ARTICLE 20.
DISTRICT SIGN REGULATIONS

Section 1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of these sign regulations is to implement the following necessary and proper objectives:

A. To protect the general public from damage and injury which may be caused by the faulty and unregulated construction of signs.

B. To prevent the obstruction of traffic visibility and confusion with traffic control devices resulting from improperly placed and designed signs.

C. To insure the visual quality of signs and preserve and promote the aesthetic quality of Johnson County by reducing visual clutter.

D. To control the magnitude, placement and number of signs in the County, recognizing that signs in the County generally tend to be highly visible because of low-density development patterns and few, if any, development features or other signs which compete visually for attention, thereby necessitating controls to protect the visual integrity of the unincorporated portion of the County.

Section 2. APPLICABILITY:

The provisions of this Article govern the size, placement, use and structural quality of outdoor signs and other advertising and identification devices together with their appurtenant and auxiliary apparatus. No sign shall be erected, enlarged, constructed, reconstructed, relocated, refaced, structurally or otherwise altered without first obtaining a separate sign permit as set forth in this Article.

Section 3. PERMIT REQUIREMENTS:

A. Permit Required: Except as provided in paragraph F of this section, a separate sign permit shall be obtained from the Zoning Administrator or such persons designate for each sign as provided in this Article.

B. Application for Permit: Applications for a permit shall be made in writing upon forms provided by the Zoning Administrator which may request the following information, among others:

1. The name, street address, and telephone number of both the applicant and the person erecting, constructing, reconstructing, relocating, refacing, structurally or otherwise altering the sign.

2. The legal description of the lot or tract and the street address of the building or structure where the sign is to be located.

3. Two sets of sign plans drawn to scale which shall include specifications of the proposed sign and sign structure along with the method of construction and attachment to the building or ground. A site plan showing the position of the sign(s) in relation to property lines and nearby buildings and structures shall be included with the sign plans.

4. If the applicant is not the owner, written consent of the owner(s) of the lot or tract, building or structure on which the sign is to be erected.
C. Issuance of Permit: Upon the filing of an application for a sign permit and payment of the applicable permit fee as provided herein, the Zoning Administrator or such persons designate shall examine such plans and specifications, along with the premises upon which the sign proposed to be erected, and any other pertinent data, to determine whether the proposed sign would comply with these regulations. If all applicable requirements are met, the permit shall be issued and shall be valid for construction and erection, alteration or relocation of the sign within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date the permit is issued.

The issuance of the Sign Permit, as required by these regulations, shall not act in lieu of any other permits or fees required by the electrical code or building code or any other governmental rules or regulations adopted by the County or any other governmental entity and made applicable to the sign and its placement.

D. Permit Fees: Before being granted a permit for a sign, every applicant shall pay to the County a permit fee as established by resolution of the Board.

E. Permit Revocation: If the Zoning Administrator or such persons designate shall find that any sign subject to these regulations is unsafe or insecure; is a possible danger to the public health, safety, or welfare due to structural defects; has been allowed to deteriorate to such condition that it is unsightly; has been constructed or erected or is being maintained in violation of the provisions of these regulations, then written notice shall be given to the owner of the premises or, if different than the owner, the occupant(s) of the premises on which the sign is located, specifying the problem. If such person fails to remove or alter the sign to comply with the provisions of these regulations within fifteen (15) days of such notice, the Zoning Administrator may take such action as may be necessary to cause such sign to be removed or altered to comply with these regulations, which shall be at the expense of the applicant or owner(s) of the property on which the sign is located. If a sign is an immediate hazard to the public health, safety, or welfare, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator, the Zoning Administrator may cause it to be removed immediately and without notice.

F. Exemptions From Fees and Permits: The following signs or sign modifications shall be exempt from paying fees and obtaining a permit; however such signs shall be subject to all other requirements of these regulations since this exemption shall not be construed as relieving the owner of the property on which the sign is located from the responsibility for its meeting the other requirements of these regulations:

1. Non-electrical signs not exceeding one (1) square foot in area.

2. Non-electrical signs on construction sites where construction is underway, and if the sign area does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area.

3. Traffic control signs pursuant to the applicable Street Construction and Storm Drainage Standards adopted by the County.

