

# Housing ad guidelines will be in next Bulletin

*Reminder: Use names in political ad credits*

In the July magazine I reminded that you need to make certain your housing ads are within the guidelines that the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations require. After that ran, I had dozens of calls from papers concerned about whether they were within those guidelines.

As a result, I have created a one-page sheet that we will have in the September bulletin and on the MPA website that can be posted somewhere in your advertising department.

Meanwhile, once again, here are the basics.

Every newspaper, in its real estate section, needs to run a publisher's notice. The language for that notice will be in the flier I have prepared, or if you need it immediately, call me and I'll forward it to you.

Your housing classified ads should not describe anything about the prospective tenant. Ads can describe the property. While you can state a residence is within a certain development in town, it is not advisable to describe the property by saying what or where it is "near."

Display advertising requires certain

language or the HUD logo, depending on the size of the ad. The specifics are in the sheet that will be in the bulletin.

Again, if you have questions, call me. This is the area in your advertising where you are most likely to incur some liability.

While I'm discussing advertising, I want to add a thought about the recent newspaper ads from the State Treasurer's Office listing unclaimed property owners.

Stories after the ads were published noted that those ads cost the state more than \$650,000. One story noted that "The lists raised eyebrows recently when they took up numerous pages in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and *The Kansas City Star*."

Huh? Whose eyebrows were raised? The story didn't say. I wondered if it was the reporter's eyebrows.

Seriously, I think that is one of the most helpful things the State Treasurer's Office does. I know they have a website for this purpose, but I don't often check that website for all my friends and neighbors.

But when the published list comes

out I do make a practice of reading every name on it. No, I'm not looking for my own name (of course, if I found it there, I'd be scampering to claim my funds!).

Instead, I read it for clients' names. Every year I find several of my clients on that list. For example, this year, among the names was the name of a BANK I represent. Who would believe a bank would have misplaced money? Seriously!

I sent them a note alerting them to the fact that they were on the list, and they gratefully responded to tell me they didn't see it, and they were scampering to reclaim those funds. Thanks, State Treasurer Clint Zweifel! I look like a hero!

A bunch of newspapers in the state have made many citizens here happy!

One last reminder while we're on the advertising issue – we are heading into the fall election season. I know you won't have the volume of advertising you do in election cycle years, but if there are some local races in November, be sure advertisers are properly using attribution in your candidate and ballot-issue ads.

If you have questions, call me. Especially, I'd encourage you NOT to use language like "Paid for by the candidate." That's not permitted by state law. It's a habit many newspapers have gotten into, and it has concerned the Missouri Ethics Commission enough that it is studying the issue.

Use the candidate's first and last names in the ad. It's just a good practice to have.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Convention!

---

---

*Every year I find several of my clients on that (unclaimed property) list.*

---

---



Jean Maneke, MPA's Legal Hotline attorney, can be reached at (816) 753-9000, [jmaneke@manekelaw.com](mailto:jmaneke@manekelaw.com).