Petition Manual:

Statewide Initiative, Referendum, and Constitutional Amendment Petitions

As approved on July 31, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BY THE MICHIGAN BUREAU OF ELECTIONS
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I. Introduction

This manual describes legal requirements and provides guidance to those interested in launching a statewide petition drive to initiate new legislation, amend or repeal existing laws, subject newly-enacted laws to a referendum vote, or amend the state constitution. The manual includes the petition sampling process approved by the Board of State Canvassers on October 20, 2023. In addition to constitutional and statutory requirements, this manual also highlights best practices which, although not legally required, will minimize the risk that an error could disqualify a petition.

The statewide ballot proposal petitioning process is governed by the Michigan Election Law and overseen by the Michigan Secretary of State and the Michigan Board of State Canvassers. Once a petition is filed with the Secretary of State, signatures are subject to a verification process and the Board of State Canvassers determines whether the petition contains sufficient valid signatures to qualify for placement on the ballot.

Changes in this publication from 2024 include:

- Ballot question petition and partisan candidate nominating petition information has been separated into two manuals.
- Updated signature challenge information.
- Reorganization of material and the addition of a section on circulation.
- Updated Bureau of Elections (BOE) contact information.
- Updated filing deadlines and requirements in effect for the current election cycle, which can be found in Appendix A.

If you have any questions regarding this publication, contact the Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections, at 800-292-5973 or File-Canvass@Michigan.gov, or visit our website www.Michigan.gov/Elections. Correspondence may also be mailed or sent via overnight delivery to the Richard H. Austin Building – 1st Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Statewide proposal sponsors are subject to the registration and reporting requirements of the Michigan Campaign Finance Act. For questions regarding these obligations, please refer to the publication, Getting Started as a Ballot Question Committee or email Campaignfinance@Michigan.gov.

II. Petition Format Review Process

Successful petitions often utilize optional approvals and reviews provided by the Board of State Canvassers and the BOE staff.

A. Staff review regarding form requirements

The BOE can provide limited informal review of petitions to offer advice on formatting requirements. As outlined in the following section, a staff review does not constitute formal approval as to form. Due to limits in staff, BOE personnel in the Filing and Canvassing Section will only provide one initial review and one follow-up review. This review will only occur if a sponsor is seeking the Board's approval of the form of the petition.

Please note that staff review includes a review only of whether the petition complies with the technical formatting requirements. The following elements are *not* subject to staff review and are solely the responsibility of the petition sponsor: the substance of the proposal which appears on the petition including correcting typographical errors or spacing; the substance of the summary of the proposal which appears on the signature side of the petition (except as noted below); whether the petition properly identifies provisions of the existing Constitution which may be altered or abrogated by a proposed constitutional amendment; and the manner in which the proposal language is affixed to the petition.

Note that under Michigan election law, if a statewide proposal petition does not comply with all the requirements of the Michigan Election Law, signatures submitted on the petition will be considered invalid and not counted. MCL 168.482a(8).

Best Practice: Petition sponsors are urged to confer with their own legal counsel for advice regarding these aspects of their proposal prior to engaging in the review process.

B. Mandatory pre-circulation petition filing requirement

Proponents of initiative and constitutional amendment petitions are required to submit a copy of their petition (or amended petition) to the Secretary of State prior to circulating the petition. MCL 168.483a. This requirement applies to every petition to initiate legislation or amend the constitution, even if the sponsor does not intend to submit the petition to the Board of

State Canvassers as part of the optional "approval as to form" process (described in section D). Please note, any changes made to the petition after the initial submission to the Secretary of State must be submitted as an amended petition.

Copies of each initiative and constitutional amendment petition submitted in accordance with MCL 168.483a will be posted on the Secretary of State's website, www.Michigan.gov/Elections.

Filing instructions

1. Submit 15 printer's proof copies of the petition. Materials must be sent to the Secretary of State in care of the Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 430 West Allegan Street, 1st Floor, Lansing, Michigan 48933. This address may be used for hand delivery, overnight delivery, or U.S. Mail.
2. Email an electronically generated .pdf of the petition to File-Canvass@Michigan.gov. In the subject line of the email message, please indicate, "483a – Petition Attached."

Campaign Finance Requirements: State level ballot question committees supporting or opposing a statewide ballot proposal must file a petition proposal campaign statement which is triggered upon the filing of the petition form under section 483a. MCL 169.234. The petition proposal campaign statement is due 35 days after the 483a filing.

> ***Best Practice: Petition sponsors should ask the printer of the petition to sign the attached Printer's Affidavit in the presence of a notary public and retain a copy as evidence of compliance with the type size and text requirements of the Michigan Election Law.***

C. Optional pre-circulation process for "approval of the content of the petition summary"

The sponsor may submit the summary of the purpose of the petition to the Board of State Canvassers for approval of the content of the summary, using the procedure described in this section. MCL 168.482b. If the sponsor avails itself of this optional process, a summary of the proposal's purpose stated in not more than 100 words must be prepared by the Director of Elections; the summary will consist of a true and impartial statement in language that does not create prejudice for or against the proposal. MCL 168.482b(2). The summary must also inform signers of the subject matter of the petition but

does not need to be legally precise and must use words having a common everyday meaning to the general public. *Id*.

