



STATE OF MICHIGAN
BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
LANSING

April 2021

NEW POLITICAL PARTY QUALIFICATION
NOVEMBER 8, 2022 GENERAL ELECTION

New political parties are required to gather petition signatures to gain ballot access in Michigan. The following political parties are currently qualified to appear on the ballot in the 2021-2022 election cycle:

Democratic Party
Republican Party
Libertarian Party
US Taxpayers Party

Green Party
Natural Law Party
Working Class Party

Petition Format: The required format for a new political party petition is governed by [MCL 168.685](#) and includes the following:

- The petition form must be 8½ by 13 inches in size with text arranged horizontally.
- The phrase, "Petition to Form New Political Party" and proposed name of the party must be printed in the heading of the petition in 24-point boldface type.
- The text of the warning statement must be printed in 12-point boldface type:
"Warning: A person who knowingly signs petitions to organize more than 1 new state political party, signs a petition to organize a new state political party more than once, or signs a name other than his or her own is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law."

Additionally, petition forms may be circulated on a countywide or city/township basis, meaning signers must be registered to vote within the county or city/township listed in the heading of the petition.

If circulating on a **countywide** form, the heading of the petition must include the following statement in 8-point type:

We, the undersigned, duly registered electors of the county of _____, state of Michigan, residing at the places set opposite our names, respectfully request the secretary of state, in accordance with section 685 of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.685, to place the names of the candidates of the _____ party on the ballot at the _____ election.

If circulating on a **city/township** form, the signature side of the petition must include the following statement in 8-point type:

We, the undersigned, duly registered electors of the
city _____ (Strike one)
township _____, county of _____,
state of Michigan, residing at the places set opposite our names, respectfully request the secretary of state, in
accordance with section 685 of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.685, to place the names of
the candidates of the _____ party on the ballot at the _____
_____ election.

Identification of Petition Sponsor: The petition sheet must include the name and address of the person, group or organization paying for the printing of the petition form, in 8-point type, preceded by the words: “Paid for with regulated funds by _____.” MCL 169.247.

Optional Pre-Approval of Petition Format: Sponsors of new political party petitions are strongly encouraged to submit proof copies of the petition to the Board of State Canvassers (Board) for pre-approval of the form prior to gathering signatures. The Board requires sponsors to submit a Printer’s Affidavit with 15 proof copies of the petition when seeking pre-approval of the petition format.

Best Practice: Although Michigan election law does not require the sponsor of a new political party petition to seek pre-approval of the petition form, such approval greatly reduces the risk that signatures collected on the form will be ruled invalid due to formatting defects.

The Printer’s Affidavit and an example Petition to Form New Political Party are provided below.

FILING INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRE-APPROVAL:

1. Complete and sign the attached PRINTER’S AFFIDAVIT in the presence of a notary public and attach 15 proof copies of the petition. Materials must be sent to the Board of State Canvassers in care of the Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 430 West Allegan Street, 1st Floor, Lansing, Michigan 48918. This address may be used for hand delivery, overnight delivery, or U.S. Mail.
2. Email a pdf of the petition to Elections@Michigan.gov. In the subject line of the email message, please indicate, “BSC – Petition Attached.”
3. File final proof copies of petition sheets to be circulated, reflecting all necessary changes identified through the staff consultation process, at least 48 hours prior to the Board of State Canvassers meeting at which the petition is scheduled to be considered. If the petition sponsor fails to timely file all the required materials, the petition will not be placed on the meeting agenda.

Minimum Number of Valid Signatures Required: The number of valid signatures required is 42,506, which equals “not less than 1 percent of the total number of votes cast for all candidates for governor at the last election in which a governor was elected.” MCL 168.685(1). At the November 6, 2018 general election, 4,250,585 votes were cast for all candidates seeking the office of Governor. Note, once signed petition forms are submitted, additional signatures cannot be added to the filing.

Best practices:

1. Petition sponsors are strongly encouraged to gather and submit a significant number of signatures over the minimum required due to the likelihood that some petition signer entries or whole petition sheets may be found invalid during the verification process.
2. Sponsors are urged to check petition signers’ registration status, address, and city or township of registration against the Qualified Voter File (QVF) prior to filing. To obtain a copy of the QVF, follow the instructions on the [Qualified Voter File Data Request Form](#).