4. Incidental Advertising Signs or Incidental Identification Sign.

5. Modification to or replacement of the message displayed on a Bulletin Sign, Poster Panel Sign, or Junior Poster Panel Sign or the electrically changeable message or readily changeable mechanically affixed lettering, logo or insignia or message on a sign.

6. Routine maintenance, repair, repainting that does not include structural or electrical alterations or which does not result in changes to the size or height of any sign.
G. Appeals Regarding Sign Permits: In the event of the approval or the denial of any permit, or the revocation thereof, or of any objection to the limitations or conditions or the lack of limitations or conditions placed thereon, appeal may be made in writing to the Board of Zoning Appeals in accordance with the provisions of Article 3, Section 5 of these regulations.

Section 4. GENERAL SIGN PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

A. Signs Shall Not Constitute Traffic Hazards: No sign shall be erected at or near the intersection of any street(s) or driveway(s) in such a manner as to obstruct free and clear vision of motorists using such street(s) or driveway(s) or at any location where, by reason of the position, shape or color, it may interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device. No sign which obstructs the view of motorists using any street intersection shall be allowed within the visual sight triangle of an intersection. See Article 17, Section 1.

B. Signs Must Be Outside the Public Right-of-Way: No sign other than traffic control signs shall be erected, constructed, or maintained within, over or upon the right-of-way of any street, avenue, highway or alley within the County.

C. Maintenance Required: All signs and all components thereof, including supports, braces, and anchors, shall be of sound structural quality and shall be kept in a state of good repair, have a clean and neat appearance, and land adjacent thereto shall be kept free from debris, weeds, trash or other such condition by the owner thereof. If signs are not maintained as described, the Zoning Administrator or an authorized representative thereof shall have the right to order the repair or removal of any sign which is defective, damaged or deteriorated or has defects which may include holes, cracks, rotted, loose or missing materials or parts of the sign, or missing or faded print on sign copy. Such orders may be appealed to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

D. Prohibited Signs, Signs Prohibited Except Under Certain Conditions, and Signs Generally Permitted as Provided:

1. Prohibited Signs:
   a. Directly Illuminated Signs are prohibited.
   b. Roof Signs are prohibited.
   c. Signs painted on the surface of stone, concrete, or other masonry construction are prohibited.
   d. Motor vehicles, trailers or portable bases with wheels or to which wheels may be readily affixed shall not be used as a sign structure for any signs permitted by this article.

2. Prohibited Signs, Except Under Certain Conditions as follows:
   a. Attention Attracting Devices are prohibited except for flags or pennants, with name or logo or insignia of any person, governmental, public service, or charitable organization. This prohibition shall not apply to flags of the United States, the state, the city, foreign nations having diplomatic relations with the United States, and any other flag adopted or sanctioned by an elected legislative body of competent jurisdiction, provided that such a flag shall not exceed 60 square feet in area and shall not be flown from a pole the top of which is more than 40 feet in height. These flags must be flown in accordance with protocol established by the Congress of the United States for the Stars and Stripes. Any flag not meeting any one or more of these conditions shall be considered a sign and shall be subject to regulation as such. This prohibition shall not apply to signs indicating only
the time, date, or weather conditions, and it shall not apply to the use of Attention Attracting Devices in conjunction with public ceremonies and parades, the observance or recognition of recognized holidays, and so on. This prohibition shall also not apply to banners used as temporary signs to announce or promote events of general civic interest provided such banners are attached top and bottom (or two sides) to permanent structural members on a post or building erected for another purpose, and provided that a sign permit is obtained.

b. Certain outdoor Advertising Signs: Bulletin Signs, Poster Panel Signs, and Junior Poster Panel Signs, whether on-premise or off-premise, are prohibited except in the Planned Retail Business Districts (PRB-1, PRB-2 and PRB-3) and two Planned Employment Center Districts (Planned Research, Development and Light Industrial Park District, PEC-3, and Planned Industrial District, PEC-4) and then only if approved by a Conditional Use Permit as provided in Article 23 of these regulations.

c. Temporary Handbills, Placards, and Posters are prohibited except that:

1. Placards or posters no larger than four (4) square feet in area per individual panel may be used.

2. Placards or posters no larger than twenty-five (25) square feet in area per individual panel may be placed inside a window of a business to promote special activities, events, prices, or sales on-premises.

