



INSTRUCTIONS FOR LOCAL OPTION PETITIONER CIRCULATORS

“Local option petition drives do not complete themselves. Voter signature collection requires long hours, hard work and attention to detail.

Once completed, your business has an opportunity to flourish...”

field resource management, inc.

Instructions for Local Liquor Option Petition Circulators

NOTE: Please Read Carefully BEFORE Gathering Signatures.

All signatures gathered are validated by comparing the actual signature on the official voter registration card with the signature on the petition.

PETITION FRAUD IS A FELONY OF THE FIFTH DEGREE.

Since the initiative petition is a **LEGAL DOCUMENT**, there are a few things you should know before you begin.

Please thoroughly read these guidelines to minimize the number of **invalid** signatures you collect. There are many reasons for ruling a signature invalid. Most are correctable at the time the signature is gathered. An understanding of the process will help to maximize your efforts.

Your success is directly related to the number of **VALID** voter signatures you can collect. Signatures which do not meet the guidelines below should be considered **INVALID**. Many of the guidelines listed are much stricter than the guidelines listed in the Revised Code. However, your goal is to produce a “flawless” and “unchallengeable” petition to guarantee ballot placement of the Sunday sales local option question.

All petition drives should be approached from the notion that the petition paper itself is **NEUTRAL**. That is, voter participation - by signing the petition - does not commit the signer to a position of **FAVORING** or **OPPOSING** the issue(s) to be submitted. Rather, the petition **MERELY** requests the question be submitted to a vote of the precinct’s registered voters. Nothing more and nothing less. With that said, there are a few;

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN GATHERING VOTER SIGNATURES:

It is the circulator’s responsibility to determine **IF** someone is a registered voter. Determining whether someone is registered will be a relatively simple process for this petition drive. There are **ONLY 2** rules to follow in determining the eligibility of someone to sign the petitions:

- FIRST:** Locate the voters name on the list of registered voters provided, **and/or**;
- SECOND:** if you can’t locate their name, have the potential signer complete a new voter registration form.

ANY SIGNATURE YOU COLLECT THAT DOESN'T FIT INTO EITHER THE FIRST OR SECOND SITUATION ABOVE SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED A VALID VOTER SIGNATURE WHEN CALCULATING THE TOTAL SIGNATURES YOU HAVE COLLECTED.

WHY???

BECAUSE 9 TIMES OUT OF 10 THESE SIGNATURES WILL PROVE TO BE INVALID.

Other things for you to consider while gathering signatures are listed below. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in NUMEROUS invalid signatures on the petitions. **Keep in mind that just because a person is a registered voter doesn't mean their signature will be VALID. The petitions MUST be signed correctly in order for the signature to be considered valid by the boards of election.*

1. **ONLY VOTERS REGISTERED WITHIN THE SINGLE PRECINCT ON YOUR LIST MAY SIGN.**

Anyone who lives OR is registered outside of the precinct is INELIGIBLE and MAY NOT sign the petition.

2. **SIGNATURES MUST BE WRITTEN.**

Printed Signatures are not valid, nor are signatures written in PENCIL. If a signer insists that he/she prints their signature, simply ask them to write their name -- in cursive -- above their printed name. They may print their signature now on other legal forms but chances are when they registered to vote, they signed their voter registration card. If they refuse and insist that they always print their legal name, thank them for signing and leave it alone. HOWEVER, do not count the signature in your overall tally of valid signatures. Chances are the printed signature will not be valid, but it may hold and be counted.

The bottom line is this: *Question anyone who prints and have them Sign their name.*

3. **EVERYONE MUST SIGN FOR THEMSELVES.**

The circulator of a petition **may not** allow someone to sign a petition who they know is not qualified. This means that if you ALLOW John Smith to sign his wife Thelma's name to the petition, you -- the circulator, is in violation of the law. A husband **CANNOT** sign for his wife and vice versa. Nor can anyone else sign for another. This doesn't mean you must check someone's driver's license before you allow them to sign. However, it does mean that IF you ALLOW someone to sign their roommate's name or their brother's name or whomever -- you're in violation of election law.

If you tell someone they CAN'T sign another's name and they sign it anyway, simply ~~*strike through the signature with a single line all the way through the entire signature line.*~~ This automatically invalidates the signature and has the same effect of the signature never appearing on the petition.