Circulation Period: Signatures may be gathered for up to 180 days immediately preceding the date of filing. In other words, signatures that are more than 180 days old on the date the petition is filed are not valid and will not be counted.

Geographic Distribution of Signatures: The petition must include the signatures of at least 100 registered voters from each of at least ½ of the congressional districts in the state.

Non-Resident Petition Circulators: Michigan election law authorizes the sponsors of new party petitions to hire petition circulators who are not Michigan residents, provided that the nonresident circulators agree to accept the jurisdiction of the State of Michigan and service of process upon the Secretary of State or her designated agent. A nonresident circulator must make a cross or check mark in the box provided on the petition sheet agreeing to these terms, “otherwise each signature on this petition sheet is invalid and the signatures will not be counted by a filing official.” MCL 168.544c(1).

Filing Deadline: July 21, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Filing Location: Michigan Secretary of State, Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 430 West Allegan Street, 1st Floor, Lansing, Michigan 48918. Sponsors must contact the Bureau of Elections at 517-335-3234 to plan for the submission of the petition well in advance of the date of filing.

At the time of filing, the sponsor must submit a certificate signed by the chairperson and secretary of the party’s state central committee indicating the party’s name.

In addition, sponsors will be asked to provide the estimated number of petition sheets and signatures submitted. Please refer to the [Petition Signature Guidance](#) publication for additional information.

Canvass and Challenge Process: A random sampling process is used to determine whether petitions contain enough valid signatures to warrant certification. Random sampling yields two important results: A projection of the number of valid signatures in the entire filing, and the probability that the sample result accurately determined whether the petition contains enough valid signatures (known as the confidence level).

There are two different random sampling options: (1) A single-stage process whereby a relatively large sample is taken (usually 3,000 to 4,000 signatures depending on the percentage of signatures which must be valid in order for the petition to qualify); or (2) A two-stage process where a much smaller sample is drawn (approximately 500 signatures), and the result determines (a) whether there is a sufficient level of confidence to immediately recommend certification or the denial of certification, or (b) if the result indicates a “close call,” a second random sample must be taken (usually 3,000 to 4,000 signatures) to provide a definitive result with the maximum confidence level that can be obtained.

Staff reviews the entire petition filing sheet-by-sheet so that wholly invalid petition sheets can be identified, culled, and excluded from the “universe” of potentially valid signatures from which the random sample is drawn. The total number of potentially valid signatures from the universe is entered into a computer program along with the minimum number of signatures required, the total number of petition sheets in the universe, and the number of signature lines per sheet. The program generates a list of signatures (identified by page and line number) that comprise the random sample.

Copies of signatures selected for the random sample are made available for purchase to petition sponsors, challengers, and the public. The deadline for challenging signatures elapses at 5:00 p.m. on the 10th business day after copies of the sampled signatures are made available to the public. Challenges must identify the page and line number of each challenged signature and describe the basis for the challenge (i.e., signer not registered to vote; signer omitted signature, address, or date of signing; circulator omitted signature, address, or date of signing; etc.). A challenge alleging that the form of the petition does not comply with all legal requirements must describe the alleged defect.

After the random sample is canvassed and any challenges are addressed, a staff report is prepared and released to the public at least two business days before the Board of State Canvassers meets to make a final determination regarding the sufficiency of a petition. The staff report includes an assessment of any challenges and estimate of the total number of valid signatures contained in the filing based on the validity rate.

Governing Provisions of Michigan Election Law: Links to provisions of Michigan election law governing ballot access by new political parties follow:

[MCL 168.532](#)
[MCL 168.534](#)
[MCL 168.544c](#)
[MCL 168.560a](#)
[MCL 168.685](#)

[MCL 168.686](#)
[MCL 168.686a](#)
[MCL 168.686b](#)
[MCL 168.687](#)
[MCL 168.692a](#)

The compiled Michigan election law can also be accessed through the Michigan Legislature website, www.legislature.mi.gov, at this [link](#).

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections at:

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 20126, Lansing, MI 48901-0726

Address for Overnight or Hand Delivery: Richard H. Austin Bldg., 430 W. Allegan,
1st Floor, Lansing, MI 48933

Phone: (517) 335-3234

Web: www.Michigan.gov/Elections

Email: Elections@Michigan.gov

The sponsors of new political party petitions are urged to submit a proof copy of their petition to the Board of State Canvassers for approval as to form prior to the circulation of the petition. When submitting a petition form for approval, the Board requires that this affidavit be attached.