3. Placards or posters no larger than four (4) square feet in area per individual panel may be placed inside a window of a business to promote special activities or events of purported general public interest which would occur off-premises.

All temporary signs shall be removed within two (2) weeks after the event(s) promoted.

3. Signs Generally Permitted as Provided in this Article:

a. Incidental Identification Signs are permitted in all zoning districts in accordance with the requirements in this Article.

b. Incidental Advertising Signs are permitted in all zoning districts in accordance with the requirements in this Article.

c. Projecting Signs are permitted in lieu of all wall signs permitted in this Article.

d. Business Signs, Development Complex Signs, General Advertising Signs, Institutional Signs, Neighborhood Signs, Nameplate Signs, are permitted in all districts in accordance with the requirements in this Article.

e. Illuminated Signs: Internally Illuminated Signs and Indirectly Illuminated Signs shall be permitted as follows:

1. Internally Illuminated Signs shall not be constructed with an entirely illuminated background and copy area unless the illumination levels would be and are maintained low enough to prevent potentially offensive or hazardous illumination or glare or unless the illuminated background area has a medium to dark, semi-transparent finish to mask the intensity of the illumination.
2). Reflectors on the illumination source for Indirectly Illuminated Signs shall be provided with proper lenses, concentrating the illumination on the area of the sign so as to prevent glare upon nearby street(s) or other property.

3). It shall be unlawful for any person to use sign illumination which is wholly or partially illuminated in a manner that could or does interfere with the vision of pedestrians or motorists.

Section 5. SIGN CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS:

A. Attached Components to be Secured: All letters, figures, characters, or representations maintained in conjunction with, attached to or superimposed upon any sign shall be safely and securely built or attached to the sign structure.

B. Removable Parts to be Secured: Any openable or removable parts of a sign such as a service opening cover or readily changeable mechanically affixed lettering, logo or insignia or message shall be securely fastened or be provided with safety chains or hinges.

C. Sign Construction In General: Signs shall be constructed to prevent potential hazards to the public.

D. All permanent signs and sign structures shall be designed and constructed to comply with the building code as adopted by the County. All electrically illuminated signs shall be designed and constructed to conform with the electrical code as adopted by the County. All signs and sign structures shall be also designed and constructed to comply with the design standards set forth in this Article.

Section 6. DESIGN STANDARDS:

A. Special Requirements for Signs in Development Complexes: The owner, or applicant as agent for the owner, shall prepare a set of sign standards for all exterior signs in any development complex. Such standards shall be included as part of any development plan approved for the overall development complex and notice of such approved development plan sign standards shall be fully provided in any lease or sales contract for the property involved in the development. The size, colors, materials, styles of lettering, appearance of any logo, type of illumination and location shall be set out in such standards. The standards shall be such that signs constructed or maintained under the standards would comply with the sign regulations set out by the County for the zoning district in which the development complex is located and shall be for the purpose of assuring harmony and visual quality throughout a project. Final development plans shall not be approved until the sign standards have been approved by the Board. The sale, subdivision or other partition of the site after zoning approval does not exempt the project or portions thereof from complying with these regulations and the approved sign standards relative to number of detached signs, harmony and visual quality of signs to be installed. All signs in development complexes shall be designed and constructed of materials which harmonize with the architecture of the site on which the sign is located. Generally, the use of sign materials the same as or similar to the main building materials used on-site shall be found to provide the required level of design harmony.
B. Structural Types of Signs:

1. Attached Signs: Size, Height and Design Limitations:
   
   a. Awning Signs shall not be larger than twenty-five (25) square feet nor 10% of the awning surface area whichever is smaller.
   
   b. Marquee, Canopy, Overhead Canopy, Under-Canopy, Projecting or Wall Signs:
      
      1). Minimum Height Requirements: All Marquee, Canopy, Overhead Canopy, Under-canopy, or Projecting Signs shall be mounted at least fourteen (14) feet above any driveway and at least nine (9) feet above any walkway over which they are erected.
      
