

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PETITION PAGES

- 1. Are abbreviations allowed on petitions?**
Standard abbreviations may be used in writing the resident's address, including the street number.
- 2. What name should the voter use when signing a petition?**
The voter should sign the petition as he is registered to vote. Example - The signature for James Smith should not appear on the petition as Jim Smith, however, signing with a nickname will not invalidate the signature, provided the voter can be identified.
- 3. May a petition once filed be changed?**
No. A petition once filed may not be added to or altered. However, the receipt for filing the Statement of Economic Interests may be filed at any time during the filing period. [10 ILCS 5/7-10, 7-12, 10-4, 10-5]
- 4. Are pencil signatures allowed?**
Yes. However, dark ink is preferable.
- 5. Who can remove a name from a nomination petition?**
Only the circulator or the candidate on whose behalf the petition was circulated may strike the signature. [10 ILCS 5/7-10 and 10-3] However, an individual can submit a written request with the election authority or the local election official to have his/her name removed before the petition is filed.
- 6. May a voter sign a petition for someone else?**
No. A registered voter must sign the petition in his own person. He may not sign for someone else, such as another member of his or her own family. [10 ILCS 5/7-10, 10-4]

CIRCULATOR

- 1. May a candidate circulate his own petitions?**
Yes.
- 2. May a circulator circulate petitions for an independent candidate and a partisan candidate, or for more than one political party?**
No person shall circulate or certify petitions for candidates of more than one political party, or for an independent candidate or candidates in addition to one political party, to be voted upon at the next primary or general election, or for such candidates and parties with respect to the same political subdivision at the next consolidated election. [10 ILCS 5/10-4]
- 3. Does the circulator have to be a registered voter?**
A petition circulator must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years of age or 17 years of age on the date of the immediately following general or consolidated election, and otherwise qualified to vote. (See page 14, item 2a.) [10 ILCS 5/7-10]
- 4. May a circulator sign as a voter on the petition he is circulating?**
Yes, if he/she is a registered voter of the political subdivision in which the candidate is seeking office.

- 5. When can the circulator start collecting signatures?**
No more than 90 days prior to the last day for filing petitions (see page iv)
[10 ILCS 5/7-10, 8-8, 10-4]

NOTARIZATION

- 1. Is it proper for the notary of the petition to have signed the same petition as a voter?**
It has not been definitely determined whether a notary may also be a signatory to a petition. Some electoral boards and Circuit Courts have upheld petitions where the notary was also a signer of the petition, but the issue has not yet been decided by the Supreme Court or any Appellate Court in Illinois. A cautious candidate would avoid using a petition signer as the notary for that petition so as to avoid the risk of having to defend against an objection on this issue.
- 2. Must the notary put the date of his commission expiration on the document?**
Yes, the notary stamp indicates the date the commission expires.
- 3. Must the notary public live in the same county as the candidate?**
No, but the notary must be authorized to administer oaths in the place where the notary act is performed.

FILING PETITIONS

- 1. May a candidate file more than one set of petitions for the same office?**
Yes. However, upon notice from the filing office the candidate must make a selection in writing to the filing office; otherwise, the set of petitions filed first will be considered the official filing.
- 2. When are petitions open to the public?**
Upon their filing with the proper office and at the earliest convenience of that office. Once filed, a petition is available for public inspection.
- 3. Does a candidate have to file his or her own petition?**
No. A candidate may choose someone to file the petition on their behalf.
- 4. May a candidate file his own petition and petitions for other candidates at the same time?**
Yes.
- 5. When may petitions be mailed?**
There are no statutory requirements regarding a time element for mailing petitions; however, all petitions that are received by the office prior to the first day of the filing period will be returned to the sender. Petitions received after the end of the filing period, regardless of postmark, will not be accepted.
- 6. May a candidate file for more than one office?**
Yes, however, he must withdraw from all but one office within five business days following the last day of petition filing, if the offices are incompatible. If he does not withdraw from all but one incompatible office, his name will not be certified for any office.[10 ILCS 5/7-12(9)]

7. Who has to file a complete slate of candidates?

Persons wishing to form a New Political Party in a given jurisdiction must file a petition containing the names of candidates for EACH office to be filled for that jurisdiction.

[10 ILCS 5/10-2]

8. May a petition contain the names of two or more candidates of the same established party?

Yes. An established political party petition may contain the names of candidates for several offices to be filled at the upcoming election. The nominating papers must contain a separate statement of candidacy signed by each candidate and a receipt for the filing of a statement of economic interests by each candidate. The Loyalty Oath is optional.

9. If you are first in line or your petition is in the first mail pickup or delivery on the first day of filing, will you be first on the ballot?

Not necessarily. If there are two or more candidates in line prior to the opening of the office filing for the same party and the same office, they will be considered as filing simultaneously along with any petition in the first mail pickup or delivery and will be involved in a lottery for ballot position.

[10 ILCS 5/7-12(6), 10-6.2]

NOTE: Candidates who file petitions during the last hour of filing (between 4PM and 5PM) on the last day to file petitions are also eligible for a lottery to determine the final ballot position.

10. May a candidate file as an Independent for a school office?

No. "Independents" run in partisan elections but choose not to associate with a political party, so the word "independent" identifies them on the ballot label. All candidates for school offices run on a "nonpartisan" basis.