- **Traffic flow and congestion**, by reducing trip generation on the local road network.
- **Place amenity and quality**, by allowing space to be designed at human scale and prioritised for people walking.

### Relationship with land use planning

Parking management is an important aspect of transport and land use planning and should be considered alongside strategic planning, development of local planning controls, and broader infrastructure policy and investment.

Parking controls in major employment and activity centres can be used to limit commuter parking and encourage the use of public transport, walking, and cycling. Exemptions for permit holders can support these efforts by limiting any potential impact on local residents, businesses, and visitors.

Permit parking schemes, in concert with comprehensive parking controls and pay parking, can be used to manage transport and parking demand from new developments. Parking authorities may close schemes to occupants of developments approved on or after the date of a council resolution. By excluding occupants of new developments from access to parking permits, permit schemes can be used to prevent 'spillover' of parking demand to the public domain. This can render minimum parking requirements in planning controls unnecessary, allowing development that is more affordable, more sustainable, and more contextually appropriate. It is particularly beneficial in the case of infill development, attached housing, and small apartment buildings, which may otherwise not be viable if subject to minimum parking requirements.

Permit schemes also provide the flexibility to prioritise critical parking needs in the context of changes

to on-street parking availability. Permit schemes can be used to maintain access for key user groups when parking is reallocated to support other priorities, such as public transport improvements, place and public realm improvements, wider footpaths, cycleways, or clearways.

## Parking strategies

Parking strategies provide a framework for efficient, considered, and deliberate management of parking. They set out a vision for management of parking and the means of fulfilling that vision – including the use of permit parking schemes.

Developing and carrying out a parking strategy spurs more holistic thinking about movement, accessibility, planning and place-making, and management of public space/land. This can lead to identification of greater strategic opportunities that will achieve even broader positive outcomes.

It is recommended that parking authorities first develop a parking strategy to guide the design and implementation of permit parking schemes. They are a valuable tool for parking authorities in realising both local aims for parking management and broader strategic objectives for their area.

Parking strategies should be regularly reviewed and maintained, and existing permit parking schemes should be regularly reviewed for alignment with the parking strategy.

## 5. Design, implementation, and operation

### Roles and responsibilities

Most parking permits are issued by councils. Permits can also be issued, in accordance with these guidelines, by declared organisations listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulation.

5. Parking authorities are responsible for the establishment, operation, and enforcement of permit parking schemes in their areas of operation. This includes financing.
6. Declared organisations do not have authority to install, display, alter, or remove prescribed traffic control devices, including regulatory signs. They must work with council(s) or Transport to implement a parking scheme in their area of operations.
7. Parking authorities must keep records of quantities and types of parking permits issued, the number of permit-exempt spaces, and assessed numbers of on-site spaces in a precinct. This information must be shared if requested by Transport.

Schedule 4 of the Regulation sets out the relevant classes of officers that are authorised by councils and declared organisations as enforcement officers.

### Eligibility and fees

Parking authorities may determine what groups are to be accommodated by parking permits. Candidates for permits may include (but are not limited to):

- residents who must rely on on-street parking, and/or their visitors
- businesses which must rely on on-street parking, and/or their visitors
- carers providing bona fide in-home support services
- employees, students, residents, service providers, or contractors of declared organisations
- visitors to the beach, foreshore, or other attractions or localities where there is permissive or pay parking
- car share operators

8. A vehicle, for the purposes of a permit, must not be a truck, bus, tractor, or trailer (including a boat or caravan). These vehicle types are defined in the *Road Rules 2014*.

- 9.** A vehicle must be registered in NSW or classified as a vehicle temporarily in NSW under Schedule 1 of the *Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2017*.

Parking authorities may prescribe fees for parking permits at their discretion. In setting fees, authorities may consider and reflect recovery of administrative costs and policy objectives such as demand management, sustainability, and equity.

- 10.** Parking authorities must not apply different terms (e.g. costs, eligibility, availability, priority, etc.) on the basis of tenure (i.e. ownership v. tenancy of premises), title-type (e.g. Torrens title, strata title, community title, etc.), or housing type or size (e.g. apartments, attached dwellings, multi-dwelling housing, number of bedrooms, etc.).

This does not apply to occupants of short-stay accommodation, nor does it prevent the exclusion of households or premises in new developments from eligibility for permits on the basis of their date of approval or occupancy, as set by policy, resolution of council, or as determined through the development assessment process.

A parking authority may determine how many permits may be issued per room of a lawful boarding house, but may not entirely exclude or otherwise discriminate against residents in boarding houses.

- 11.** Any permit issued by a council and widely available to residents, ratepayers, or businesses for the purpose of parking somewhere other than at the holder's residential or business premises must:
- be available to all residents of NSW on fair terms (e.g. eligibility, availability, priority, etc.); and
  - be priced in accordance with the following principles:
    - The public have a right to access foreshore, beaches, and other natural attractions/destinations
    - Pricing cannot be used to unreasonably disadvantage or deter any specific sub-group(s) of applicants from outside the council's area of operations
    - Pricing is set to manage parking and transport demand, and encourage use of sustainable and efficient modes of transport

This applies to permits such as those for parking at a beach, foreshore, other natural or tourist attraction, town or local centre, or across the whole or a significant portion of a Local Government Area. It does not apply to permits targeted at specific holder categories such as car share operators, providers of bona fide in-home support services, temporary visitors or tradespeople, or volunteer charity services.