      2). Maximum Height Limitations: The top line of a Marquee, Canopy, Overhead Canopy, Projecting or Wall sign shall not be higher than the top of the wall, roof eaves, or parapet line of the building to which it is attached.
      
      3). Limitations on the Number of Sign Faces and the Sign Area:
         
         a). Marquee, Canopy or Overhead Canopy Signs shall have only one sign face. The sign area of Marquee, Canopy or Overhead Canopy Signs shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet per establishment.
         
         b). Under-canopy signs may have two (2) sign faces, and the sign area of any under-canopy sign shall not exceed three (3) square feet.
         
         c). Projecting signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces, and the sign area shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet.
         
         d). Wall Signs shall not have more than one (1) sign face, and the sign area shall not exceed 10% of the Signable Wall Area on which the sign is located.

2. Detached Signs: Location, Size, Height and Design Limitations:
   
   a. General Location Limitations:
      
      1). Detached signs shall not be located in the visual sight triangle as established in these regulations unless in compliance with the bulk and sight line requirements for visual triangles in Article 17, Section 1 of these regulations.
      
      2). Detached signs shall be at least ten (10) feet from all property lines, unless otherwise provided in this Article.
      
      3). Detached signs shall be located within a landscaped area which extends a minimum of three feet from all sides of the sign base.
      
   b. General Height Limitation: The total height of any monument or pole sign shall comply with Table 1 of this Article and shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet above the adjoining ground elevation, if 1) such ground elevation is higher than the elevation of the street(s) to which the sign faces, and if 2) the sign is placed at least fifty (50) feet from the street centerline, and if 3) the sign is placed within one hundred sixty-five (165) feet of the nearest right-of-way line of the street.
Except for outdoor advertising signs, other signs facing limited access highways may exceed the height limitations of Table 1 of this Article and may be up to twenty (20) feet above the elevation of the limited access highway(s) which the sign faces if the sign is placed within three hundred thirty (330) feet of the nearest right-of-way line of the highway.

c. Monument Signs: Special Limitations: Monument Signs shall have an enclosed, solid base or structural base with the base at least three-fourths the width of the widest part of the sign face. An enclosed or solid sign base shall not be required if the lower edge of the sign face is within one (1) foot of the average finished grade. Monument signs shall not be constructed with an entirely illuminated background and copy area. Monument signs shall be on-premise signs, the sign area shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet, and the sign shall not exceed five (5) feet in height above the average adjacent grade, if located ten (10) feet from the street right-of-way. For each additional two (2) feet of setback from the street right-of-way, one (1) additional foot may be added to the height of the sign to a maximum of eight (8) feet.

d. Pole Signs: Special Design and Area Limitations: Pole Signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces, and the sign area shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet.

C. Functional Types of Signs:

1. Identification Signs: Shall be allowed as provided below and in Table 1 of this Article:

a. Business Signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces, and the sign area shall not exceed twenty five (25) square feet for Detached Signs, Projecting Signs, Canopy Signs, or Overhead Canopy Signs. Business Signs may be Wall Signs if the sign area does not exceed ten percent (10%) of the signable wall area.

b. Development Complex Identification Signs shall be monument signs in accordance with the requirements of this Article.

c. General Identification Signs: Shall be allowed as provided in Table 1 of this Article.

d. Incidental identification signs:

1). Construction Site Signs shall not have more than one (1) sign face, and the sign area shall not exceed 32 square feet.

2). Instruction Signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces and the sign area shall not exceed four (4) square feet.

e. Institutional Signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces, and the sign area shall not exceed twenty five (25) square feet. Institutional signs may be attached or detached signs as provided in this Article.

f. Nameplate Signs: Nameplate signs shall not have more than one (1) sign face unless they are under-canopy signs which shall not have more than two (2) sign faces, and the sign area shall not exceed two (2) square feet unless otherwise provided by Table 1 of this Article.

g. Neighborhood Signs: Neighborhood signs shall not have more than two (2) sign faces and the sign area shall not exceed twenty five (25) square feet.
2. Advertising Signs:
   
a. Where Allowed:
   
   1). On-premises advertising signs shall be allowed as provided below and in Table 1 of this Article.
   