Best Practice: Petition sponsors should work with BOE Staff to finalize the form of their petition before requesting summary language.

If changes are made to the form or language of the petition after submission for summary language, the process must be restarted.

The summary prepared by the Director of Elections will be presented to the Board of State Canvassers at an open meeting; the Board must approve or reject the content of the summary *within 30 days of its submission* by the petition sponsor. MCL 168.482b(1).

If the Board of State Canvassers approves the summary as prepared by the Director of Elections, the sponsor must print the full text of the approved summary in the heading of the petition and the Board will be barred from considering a subsequent challenge alleging that the summary is misleading or deceptive. *Id*.

Additionally, the Director of Elections and Board of State Canvassers are authorized to draft and approve *ballot language* that differs from the *petition summary* adopted under this procedure. Op Atty Gen No 7310 (May 22, 2019).

> ***Best Practice: Note that due to the legal requirement that the petition sponsor must print the approved petition summary in the heading of the petition and the possibility that the Director of Elections' proposed summary may be modified during the Board meeting, it may not be possible for the petition sponsor to simultaneously obtain "approval of the content of the petition summary" and "approval as to form" at the same Board meeting. The Board may consider providing "conditional" approval as to form with the understanding that the summary will be updated. Sponsors must plan accordingly.***

D. Optional pre-circulation "approval as to form" process

Sponsors of petitions to initiate legislation, amend the constitution, or invoke the right of referendum are urged (but not required) to submit a proof copy of the petition to the Board of State Canvassers for approval as to form prior

to the circulation of the petition. Sponsors should email File-Canvass@Michigan.gov to indicate they are seeking approval as to form.

Upon determining through the staff review process that an initiative or referendum petition is properly formatted, it is submitted to the Board of State Canvassers for approval as to form. The Board's approval process does *not* include a review of the language of the proposed initiated law, constitutional amendment or referendum, the manner in which the proposal language is affixed to the petition, or consideration of whether the petition properly identifies provisions of the existing Constitution which may be altered or abrogated by a proposed constitutional amendment. Furthermore, the Board's approval as to form does *not* include a review of the substance of the summary of the proposal; this does not occur unless the sponsor avails itself of the optional process for approving the content of the petition summary (described above).

Please note, staff reviews regarding compliance with the technical formatting requirements are only available to petition sponsors who intend to participate in this optional approval as to form process. The time it takes to complete the review process will vary depending on the type of petition and complexity of the proposal; sponsors should plan accordingly.

Further, any changes made to the petition after it has been approved as to form by the Board of State Canvassers must be submitted as an amended petition with a newly executed Printer's Affidavit.

> ***Best Practice: Although Michigan Election Law does not require the sponsor of a statewide proposal 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.***

Filing instructions:

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 48933. This address may be used for hand delivery, overnight delivery, or U.S. Mail.
2. Email a pdf of the petition to file-canvass@Michigan.gov. In the subject line of the email message, please indicate, "BSC – Petition Attached."

Specifically indicate in the body of the email if you are seeking approval as to form and the summary language.

3. File final proof copies of petition sheets to be circulated, reflecting all necessary changes identified through the staff review 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.

III. Ballot Question Petition Format Requirements

A. Circulation on a countywide form or city/township form

Petitions proposing an initiated law, constitutional amendment, or referendum of legislation may be circulated on a countywide or city/township form. Op Atty Gen No 7310 (May 22, 2019). (Note: The requirement in 2018 PA 608 related to geographic requirements that required statewide proposal petitions be circulated on a congressional district form was found to be unconstitutional. *League of Women Voters of Mich v Secretary of State*, 508 Mich 520 (2022).)

> ***Best Practice: Countywide forms are strongly recommended. Petition sponsors are strongly encouraged to check the registration status, address, and city or township of registration of petition signers against the Qualified Voter File (QVF) prior to filing. Any petition signer entries found by the sponsor to be invalid may be crossed out prior to filing. Use a pen or pencil to cross out rather than a marker that may bleed through.***
>
> ***To obtain a copy of the QVF, follow the instructions on the Qualified Voter File Data Request Form.***

B. Sheet size

The size of the petition sheet must be 8½ inches by 14 inches. MCL 168.482(1). The petition format must be arranged horizontally (i.e., in landscape layout) on the sheet.

If the full text of the constitutional amendment, legislative proposal or legislation being subjected to a referendum is too lengthy to be printed on the reverse side of the petition sheet, the language of the petition must be continued on a fold over extension on the same sheet of paper, like a map. This is frequently referred to as a "bedsheet petition." The fold over extension must be attached to the sheet at all times from the time the petition is placed into circulation through the time of filing. With the extension folded down and the signature side facing up, the petition must measure 8½ inches by 14 inches in size.

