

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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## OFFICIAL CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL LANDMARK PLAQUES QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q: What is an official State Landmark plaque?**

**A:** An official state landmark plaque is the standard marker used for registered California Historical Landmarks. The plaques have the official bear logo.

**Q: Can I use one that looks like the official State standard plaque?**

**A:** No. Pursuant to Sect. 5022.6 of the California Public Resources Code, persons who maliciously or for commercial purposes, or contrary to such rule, use or allow to be used any reproduction or facsimile of such standard marker or plaque in any manner whatsoever are guilty of a misdemeanor.

**Q: Can I have a plaque made in a material other than bronze?**

**A:** No. The design of the official State plaque is copyrighted, including the material.

**Q: I own the property where a California Historical Landmark is located. Can I put up my own plaque?**

**A:** Yes. Property owners may place any plaque on their property.

**Q: Who do I contact to get an official State plaque?**

**A:** Official plaques are ordered through the Office of Historic Preservation. Contact the Registration Unit at (916) 445-7000.

**Q: Who pays for an official State plaque?**

**A:** An official plaque is paid for using private funds. The State does not pay for plaques.

**Q: Do I need the owner's permission to put up a plaque for a California Historical Landmark?**

**A:** Yes, a written letter of permission from the legal property owner is required to put up a plaque.

**Q: How do I order an official State plaque?**

**A:** If the property is already a registered California Historical Landmark numbered 770 or higher, the plaque may be ordered through the Office of Historic Preservation. First, check the website for the official list of landmarks. If it is a registered landmark numbered 770 or higher, applicants must submit the proposed plaque text for OHP approval. Upon approval, the applicant submits a deposit for the cost of the plaque to the foundry. When the plaque is ready, it is shipped to the applicant in accordance with instructions previously received, and the applicant is billed for the unpaid balance including shipping charge.

**Q: Can you recommend a foundry?**

**A:** State offices may not recommend a specific vendor. More information about plaques, including a list of vendors, is available on our website at [http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1056](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1056).

**Q: How much do official State plaques cost?**

**A:** As of July 2014, official plaques from one of the listed vendors cost \$3,275 plus any applicable state tax and a \$175 crating/shipping charge. A \$1,500 deposit is required at the time of order. Other vendors may have different charges and payment arrangements.

**Q: What if the Landmark number is lower than #770? Can I order an official State plaque?**

**A:** Beginning in January 1962, with Landmark #770, the current criteria were adopted in judging the merits of Landmark applications. A request for a plaque for Landmarks registered through #769 triggers a re-examination using the current evaluation criteria. Applicants must contact the Registration Unit who will determine if the existing information is sufficient. If it is, then the request is placed on the agenda of the State Historical Resources Commission for action.

**Q: What if the information is determined insufficient? Can I still get an official State plaque?**

**A:** If OHP staff determine the existing information does not meet today's standards written notice is sent to the applicant requesting supplemental research and a report with documentation equivalent to that required of a new Landmark application. If the supplemental information is sufficient, the request is placed on the agenda of the State Historical Resources Commission for action. If the supplemental information is insufficient and the Landmark fails to meet the current criteria, the plaque request is denied by OHP.

**Q: Why does OHP have to approve the text of official State plaques?**

**A:** The text is reviewed for historical accuracy, grammar, style, and readability.

**Q: Can I move an official State plaque?**

**A:** Requests to move plaques must be accompanied by approval from the existing property owner and the property owner of the proposed location. Requests should be made in writing and sent to the Registration Unit at OHP. The letter should state the reason for the move, the current location, the new location and a map clearly marking these locations. OHP will respond in writing of its decision.

**Q: Will the State pay for relocating the official State plaque and its base?**

**A:** No, moving a plaque and its base is paid for with private funds.

**Q: If my plaque isn't an official State plaque, can I still move it?**

**A:** Unofficial plaques may be moved without permission from OHP. However, we encourage you to obtain the property owner's approval prior to moving a plaque.

**Q: What if the plaque is damaged or stolen? Can a replacement plaque be ordered?**

**A:** Yes, an official State plaque may be replaced and ordered through the Office of Historic Preservation. The cost for the replacement is not paid by the State. Please remember that for replacement plaques for Landmarks registered through #769 the documentation must meet today's registration standards.

**Q: Do I contact the Office of Historic Preservation if I discover that a plaque has been damaged or stolen?**

**A:** You may contact the Registration Unit. We will update our files with the new information.

**Q: Does the State organize plaque dedication ceremonies?**

**A:** No. Dedication ceremonies are organized, funded, and conducted by private persons and/or organizations. Invitations to the members of the State Historical Resources Commission should be sent to: Office of Historic Preservation, 1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, California 5816-7100.