

Ramsey County Elections

General Procedures for Inspection of Petitions

1. Count and consecutively number the pages of the petition in front of the person submitting it. Briefly explain the process to be used to inspect the petition. Prepare a receipt, which is signed by both the person submitting the petition and the filing officer. Give the receipt to the person submitting the petition and keep a copy with the petition. The receipt will contain the following information. (Minn. R. 8205.1040, subps 3, 4):
 - a. Name, address, phone number and email address of petitioner
 - b. Type of petition
 - c. Date the petition is submitted for inspection
 - d. Date by which petition inspection will be completed; the verification of a petition must be completed as soon as practicable but no later than ten working days after the day on which the petition was filed.
 - e. Acknowledgement by the petitioner of the process that will be used to inspect the petition
 - f. Acknowledgment by the petitioner of the number of petition pages submitted for inspection
2. Note that the petition must comply with the appropriate laws. Election officials must be able to determine compliance solely from the information provided on the face of the petition.
3. The same day that the petition is submitted, save to pdf a copy of the public information list from the Statewide Voter Registration System (“SVRS”) for the jurisdiction that is the subject of the petition. Alternatively, if the petition is large enough to require more than one team to inspect it, the copy of the public information list can be saved from the SVRS in the Excel spreadsheet format, to permit the data to be sorted. If a spreadsheet is used, delete the data not relevant to the petition inspection. This will be the list of voters used to inspect the petition.
4. The number of valid signatures needed on the petition is provided by law and varies by the type of petition being submitted. It will be necessary to check the

appropriate state law, ordinance, or charter provision to determine the number needed.

5. For archival purposes, scan both the petition and the SVRS public information list used to inspect the petition.
6. Staff members and/or election judges will work in teams of two to inspect the petition. Each team should work on no more than 50 petition pages at a time. One person will read from the petition; the other will verify that information by reviewing the public information list. Each team will maintain an inspection log to record information on rejected signatures.
7. Check the face of the petition to ensure that each page complies with Minn. R. 8205.1010, subp 2:
 - a. A petition must be prepared on paper no larger than 8-1/2 inches wide and 14 inches long. The signer's oath and the signature lines must be on the same side of the paper.
 - b. The language on the petition must be printed in no smaller than 10-point type.
 - c. Each petition page must have a short title describing the purpose of the petition.
 - d. Each petition page must have a statement summarizing the purpose of the petition.
 - e. If the purpose of the petition is to put a question on the ballot, each petition page may have a statement of 75 words or less summarizing the ballot question.
 - f. Each petition page must have a signer's oath in no smaller than 12-point bold type. If the form of the signer's oath is not specified by statute, the following oath must be used: "I swear (or affirm) that I know the contents and purpose of this petition and that I signed this petition only once and of my own free will."
 - g. Each petition page must include the following statement immediately above the signature lines: "All information must be filled in by person(s) signing the petition unless disability prevents the person(s) from doing so."

13. If the petition requires that the signers be eligible and registered to vote for the candidate or ballot question that is the subject of the petition (Minn. R. 8205.1030, subp 2):
 - a. Check the voter's printed name and make sure it is legible. The last name on the petition must match the last name on the public information list exactly. Nicknames or initials for the first name may be accepted if the remainder of the information provided by the signer on the petition enables you to clearly match the signer with a voter record on the public information list.
 - b. Check the year of birth to ensure that each signer is at least 18 years of age. The year of birth provided on the petition must be an exact match with the year of birth provided in the voter record on the public information list. The year of birth should include four digits.
 - c. Check the address to ensure that the signer resides in the jurisdiction that is the subject of the petition. The address provided by the signer on the petition must match the address in the voter record on the public information list. A signature can be accepted if the address does not include a discrete apartment or unit number.
14. Make a small 'x' mark next to the signature line number for each line that does not have the information required (use red pen). Note on the inspection log the page and line number of the signature not counted and describe in detail the defect.
15. Count the number of signature lines that meet the legal criteria. Write this number on the lower right-hand corner of the petition form (use red pen). Each member of the inspection team will write their initials in the lower left-hand corner of each page inspected.
16. When the minimum number of valid signatures required has been verified, the inspection process can stop. (Minn. R. 8205.1050, subp 2.)
17. Complete the petition inspection form, indicating whether the petition is sufficient or not sufficient.
18. Place the inspected petition in the files along with the public information list used to inspect the petition. The petition, the public information list and the inspection log are all available for public inspection.

19. Send the petitioner a letter indicating the sufficiency of the petition. If the petition is insufficient, include a report that describes the page, line number, and defect of the signatures not counted. Also include the date by which additional signatures can be submitted for inspection, if permitted by law.

5-15-18