The following examples depict methods for folding maps and can be used as a guide for folding "bedsheet petitions" to comply with the legal-size paper requirement. The blank part of the map represents the signature side of the petition that will lie face-up after folding.

Bi-fold (17 x 14 sheet)	Trifold or Z-fold (25.5 x 14 sheet)	Multi-fold or Accordion fold (34 x 14 sheet)

C. Circulator payment status checkbox

A check box must appear at the top of the petition sheet indicating whether the circulator of the petition is a paid signature gatherer or a volunteer signature gatherer. The statement must be printed in 12-point type on the signature side of the petition sheet. Recommended language is as follows:

The circulator of this petition is a (mark one): ❑ paid signature gatherer ❑ volunteer signature gatherer.

MCL 168.482(7).

D. Circulator compliance statement

A circulator compliance statement must appear at the top of the petition sheet below the circulator payment status checkbox. The statement must be printed in 12-point type on the signature side of the petition sheet:

> If the petition circulator does not comply with all of the requirements of the Michigan Election Law for petition circulators, any signature obtained by that petition circulator on that petition is invalid and will not be counted. MCL 168.482(8)

E. Identification of petition type

One of the following phrases must be printed in capital letters in 14-point boldface type in the heading of each part of the petition (which includes the signature side of the sheet and if applicable, the reverse side):

INITIATIVE PETITION
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION
or
INITIATION OF LEGISLATION
or
REFERENDUM OF LEGISLATION
PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

MCL 168.482(2)

F. Petition summary

A summary of the purpose of the proposal must be printed in 12-point type following the identification of the petition type. MCL 168.482(3). This summary must describe the proposal's purpose and cannot exceed 100 words in length. *Id*.

If preparing a multi-page petition, reprint the summary of the proposal's purpose in 12-point type on the reverse side of the petition sheet, below the identification of petition type.

G. Presentation of proposal

The full text of the proposal must be presented in 8-point type as described in the following list. MCL 168.482(3).

1. **For a petition that fits on a single-sided 8 ½ by 14-inch page, print the full text of the proposal following the summary:** The full text of the proposed initiated law, constitutional amendment, or legislation to be referred must follow the summary and be printed in 8-point type. MCL 168.482(3). For multi-page petitions, see below.
2. **For a multi-page petition, add an instruction for signers to refer to reverse side:** For petitions that require two or more pages, signers should be instructed to refer to the reverse side for the full text of the proposal; this instruction is provided following the summary. The full text of the proposal may be presented in single or dual column format only. Examples include but are not limited the following:

INITIATIVE PETITION EXAMPLES
For the full text of [the law to be amended], see the reverse side of this petition. *[Include the Public Act number, Michigan Compiled Laws citation and title of the law to be amended.]*
For the full text of [the new act], see the reverse side of this petition. *[Include the title of the law to be enacted.]*

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PETITION EXAMPLES
For the full text of proposed [the constitutional provision to be created], see the reverse side of this petition. *[Include the new article and section number for the section to be created.]*
For the full text of proposed [the constitutional provision to be amended], see the reverse side of this petition. *[Include the article and section numbers of the provision to be amended.]*
The full text of the proposal appears on the reverse side of this petition, along with provisions of the existing constitution which would be altered or abrogated if the proposal is adopted.

REFERENDUM PETITION EXAMPLES
For the full text of [the law to be referred], see the reverse side of this petition. *[Include the Public Act number and Michigan Compiled Laws citation of the law to be referred.]*
The full text of the legislation to be referred appears on the reverse side of this petition.

NOTE: See Appendix F for an example of a petition sheet.

3. **Instructions applicable to initiative petitions only:** Include the title of the law to be amended, its Public Act number, and the Michigan Compiled Laws citation(s) for the statute(s) to be amended. This information must be printed in 8-point type on the signature side of the petition sheet and on the reverse side (if applicable), after the summary. Const 1963, art 4, § 24. In addition, the preface of the full text of the proposal must include the phrase, "The People of the State of Michigan enact" Const 1963, art 4, § 23.

4. **Instructions applicable to constitutional amendment petitions only:** Identify and republish the provision(s) of the Michigan Constitution that would be altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted. A petition proposing a constitutional amendment is required to include additional language if it "alters" or "abrogates" an existing provision of the constitution. MCL 168.482(3). The words, "Provisions of existing constitution altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted" must be printed in 8-point type preceding the identification/citation of the provision(s) that would be so affected if the proposal is adopted. *Id*. Additionally, the full text of the provision(s) which would be altered or abrogated must be republished at length. Const 1963, art 12, § 2, MCL 168.482(3).