PRINTER'S AFFIDAVIT

I, _____, being duly sworn, depose and say:

1. That I prepared the attached petition proof.
2. That the size of the petition is 8.5 inches by 13 inches.
3. That the words, "PETITION TO FORM A NEW POLITICAL PARTY" and the name of the proposed party are printed in 24-point boldface type.
4. That the words, "We, the undersigned, duly registered electors . . ." are printed in 8-point type.
5. That the two warning statements and language contained therein are printed in 12-point boldface type.
6. That the words, "CIRCULATOR – Do not sign or date . . ." are printed in 12-point boldface type.
7. That the balance of the petition is printed in 8-point type.
8. That the font used in the petition is _____.
9. That to the best of my knowledge and belief, the petition conforms to the petition form standards prescribed by Michigan Election Law.

Printer's Signature

Name of Proposed Political Party

Notary Public, State of Michigan, County of _____.

Acting in the County of _____ (where required).

My commission expires _____.

Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on this ___ day of _____, 20____,

by _____.

Name of Affiant

Signature of Notary Public

Name of Notary Public

PETITION TO FORM NEW POLITICAL PARTY

We, the undersigned, duly registered electors of the county of _____, state of Michigan, residing at the places set opposite our names, respectfully request the secretary of state, in accordance with section 665 of the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 174, MCL 168.665, to receive the certificate and signate accompanying this petition, and place the names of the candidates of the **Working Class Party** on the ballot at the November 8, 2018 election.

WARNING: A PERSON WHO KNOWINGLY SIGNS PETITIONS TO ORGANIZE MORE THAN 1 NEW STATE POLITICAL PARTY, SIGNS A PETITION TO ORGANIZE A NEW STATE POLITICAL PARTY MORE THAN ONCE, OR SIGNS A NAME OTHER THAN HIS OR HER OWN IS VIOLATING THE PROVISIONS OF THE MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW.

INDICATE CITY OR TOWNSHIP IN WHICH REGISTERED TO VOTE	SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING		
					MONTH	DAY	YEAR
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	1.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	2.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	3.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	4.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	5.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	6.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	7.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	8.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	9.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	10.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	11.						
CITY OF _____ TOWNSHIP OF _____	12.						

CERTIFICATE OF CIRCULATOR

The undersigned circulator of the above petition asserts that he or she is 18 years of age or older and a United States citizen; that each signature on the petition was signed in his or her presence; that he or she has neither caused nor permitted a person to sign the petition more than once and has no knowledge of a person signing the petition more than once; and that, to his or her best knowledge and belief, each signature is the genuine signature of the person purporting to sign the petition, the person signing the petition was at the time of signing a qualified registered elector of the city or township indicated preceding the signature, and the elector was qualified to sign the petition.

If the circulator is not a resident of Michigan, the circulator shall make a cross (X) or check mark (✓) in the box provided, otherwise each signature on the petition sheet is invalid and the signature will not be counted by a filing official. By making a cross or check mark in the box provided, the undersigned circulator asserts that he or she is not a resident of Michigan and agrees to accept the jurisdiction of this state for the purpose of any legal proceeding or hearing that concerns a petition sheet executed by the circulator and agrees that legal process served on the Secretary of State or a designated agent of the Secretary of State has the same effect as if personally served on the circulator.

WARNING - A CIRCULATOR KNOWINGLY MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT IN THE ABOVE CERTIFICATE, A PERSON NOT A CIRCULATOR WHO SIGNS AS A CIRCULATOR, OR A PERSON WHO SIGNS A NAME OTHER THAN HIS OR HER OWN AS CIRCULATOR IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR.

Paid for by the Working Class Party, 3026 Gratiot Detroit MI 48213

CIRCULATOR - DO NOT SIGN OR DATE CERTIFICATE UNTIL AFTER CIRCULATING PETITION.

Signature of Circulator _____

Date _____

Printed Name of Circulator _____

Complete Residence Address (Street and Number or Rural Route) Do not enter a post office box _____

City or Township, State, Zip Code _____

County of Registration, if Registered to Vote, of a Circulator who is not a Resident of Michigan _____