   2). After approval of a Conditional Use Permit as provided in Article 23 of these regulations, outdoor advertising signs may be On-premise or Off-premise signs and shall be allowed as provided below only in the Planned Business Districts (PRB-1, PRB-2, and PRB-3) and in Planned Employment Center Districts (PEC-3 and PEC-4) and in the Rural District (RUR).
   
b. On-premises Advertising Signs:
   
   1). General Advertising Signs shall be allowed as provided in Table 1 of this Article.
   
   2). Incidental Advertising Signs shall be allowed as provided below and in Table 1 of this Article.
      
a). Real Estate Signs shall not be larger than four (4) square feet for tracts smaller than 10 acres and not zoned for business or employment center uses; and shall not be larger than thirty-two (32) square feet for tracts larger than 10 acres or tracts zoned for business or employment center uses, shall be located on-premise and shall not have more than two (2) sign faces.
      
b). Real Estate Project Signs shall not be larger than thirty-two (32) square feet, shall not have more than two (2) sign faces and shall be on-premise signs unless approved for off-premise use by Conditional Use Permit as provided in Article 23 of these regulations.
      
c). Special Events Signs shall be allowed as provided in Section 5, (D)(2)(c)(1), (2) and (3) of this Article.
   
c. Outdoor Advertising Signs (Bulletin Signs, Poster Panel Signs, or Junior Poster Panel Signs) Location, Height, Area, Lighting, and Spacing Requirements:
   
   1). Location:
      
a). Outdoor advertising signs shall not be located within five hundred (500) feet of a Residential or Planned Residential District or any structure occupied by a residential or institutional use.
      
b). Outdoor advertising signs shall not be located within fifty (50) feet of any right-of-way.
      
c). Outdoor advertising signs shall not be attached to the roof or wall or placed above the roof level of any building.
   
   2). Maximum Height: The top of any outdoor advertising sign shall not exceed thirty (30) feet above adjacent ground elevation.
3. Maximum Sign Area:

a. The maximum sign area of any outdoor advertising sign shall not exceed a total of six hundred fifty (650) square feet.

b. The maximum height or vertical dimension of the sign face of any Outdoor Advertising Sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet.

c. The maximum width or horizontal dimension of any one (1) Outdoor Advertising Sign shall not exceed fifty (50) feet.

d. For purposes of the maximum sign area provision, each face of outdoor advertising signs, whether back-to-back, V-shaped signs or "tri-vision" shall be considered a separate sign.

4. Lighting: Outdoor advertising signs may be indirectly illuminated, however the illumination shall not cast glare upon any adjacent highway so as to pose a potential hazard to vehicular traffic.

5. Minimum Spacing Requirements:

a. No outdoor advertising sign or structure hereafter erected, shall be less than one thousand two hundred (1,200) feet from any other existing outdoor advertising sign structure on the same side of the street. Such minimum spacing distance shall be measured along the center line of the frontage street, or highway from a point opposite any edge of an outdoor advertising sign structure and perpendicular to the center line of each street, or highway. Double-faced outdoor advertising sign structures having back-to-back sign surfaces and V-shaped outdoor advertising sign structures shall not be prohibited by this spacing requirement.

b. No new outdoor advertising signs or sign structures shall hereafter be erected having more than one viewable sign face directed toward the same lane of traffic.

3. Noncommercial Speech Signs: Shall be allowed as provided in Table 1 of this Article.

Section 7. NONCONFORMING SIGNS:

Every legally established sign in existence on the effective date of these regulations may continue in existence subject to the following:

A. It shall not be altered structurally or moved unless it is made to comply with the provisions of these regulations. However, the changing of the movable parts of an existing sign that is designed for such changes, or the repainting or reposting of display matter shall not be deemed a structural alteration.

B. The lawful use of a sign existing on the effective date of these regulations, although such sign does not conform to the provisions hereof, may continue; but if such nonconforming use is discontinued for a period of six (6) months or more, such sign shall not be used until it has been made to conform with the provisions of these regulations.