   A proposal is said to "alter" an existing provision only when the amendment would add to, delete from, or change the existing wording of a provision of the Michigan Constitution. A proposed amendment would "abrogate" (eliminate) an existing provision if it would: first, render that provision or some discrete component of it wholly inoperative, a nullity; or second, become impossible for the proposed amendment to be harmonized with an existing provision of the Michigan Constitution when the proposed amendment and existing provision are read together.

   a. For a constitutional amendment petition that fits on a single-sided 8 ½ by 14-inch page, print the following in 8-point type after the summary: the full text of the proposed amendment, and if applicable, the "Provisions of existing constitution …" clause with the full text of the provision(s) to be altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted.

   b. For a multi-page constitutional amendment petition, do all the following:

i. On the signature side of the sheet, beneath the summary, print in 8-point type the "Provisions of existing constitution …" clause, and a statement instructing the signer to refer to the reverse side of the petition for the full text of the proposal and provisions of the existing constitution which would be altered or abrogated if it is adopted; and

ii. On the reverse side of the sheet, beneath the identification of petition type, print the summary in 12-point type, the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment in 8-point type, the "Provisions of existing constitution …" clause in 8-point type, and republish the full text of the provisions that would be altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted in 8-point type.

Best Practice: Sponsors of petitions to amend the Michigan Constitution are strongly encouraged to seek legal advice for assistance in determining whether the identification and republication requirement applies to their proposals.

5. Instructions applicable to referendum petitions only: The **petition** must include the Public Act number and full text of the law to be referred. A petition to invoke the right of referendum must identify the legislation that is the subject of the referendum vote by its Public Act number. In addition, the full text of the law that is the subject of the petition must be printed in 8-point type.

H. Identification of county or city/township of circulation

A petition to initiate legislation, refer legislation, or amend the Michigan Constitution may be circulated on a countywide or city/township form. Op Atty Gen No. 7310 (May 22, 2019). If circulating on a **countywide** form, the signature side of the petition must include the following statement immediately above the warning to petition signers in 8-point type:

> We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the county of _____, state of Michigan, respectively petition for (amendment to constitution) (initiation of legislation) (referendum of legislation).

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 qualified and registered electors, residents in the

City
Township of } _____, state of Michigan, respectively petition for
STRIKE ONE

(amendment to constitution) (initiation of legislation) (referendum of legislation).

Op Atty Gen No 7310 (May 22, 2019). Also note that under MCL 168.552a(1), "[n]otwithstanding any other provision of this act to the contrary, a petition or a signature is not invalid solely because the designation of city or township has not been made on the petition form if a city and an adjoining township have the same name."

I. Warning to petition signers

A warning to the signers of the petition must be printed in 12-point boldface type, immediately above the signature lines. MCL 168.482(5).

> **WARNING – A person who knowingly signs this petition more than once, signs a name other than his or her own, signs when not a qualified and registered elector, or sets opposite his or her signature on a petition, a date other than the actual date the signature was affixed, is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.**

J. Entry spaces for petition signers

On **countywide** petition forms, the entry spaces for signers must be presented in 8-point type as shown below:

SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING		
					MO	DAY	YEAR
1.							

MCL 168.482(6); MCL 168.544c(1)-(2). Also note that under MCL 168.552a(2), "[n]otwithstanding any other provision of this act to the contrary, if a person who signs a petition uses his or her mailing address on the petition and that mailing address incorporates the political jurisdiction in which the person is registered to vote, that signature shall be counted if the signature is otherwise determined to be genuine and valid under this act."

On **city/township** petition forms, the entry spaces for signers must be presented in 8-point type as shown below:

SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING		
				MONTH	DAY	YEAR
1.						

The minimum number of signature lines is seven (7) and the maximum number is fifteen (15). As any reduction in the number of *lines* provided for signers increases the number of *petition sheets* needed to satisfy the signature requirement, a minimum of seven (7) lines is necessary to assure that the increased volume of petition sheets is not so great as to impede or delay the processing procedure.

K. Certificate of circulator

The following statement shall be printed in 8-point type in the lower left-hand corner of the petition sheet. MCL 168.482(6); MCL 168.544c(1); MCL 168.544d.

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 registered elector of the City or Township indicated following 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 this petition sheet is invalid and the signatures 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.

Best Practice: It is recommended that the check box be printed in boldface type to minimize the likelihood that an out-of-state circulator may inadvertently fail to make the selection.

L. Warning to circulator

A warning to the circulators of the petition must be printed in 12-point boldface type as specified below. MCL 168.482(6); MCL 168.544c(1). The warning must be placed in the lower left-hand corner of the sheet immediately beneath the circulator's statement.

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.