4. **THE CIRCULATOR (You) MUST WITNESS THE SIGNATURE OF EVERY VOTER WHO SIGNS YOUR PETITION.**

Circulators **MUST** watch the individual voter sign the petition. **DO NOT** allow a voter to take the petition into their house, or somehow out of your line of sight to sign. If they do, simply ask them to re-sign above their signature. From time to time this will happen, especially in the case of someone very supportive, old or in bad weather. They will

simply walk into the house to have their spouse sign or sit down while they're signing, or simply close the door on you while they sign. Just inform them of the law when they return. They'll appreciate your attention to detail and be much more trusting if you have to come back for voters who were not at home.

5. **VOTERS MUST PLACE THE DATE OF SIGNING IN THE DATE COLUMN.**

Ohio law REQUIRES the signer of a petition to affix the date of signing on the petition in the appropriate date column. Signatures without dates or with incorrect dates are invalid. **DATE OF SIGNING SHOULD BE IN SEQUENCE.** The date each voter signs the petition, including the year, must be written in ascending order (i.e. August 5th, 6thth, 7th, etc.) It is difficult to have the first 6 signers on a petition sign on August 10, 2017 then have the 7th signer sign on August 8, 2017. This scenario will occur if the circulator is not vigilant. Always check the date on the petition to make sure it is correct after a voter signs. If it's incorrect, simply have them correct it.

6. **SIGNATURES MUST BE LEGIBLE.**

If you cannot read the signature, chances are the board of elections won't be able to read it either. Have the voter print his/her name above their written or cursive signature. Doctors, lawyers, and many professional executives are notorious for having illegible autographs. If they print their name above their signature the board of elections will immediately go to the voter card and verify the signature's validity. If they don't, the board will immediately invalidate the signature as being illegible.

7. **DO NOT SIGN ANYONE'S NAME.**

Make no mistake, the petitions WILL BE SCRUTINIZED very thoroughly during the voter signature verification process by the board of elections. If a circulator signs someone's name or allows someone else to sign for another person it will most certainly be discovered as a *FORGERY* which will not only invalidate the entire part-petition paper, but it may open you as the circulator up to prosecution for *ELECTION FALSIFICATION*. Legally, a voter *MAY NOT* give you permission to sign their name. Don't be fooled if someone says, "Go ahead and sign my name." This is not permitted under Ohio law.

8. **ASK EACH SIGNER TO FILL-OUT THE PETITION COMPLETELY AS THEY ARE SIGNING.**

DON'T allow signers to use ***DITTO MARKS*** or ***First initials***

9. **EACH SIGNER'S ADDRESS MUST MATCH THE ADDRESS ON FILE WITH THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS.**

10.

The address at which he/she (the signer) is registered to vote is the only VALID ADDRESS that can be used. Rely on the voter registration list for this information. This information matches the computer database at the board of elections. If someone insists on placing a different address instead of their current address -- ASK them to complete a new voter registration card. If they refuse and have signed the petition, simply cross out the signature with a single line. ONLY voters who are registered in the actual precinct you are canvassing are eligible to sign the petition. All other signatures will be ruled INVALID.

11. **ONLY ONE PERSON MAY CIRCULATE EACH PART-PETITION.**

You ***MAY NOT*** pass a petition partially then allow someone else to complete the part-petition. One individual must personally *WITNESS* each signature on each part-petition. There is no limit to the number of part-petitions which may be filed. Even if a petition contains 1 voter signature that petition must be completed by the person who *WITNESSED* the affixing of that single signature to that particular part-petition.

12. YOU MUST SIGN THE LAST PAGE OF THE PETITION AS THE CIRCULATOR.

The circulator statement on the last page must be signed before the petition can be considered **VALID**. Failure to sign the statement on the back of the petitions will render the petition paper INVALID. This statement attests that you **WITNESSED** each signature and that to the best of your knowledge, each signer was qualified to sign and each signature is **GENUINE**. Again, if you fail to complete the statement on the back of the petition, all signatures will be ruled **INVALID**. It is important that circulators **PRINT** their NAME as the circulator on the back page before collecting any signatures on the petition. That way you will not inadvertently sign a petition you did not circulate. Do Not Sign the Back Of A Petition That You Did Not Circulate.