C. Any sign which has been damaged by fire, wind, explosion, or act of God to the extent that fifty (50) percent or more of the construction value or replacement cost of the sign before it was damaged shall be deemed to have been totally destroyed and the sign shall not be restored except in conformity with these regulations. Any sign which has been damaged to an extent less than
fifty (50) percent of the construction value or replacement cost of the sign before it was damaged may be restored to the condition which it existed previously as a nonconforming use prior to its damage.
### Table 1 - Article 20, District Sign Regulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Total Sign Area Allowed per Lot, Site or Establishment</th>
<th>Structural Types of Signs Allowed</th>
<th>Functional Types of Signs Allowed</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Signs per Location</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Faces per Sign</th>
<th>Maximum Area of Sign Face (in Sq. Ft.)</th>
<th>Maximum Sign Height (in Feet)</th>
<th>Minimum Setback (in Feet)</th>
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*PAE: PAE, Planned Adult Entertainment District — As allowed specifically by Article 32 of these regulations.*
FOOTNOTES FOR TABLE ONE:

1. Must be removed within 2 weeks of event promoted.
2. Signs not at the same entrance must be at least 330 feet apart. Neighborhood signs are allowed as follows: 2 per entrance or neighborhood frontage single-sided or 1 per entrance or neighborhood frontage double-sided.
3. If placed above an entrance gate at least seventeen (17) feet above the average adjacent grade.
4. If tract is at least 10 acres in size.
5. Special events signs may have two (2) sign faces only if not larger than four (4) square feet per sign face or if located inside a window.
6. Special event signs not located inside a window shall not be larger than four (4) square feet per sign face.
7. Noncommercial speech signs shall not be larger than allowed by this table unless a variance is approved by the BZA.
8. Exclusive of outdoor advertising and incidental signs.
9. Maximum height of five (5) feet unless sign complies with Section 6 (B)(2)(c) of this Article.
10. Top of sign shall not extend above top of wall behind sign or to which sign is attached.
11. In lieu of all wall or marquee signs otherwise allowed.
12. Outdoor advertising signs must be at least thirty-five (35) feet from any highway right-of-way.
13. Ten percent (10%) of the signable area of the awning surface or wall.
14. To any other outdoor advertising sign on the same side of the road.
15. Allowed only in compliance with Section 6 (A) of this Article.
16. On-premises signs only, unless approved by Conditional Use Permit.
17. If minimum height requirements apply, then twelve (12) feet above any walkway and twenty (20) feet above any driveway.
18. In lieu of development complex sign.
19. Outdoor Advertising Signs must be at least five hundred (500) feet from any Rural, Planned Rural, Residential or Planned Residential District or any structure occupied by a residential or institutional use. Outdoor Advertising Signs are allowed in the Rural District if a Conditional Use Permit is approved as provided in Article 23 of these regulations.
20. Minor Advertising Signs and Minor Identification Signs are allowed in Groups 1, 2 and 3, in compliance with this Article.

GENERAL NOTES:

A. Signs in Group 1 zoning districts shall not be illuminated except that General Identification Signs in the Rural District (RUR), or in the Planned Rural District, (PRUR) and Institutional Signs or Neighborhood Signs in any Group 1 zoning district may be illuminated as allowed in this Article.
B. Except for allowed Nameplate Signs for allowed home occupations in Group 2 zoning districts, signs in Groups 2 and 3 may be illuminated as allowed in this Article.
C. Except for Incidental Advertising Signs or Nameplate Signs for allowed home occupations, no commercial message shall be allowed on signs in the Group 1 zoning districts.
D. Any signs located over a walkway or driveway must be at least nine (9) feet above the walkway and at least fourteen (14) feet above the driveway.
E. When this table allows multiple signs at intervals along the street frontages or at site entrances, the total sign area allowed for those multiple signs shall not be accumulated to result in larger signs at fewer locations or greater numbers of signs at closer intervals than allowed specifically by this table.

ABBREVIATIONS

a = attached sign
b = canopy sign
c = detached sign
d = monument sign
m = pole sign
p = pole sign
w = wall sign
aw = awning sign
ma = marquee sign
oc = overhead canopy sign
pr = projecting sign
uc = under canopy sign
n/a = not applicable