M. Instruction to circulator and space for circulator's signature and residential address

In the lower right-hand corner of the petition sheet, the following circulator instruction must be printed in 12-point boldface type:

> **CIRCULATOR–Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.**

MCL 168.482(6); MCL 168.544c(1)-(2). Immediately beneath this instruction, the entry space for the petition circulator must be presented in 8-point type as shown below:

_____ _____/_____/_____
(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)

N. Identification of petition sponsor

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

O. Extension for instructional or promotional language

During the circulation period, the petition may contain a detachable extension for optional instructional or promotional language. The extended portion of the sheet **must be detached or otherwise removed prior to the filing of the petition**. If a detachable stub or other type of petition sheet extension is used, the sponsor of the petition is solely responsible for the accuracy of the instructional and/or promotional language placed on the extension.

P. Clarification of constitutional amendment, initiated legislation or referendum of legislation

For ease of readability, sponsors are encouraged to follow the ~~strike~~/CAPS format for presenting amendatory language. For example, if the petition offers a constitutional amendment which involves alterations to existing provisions of the State Constitution, the alterations may be presented by showing any language that would be added to the provision or provisions in capital letters and any language that would be deleted from the provision or provisions struck out with a line.

If the petition offers a legislative proposal or a referendum of legislation which involves alterations to existing provisions of Michigan law, the alterations may be presented by showing any language that would be added to the provision or provisions in capital letters and any language that would be deleted from the provision or provisions struck out with a line.

Q. Type size and font

The statutes that govern the form of the petition mandate the use of specific type sizes. The *font* size indicated in some software programs does not always measure the same *type* size. Petition sponsors and printers must exercise caution to ensure that the printed type measures the type size required by law.

> ***Best Practice: Petition sponsors are strongly encouraged to utilize a sans serif font for readability purposes. Examples of such fonts are provided below.***

Arial (14-point type)

Microsoft Sans Serif (14-point type)

Tahoma (14-point type)

Verdana (14-point type)

R. Printer's affidavit

When submitting a statewide initiative, constitutional amendment or referendum petition to the Board of State Canvassers, sponsors must submit a printer's affidavit which details the type size and font used to make the petition. The printer's affidavit must be notarized. A sample printer's affidavit is attached in Appendix H.

S. Prescribed format for initiative, referendum and constitutional amendment petitions on countywide form

Public Act 608 of 2018 eliminated the option for the sponsors of statewide ballot proposals to print and circulate countywide petition forms, and instead required the sponsors to use petition sheets circulated within a single congressional district. However, in *League of Women Voters of Mich v Secretary of State*, 508 Mich 520 (2022), the Michigan Supreme Court concluded that the elimination of the countywide petition form was unconstitutional and unenforceable, and that petition sponsors could choose whether to circulate petition sheets on a countywide or city/township basis.

The Michigan Election Law provides, "Petitions circulated countywide must be on a form prescribed by the secretary of state, which form must be substantially as provided in sections 482, 544a, or 544c, whichever is applicable." MCL 168.544d. Therefore, pursuant to their authority under MCL 168.544d to prescribe the format of a countywide petition form for initiative, referendum, and constitutional amendment petitions, the Secretary of State designates the following petition format as substantially compliant with the requirements of MCL 168.482:

- The format of the petition sheet must be arranged horizontally.
- If the full text of the constitutional amendment, legislative initiative or legislation being subjected to a referendum is too lengthy to be printed on a single petition sheet, the language of the proposal must be continued on a fold over extension on the same sheet of paper.
- If preparing a multi-page petition, the summary of the proposal's purpose must be reprinted in 12-point type on the reverse side of the petition sheet below the identification of petition type. Additionally, the signature side of the petition sheet should include an instruction for signers to refer to the reverse side for the full text of the proposal; this instruction is provided following the summary.

IV. Petition circulation

A. Circulation period

Michigan Election Law states, "The signature on a petition that proposes an amendment to the constitution or is to initiate legislation shall not be counted if the signature was made more than 180 days before the petition is filed with the office of the secretary of state." MCL 168.472a.

A referendum petition is not subject to the 180-day limitation of MCL 168.472a and can be circulated from the date the legislation is enacted into law until the filing deadline imposed under Const 1963, art 2, § 9 (90 days following the final adjournment of the legislative session at which the law was enacted).

B. Law regarding non-resident petition circulators

Michigan Election Law authorizes the sponsors of statewide ballot proposals to utilize 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 their 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). The format of the circulator's certificate is described previously in Section III.

C. Invalidation of signatures if circulator provides false or fraudulent information

Under MCL 168.482a(3), (5):

> "If the circulator of a petition under section 482 provides or uses a false address or provides any fraudulent information on the certificate of circulator, any signature obtained by that circulator on that petition is invalid and must not be counted.
>
> * * *
>
> Any signature obtained on a petition under section 482 that was not signed in the circulator's presence is invalid and must not be counted."

D. Prohibited conduct

It is a misdemeanor for an individual to sign a petition with a name other than their own; make a false statement in a certificate on a petition; sign a petition as a circulator if the individual did not circulate the petition; or sign a name as circulator with a name other than their own. MCL 168.482e(1)-(2). It is a felony to sign a petition with multiple names. MCL 168.482e(3).