## Managing demand

A parking permit is not an entitlement. Permit schemes are most effective where they prioritise permits for those without access to on-site parking.

- 12.** The number of permits available for any vehicles at a residential or business premises must be reduced by the number of on-site parking spaces. Individual exceptions may be made in case of bona fide hardship.
- 13.** Parking permits must not be issued for vehicles for which on-site parking is available.
- 14.** In areas of high demand, where the number of applications for parking permits may exceed the available on-street parking space, a parking authority must consider reducing the number of permits available to new applicants. Existing permits may continue to be renewed while a permit holder remains at their address.

In areas of very high demand, only one permit should be issued per household or premises, provided no on-site parking is available.

## Fairness and transparency

For councils, the in-principle decision to adopt, or significantly extend or vary, a permit parking scheme should be made by the full elected council.

15. Parking authorities must assess local conditions and adopt time limits that ensure reasonable public access to local destinations for motorists without permits.
16. A parking authority must not set aside any parking for the exclusive use of permit holders, and where a sign including 'PERMIT HOLDERS EXCEPTED' is used, including in special event parking areas, the minimum parking period must be at least one hour.
17. Eligibility requirements and application processes for permits must be easily available to the public.
18. Where permits are issued, information must be included in relation to:
  - the scheme to which they relate
  - how they are to be displayed
  - where and how they can be used
  - what signage to look for
  - expiry dates and renewal procedures
  - conditions and restrictions (such as prohibitions on transfer or sale, etc.)
  - obligations and responsibilities of the permit holder
19. Permit holders must be reminded that:
  - exemptions may apply only to some spaces
  - a permit does not provide exemption from other parking restrictions or road rules
  - holding a permit does not guarantee the holder a parking space

## Permit format and content

20. A parking permit must be either printed or digital, and display or contain the following:
  - permit type or purpose
  - area in which it is valid (usually via numeric or alpha-numeric code)
  - expiry date

To mitigate risk of fraud and unauthorised transfer, it is strongly recommended that all permits are tied to a vehicle registration corresponding to the address of the applicant. For visitor permits, fraud can be prevented with a digital permit system or with single-use daily permits.

Examples of printed permit formats can be found in the Appendices.

## Signage

Division 7 of Part 12 of *Road Rules 2014* describes the application of signs and driver responsibilities relating to permissive parking signs and fees. Rules 317-318 describe the information that may be depicted on signage and to what extent it applies.

21. The location and application of permit schemes must be clear and identifiable for users and the public. The presence of a permit exemption must be clearly signposted in every location in which the exemption applies. Permits must not be issued for use in a location that does not have 'PERMIT HOLDERS EXCEPTED' signage.
22. Where permit holders are exempted from time restrictions and charges, signs must include the



following:

- the words 'PERMIT HOLDERS EXCEPTED'
- an area identifier
- a minimum parking period of one hour for non-permit holders

**23.** Legacy parking signs may show the words 'AUTHORISED RESIDENTS' VEHICLES EXCEPTED'. This signage remains enforceable but must be replaced during normal maintenance with signs using the words 'PERMIT HOLDERS EXCEPTED'.

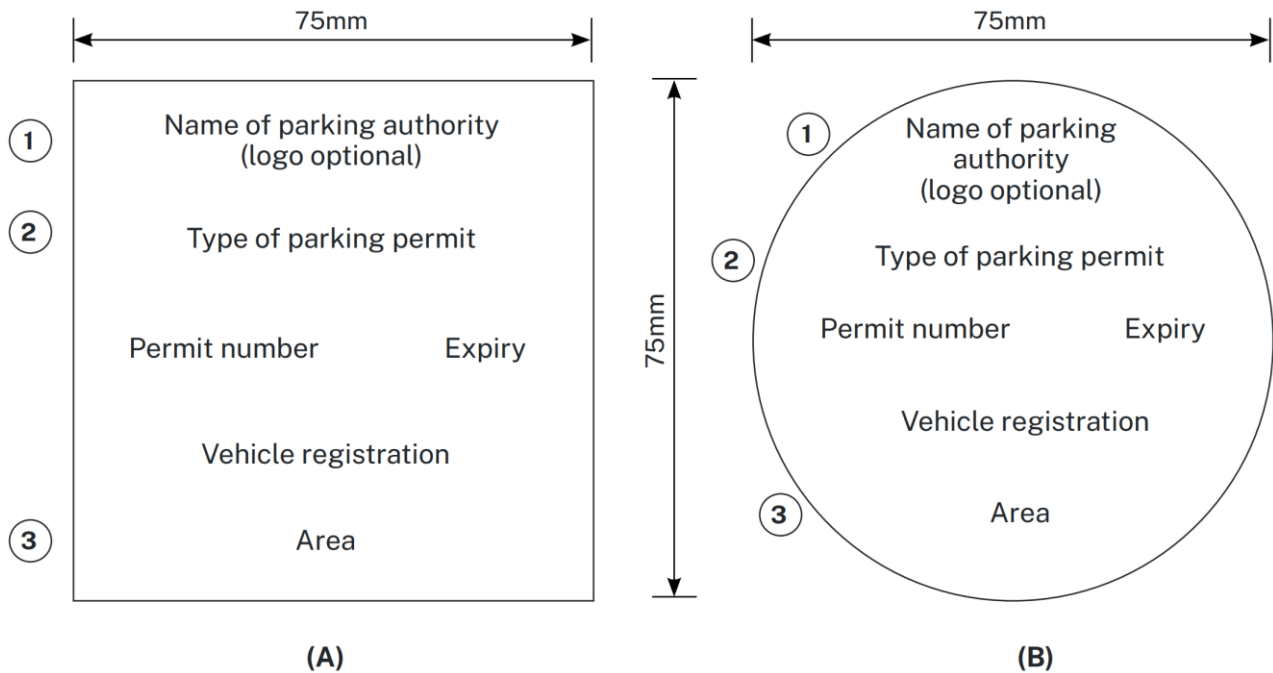
Refer to the Appendices for examples of pay and permissive parking signs and special event parking signs. Refer to the register of traffic signs on Transport's website for more detail.