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I, *Dick Collins* declare, under penalty of election falsification, that I reside at the address appearing below my signature; that I am the circulator of the foregoing petition containing 22 signatures; that I witnessed the affixing of every signature; that all signers were to the best of my knowledge and belief qualified to sign; and that every signature is to the best of my knowledge and belief the signature of the person whose signature it purports to be.

WHOEVER COMMITS ELECTION FALSIFICATION IS GUILTY OF A FELONY OF THE FIFTH DEGREE

Dick Collins
(Signature of Circulator)
18915 Detroit St. 4420
(Street and Number or Rural Route)
Caledonia, OH. 44207
(City or Village, State and Zip Code)

THE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES WRITTEN IN THE CIRCULATOR'S STATEMENT MUST MATCH THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL SIGNATURES ON THE PETITION.

Be very accurate! If there is a greater number of actual signatures on the petition than is listed in the circulator statement, the entire part-petition will be ruled **INVALID**. If you cross off a name or someone else crosses off their own name after they sign the petition, this will have the same effect as their name never appearing on the petition. **DO NOT COUNT CROSSED OUT SIGNATURES in your total.**

Registration Lists:

When circulating petitions door-to-door always use the current list of registered voters you were given. **KEEP IN MIND THAT PEOPLE MOVE** and one of the last things they take care of is their change of registration. The list will not be completely accurate. However, if you rely on the list you'll find - for the most part - that voters on the list will also be on file with the board of elections.

Likewise, you'll find that almost all those nice people insisting they *are* registered but *do not* appear on the list are, in fact not registered to vote at that address. Any voter who does not appear on the voter list **MUST** complete a voter registration card to sign the petition.

Keep good track of where you have been within the precinct by marking the voter file. **PLEASE** mark a (+) or a (-) on the voter list next to each voter's name that has allowed you to explain the issue and/or signed the petition. This will allow you to re-canvass areas to reach you signature goals. **If you do not talk to anyone at a house, don't mark the list.**

SUGGESTED DOOR APPROACH *for Grocery Stores*

Hi! [ask for selected voter from list] My name is _____, and I'm circulating a petition for (use clients name) to place an issue on the ballot to allow customers to purchase [beer, and/or wine, and/or liquor products] along with the rest of their grocery items like most other stores on Sundays. I need your signature to allow a vote on this? **[Hand potential signer the clipboard and petition]**

SAY NO MORE UNTIL THE VOTER ASKS QUESTIONS!

SUGGESTED DOOR APPROACH *for Restaurants*

Hi! **[ask for selected voter from list]** My name is _____, and I'm circulating a petition for (use clients name) to place an issue on the ballot to allow their customers to order a glass of wine or a mixed drink with their meal when they open for lunch on Sundays like most other businesses. I need your signature to allow a vote on this? **[Hand potential signer the clipboard and petition]**

SAY NO MORE UNTIL THE VOTER ASKS QUESTIONS!

Note: The door approach above is merely a suggestion. You are free to say whatever you are comfortable with as long as there is no **MISREPRESENTATION of the facts** and the effect of the petition. In other words, you cannot tell a potential signer who opposes liquor sales that the petition is to ban liquor sales. While it could have that effect, it is not designed to REMOVE sales that currently DO NOT EXIST! Also, do not make up an answer to get a signature. Tell the potential signer that you don't know the answer but would be happy to find out and get back with them the next time you are in the area. DO NOT LEAVE VOTERS CONFUSED.

Typical Questions & Suggested Responses:

IF YOUR BUSINESS CURRENTLY HOLDS A SUNDAY SALES D6 LICENSE YOU CAN BEGIN SALES ON SUNDAYS AT 11:00 A.M. THESE ISSUES ALLOW SALES TO BEGIN AT 10:00 AM.

Q. Why are you doing this? Can't you just go buy a license?

A. I wish it were that simple. In Ohio, before the state can issue a license for us to sell these products voters must first approve of the sale. That's why we need you to sign the petition to allow a vote.

Q. Are they dry for sale? I don't mind if you sell but I don't want it anywhere else. Is this just for you or will others be allowed to sell?

A. This issue allows a vote for _____ ONLY. If voters approve, we can begin sales at 10:00 am instead of 11:00 am. This is just a small extension.

Q. Won't this add to problems like drunk driving and access of liquor to kids?

A. Not at all. In fact this doesn't have anything to do with drunk driving, and it's already against the law to sell to minors. This is a business issue that will allow us to be a little more competitive with everything from convenience to pricing.