If an individual signs a petition in violation of MCL 168.482e, any signature by that individual on the petition is invalid and will not be counted. MCL 168.482e(4).

V. Filing instructions

A. Signature requirements

The minimum numbers of valid signatures required for filing an initiative, referendum, or constitutional amendment petition are listed in the following table. See MCL 168.471; 1963 Const, art 2, § 9; 1963 Const, art 12, § 2.

BALLOT QUESTION TYPE	SIGNATURE REQUIREMENT
Initiative to create new or amend existing legislation	**356,958**
Initiative to amend the State Constitution	**446,198**
Referendum on legislation	**223,099**

The minimum number of valid signatures required for initiatives and referendums is based on the total number of votes cast for all candidates for Governor at the most recent gubernatorial election. Initiative, referendum and constitutional amendment petition sponsors may only submit all the signatures intended to be considered for filing once; supplemental signatures are not permitted to be filed after the initial submission. MCL 168.475(2).

Best Practice: Petition sponsors are strongly encouraged to gather and submit a significant number of signatures exceeding the minimum number required due to the likelihood that some petition signer entries or whole petition sheets may be found invalid during the verification process.

B. Statewide ballot questions filing instructions

Signed statewide initiative, constitutional amendment and referendum petitions are filed with the Michigan Department of State Bureau of Elections, Richard H. Austin Building, 1st Floor, 430 West Allegan Street, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Sponsors must contact the Bureau of Elections at 800-292-5973 to plan for the submission of the petition two business days prior to the applicable filing deadline.

At the time of filing, sponsors will be asked to provide the estimated number of petition sheets and signatures submitted.

To expedite the petition sampling process, petitioners should sort petitions by the number of valid signatures on a sheet. As an example: A box will contain sheets with only one valid signature, another box will contain sheets with two valid signatures, etc. Boxes should have labels indicating the number of valid signatures on the petitions within them.

Petition sheets should not be pre-numbered. The BOE will apply its own sheet numbers in accordance with the Board of State Canvassers approved processes. Petitions may contain unique identifiers placed at the bottom of each petition sheet. Do not place any unique identifier in the top right corner of the petition sheets, and do not cover any mandatory elements.

VI. Board of State Canvassers petition review

Initiative, referendum and constitutional amendment petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State. MCL 168.471. Upon final submission of a petition, the Secretary of State must provide notice to the Board of State Canvassers immediately. MCL 168.475(1). Submission is final when the Bureau has completed any requested initial review and has received 15 paper copies of the petition. "Upon receiving notification of the filing of the petitions, the Board of State Canvassers shall canvass the petitions to ascertain if the petitions have been signed by the requisite number of qualified and registered electors." MCL 168.476(1).

A. Initiative to create new or amend existing legislation

The Board of State Canvassers is required to "make an official declaration of the sufficiency or insufficiency of an initiative petition no later than 100 days before the election at which the proposal is to be submitted." MCL 168.477(1). If the Board of State Canvassers determines that the petition contains enough valid signatures, the state legislature has 40 session days to adopt or reject the proposal; the legislature's failure to enact the proposed initiated law results in the proposal's placement on the ballot at the next statewide general election. Const 1963, art 2, § 9. Article 2, § 9 further provides: "The legislature may reject any measure so proposed by initiative petition and propose a different measure upon the same subject … and in such event both measures shall be submitted … to the electors for approval or rejection at the next general election."

If a majority of the votes cast are in favor of the proposed initiated law and/or any alternative proposal placed on the ballot by the legislature, the measure goes into effect. The Michigan Constitution states: "If two or more measures approved by the electors at the same election conflict, that receiving the highest affirmative vote shall prevail." Const 1963, art 2, § 9. Initiated laws become effective ten days after the date the Board of State Canvassers certifies the official election results. *Id*.

B. Initiative to amend the state constitution

The Board of State Canvassers must make an official determination regarding the sufficiency or insufficiency of a petition to amend the Michigan

Constitution "at least 2 months before the election at which the proposal is to be submitted." MCL 168.477. If the petition is determined by the Board of State Canvassers to contain enough valid signatures, the proposed amendment is placed on ballot at the next statewide general election. 1963 Const, art 12, § 2. If approved by a majority of voters voting on the question, the proposed constitutional amendment goes into effect 45 days following the date of the election at which it was approved. *Id*.

C. Referendum on legislation

The Board of State Canvassers is required to "complete the canvass of a referendum petition within 60 days after the petition is filed with the Secretary of State, except that 1 15-day extension may be granted by the Secretary of State if necessary to complete the canvass." MCL 168.477(2). If the petition contains enough valid signatures as determined by the Board of State Canvassers, the implementation of the law involved is suspended pending the placement of the law on the ballot at the next statewide general election; a majority vote determines whether the law goes into effect. 1963 Const, art 2, § 9, MCL 168.477(2).