## References

DOCUMENT	SOURCE	NOTE
<b>Australian Standard 2890: Parking facilities</b>	Standards Australia	This series has been adopted as practice by Transport, except as modified by the associated supplement (as below).
<b>RMS Supplement for Australian Standard 2890: Parking facilities</b>	Transport Standards Portal	This supplement defines Transport practice for parking facilities against the requirements of the AS 2890 series.
<b>Australian Standard 1742.11: Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices – Part 11: Parking controls</b>	Standards Australia	This series has been adopted as practice by Transport, except as modified by the associated supplement (as below).
<b>RMS Supplement to AS 1742.11: Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices – Part 11: Parking controls</b>	Transport Standards Portal	This supplement defines Transport practice for traffic control devices against the requirements of the AS 1742 series.
<b>Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11: Parking</b>	Austroads	This document has been adopted as practice by Transport, except as modified by the associated supplement (as below).
<b>RMS Austroads Supplement for Guide to Traffic Management Part 11: Parking</b>	Transport Standards Portal	This supplement defines Transport practice for traffic management against the requirements of Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11.

## Appendices

### Example of a printed long-term permit



#### Notes:

- The parking authority is responsible for the design of the permit, which may be a card or label.
- Type of parking permit should be a clear descriptor (e.g. residential, carer, car share, etc.).

## Example of a printed short-term permit

① Name of parking authority  
(logo optional)

② Type of parking permit

Permit number                      Expiry

③ Area

④ Space for vehicle registration

Scratch date, month and year:

Date

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31					

Month

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

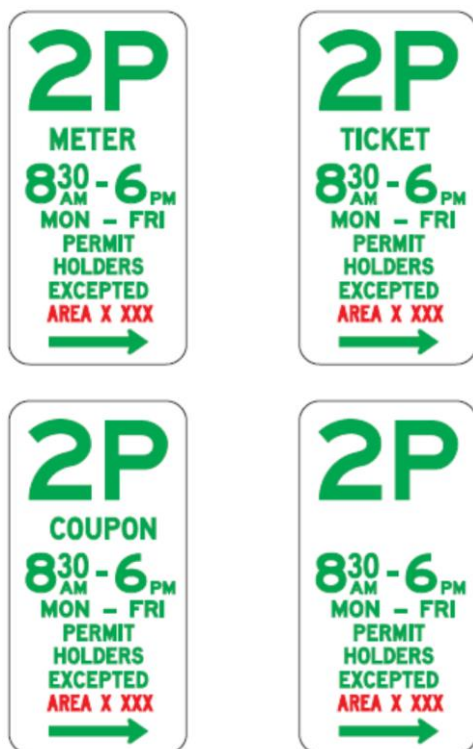
Year

2019	2020	2021
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### Notes:

- The parking authority is responsible for the final design, layout, and colour of the permit.
- Type of parking permit should be a clear descriptor (e.g. residential, carer, car share, etc.).

## Examples of pay and permissive parking signs



## Examples of special event parking signs

SIGN	NUMBER	USE
	<p>R5-60-4n</p> <hr/> <p>R5-207-2n</p>	<p>Major entry points to scheme</p>
	<p>R5-61-4n</p> <hr/> <p>R5-207-1n</p>	<p>Minor entry points to scheme</p>
	<p>R5-62-4n</p> <hr/> <p>R5-207-1n</p>	<p>Internal or repeater, within scheme</p>
	<p>R5-63-4n</p>	<p>Exit from scheme</p>

### Notes:

- As and when needed, panels depicting event times and dates are to be placed over the text reading 'Not Currently In Use'.