D. Challenge process

Statewide initiative, constitutional amendment, and referendum petitions are filed with the Secretary of State. Challenges to submitted petitions must also be filed with the Secretary of State.

Requesting copies of the petition

Copies of a petition may be requested under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), MCL 15.231 *et seq*. In 2023, the BSC approved an electronic scanning and numbering plan that makes the sampling process more efficient and facilitates the fulfillment of FOIA requests quickly and at lower expense for the requestor.

A request should be submitted through the Department's FOIA portal at https://www.michigan.gov/sos/resources/transparency.

Payment can be made through the portal. Petitions requested will be provided through the portal or via thumb drive.

Submitting the challenge

Under the current practice of the Board of State Canvassers, challenges are due 10 business days after the release of the sample. Rebuttals are due as

soon as possible after challenges are received. To be considered at a Board meeting, the Board must receive material at least 48 hours before the meeting. Signature challenges must be presented in a ***notarized document*** and submitted to BOE. **It is strongly encouraged** that challenges be submitted by sending a scanned notarized document by email to MDOS-Canvassers@Michigan.gov.

The challenge **must be received no later than 5 p.m. on the date of the deadline, irrespective of postmark.** Therefore, BOE strongly recommends that challenges submitted close to the deadline be submitted by email or overnight or hand delivery rather than mail.

> ***Best Practice: Challengers should serve a copy of any challenge upon the party being challenged at the same time the challenge is submitted to the Board of State Canvassers.***

Challenge procedure

The challenge must specify each signature being challenged and the reason why the validity of the signature is being questioned. To specify a signature, indicate the sheet number (stamped or written on each sheet) and the line number bearing the signature. To expedite processing, BOE asks that challenges be organized in ***sheet number order*** as opposed to an alphabetical listing of the signers' names or any other organizational format and be contained in an excel or csv file.

> ***Best Practice: The challenge submission should contain rows and columns that refer to the codes used by the Board of State Canvassers in Appendix D as well as a column to track the total number of signatures challenged. The submission should be submitted as an excel spreadsheet to facilitate review. For example:***

# of Signatures challenged	Sheet Number	Line Number	Challenge Reason	Explanation
1	1	4	NR	Voter not registered
2	56	9	IA	Invalid address listed
3	72	1	Date	Voter signed with date of birth

To challenge anything other than specific signatures, a full written description of what is being challenged must be submitted. A challenge must specify the sheet numbers appearing on the petition sheets involved.

VII. Procedure for evaluating petitions

A. Validation of signatures by random sampling, challenge

Procedure

In 1980, the Board of State Canvassers adopted a petition review and sampling procedure to evaluate the validity of signatures on petitions seeking an initiative, referendum, or state constitutional amendment. That process was reaffirmed in 1990. In 2022, BOE hired an outside firm to review the 1980 procedure, including the statistical methods and processes. That review found that the sampling process continues to be sound, but several changes could be made to improve efficiency and accuracy. The improvements recommended in the report are summarized in this manual. A complete description of the entire review and sampling procedure is available in the document: Sampling Procedure for Canvassing Petitions. The Board of State Canvassers approved the recommendations in October 2023.

Upon final submission of petitions, the Bureau will post monthly updates indicating the following statuses: (1) petition signatures submitted, (2) processing petition universe and pulling a sample, (3) processing sample, (4) preparing staff report, (5) staff review final, and (6) board rejected/approved.

Submission is final when the Bureau has completed any requested initial review and has received 15 **paper** copies of the petition.

Sampling

To canvass a petition, BOE staff utilize a single-stage random sampling process. The selection of random signatures is completed utilizing specially designed software. As soon as it is available, BOE staff post online the randomly generated list of sheets and signatures to be sampled, and the total number of sheets and signatures submitted and in the universe. Additional documents are made available in response to requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

The sampled sheets are face reviewed to determine if a circulator error or other issue with the sheet invalidates the entire sheet of signatures. Sample signatures on invalid sheets are considered invalid signatures.

Each sampled signature on valid sheets is then examined to confirm that the signatory is a person registered to vote in Michigan, that the signature on the petition sheet matches the signature contained in the Qualified Voter File (QVF), and that the entry does not contain a fatal defect (See Appendix D: Signature Coding for a list of fatal defects.)

Signatures found to be invalid are reviewed a second time by another BOE staff member. Signatures challenged during the challenge period are reviewed by BOE staff.

BOE staff tally the number of valid/invalid sheets and valid/invalid signatures in the sample. A staff report is drafted for the Board of State Canvassers with statistical analysis and the board makes a recommendation whether to approve or deny the petition for placement on the ballot. The staff report, including the Board-approved statistical analysis, is posted online at least 2 business days before the Board of State Canvassers meets to make a final determination on challenges to and sufficiency of a petition.

B. Petition sheet validity

Imperfections in the petition sheet heading, certificate of circulator, or body of the petition sheet may jeopardize the validity of signatures appearing on the sheet. Ballot question petition format requirements are detailed in Section III.

Defects in the petition heading which render an entire sheet invalid.

If circulating on a countywide form, a petition sheet is invalid if it contains one or more of the following defects in the heading:

- The county of circulation is omitted.
- Two or more counties or a county not located in Michigan are listed.

Defects in the certificate of circulator which render an entire sheet invalid.

A petition sheet is invalid if it contains one or more of the following defects in the circulator's certificate:

- The petition sheet is not signed by the circulator or is signed by more than one circulator.
- The circulator's date of signing is omitted, incomplete or earlier than the date entered by every petition signer.

Note: The petition sheet is invalid if the circulator merely prints their name and fails to sign the petition.

- The circulator's residence address is omitted, incomplete or includes a P.O. Box in place of a street address or rural route.

Note: The circulator's failure to include the correct zip code, by itself, is not a fatal defect.

- Attention nonresident petition circulators: A petition sheet is invalid if the circulator is not a Michigan resident and fails to mark the nonresident box in the certificate of circulator.
- Petition circulator failed to check a box to indicate whether they are a paid circulator or a volunteer circulator.

Other fatal defects that render an entire petition sheet invalid

- Damaged, mutilated or torn petition sheets where any of the mandatory elements (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, signer entries) are illegible or omitted.
- Sheets where any of the mandatory elements (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, signer entries) are obscured or covered by white-out, permanent marker, stickers or other opaque material.

Acceptable sheet variations

The following variations will not cause an entire petition sheet to be rejected:

- The circulator's signature is illegible.
- The circulator prints their name in space provided for the signature and signs in the space for printed name.
- The circulator omits their printed name.
- The circulator enters their cursive signature in space provided for printed name.

- The circulator omits their zip code or enters an incorrect zip code.
- An out-of-state circulator omits the county of registration.
- The circulator is a resident of Michigan and inadvertently checks the out-of-state circulator checkbox and/or writes the name of the Michigan county where he or she is registered to vote.

C. Validity of individual signatures

A signature entry is valid if the voter signs the petition and prints their street address or rural route, city or township where registered to vote, and date of signing. (The signer's omission of their printed name or zip code is an acceptable variation.) Filing officials use the code "R" (registered) for valid entries. A signature is invalid if it contains one or more of the defects or omissions identified by the codes used to mark defects and omissions on petition sheets, shown in Appendix D.

Acceptable signature entries

The following variations are acceptable and will not result in the rejection of an individual signature:

- The signature includes one or more of the signer's initials plus their last name. Acceptable entries include but are not limited to: J. Smith; J.B. Smith; Mrs. J. Jones; A. John Doe.
- The signature is illegible.[1]
- All of the following variations are acceptable: The signer prints their name in space provided for the signature and signs in the space for printed name; signer omits their printed name; signer enters their cursive signature in space provided for printed name.

Note: A signature is invalid if the signer merely prints their name in the space provided for printed name yet fails to sign the petition, and the signature on file is a cursive signature.

See Appendix B: Signature Verification Examples for examples of valid and invalid signatures.

[1] Note, however, that if *all* the personally identifiable information in the petition entry is illegible and cannot be validated (signature, printed name, address, city or township), the signature may be coded as invalid.

- The signer is unable to sign their name and uses a signature stamp (instead of a pen-and-ink signature).
- The signer enters ditto marks in the space(s) provided for address, city or township, zip code or date of signing.
- On the date of signing, the signer was registered to vote in the city or township indicated but at a different street address within the same city or township.
- The signer writes the community's name appearing in their "postal address"[2] in the space for city or township of registration.
- The signer omits their zip code or enters an incorrect zip code.
- The signer writes the name of a village or unincorporated place in the space for city or township of registration.

Example 1: Individuals who are registered to vote in Genesee Township, Richfield Township, and Vienna Township have a Mt. Morris postal address. When signing a countywide petition, these voters may write the name of the township where they are registered to vote or Mt. Morris in the "City or Township" column of the petition sheet, and either entry is valid.

Example 2: Parts of Texas Township are served by the Kalamazoo post office (zip code 49001) while other parts of the township are served by the Mattawan post office (zip code 49071). If a Texas Township registrant writes "Kalamazoo" in the city or township column but his or her postal address is Mattawan, the entry is invalid.

Example 3: A signature is valid if the signer provides the name of an unincorporated place in the place for city or township of registration, and the signer is registered to vote in the township containing that unincorporated place. Examples of unincorporated places include but are not limited to: Hemlock (Saginaw County), Kincheloe (Chippewa County), Lambertville (Monroe County), Okemos (Ingham County), Union Lake (Oakland County), and Walloon Lake (Charlevoix County).

[2] The term "postal address" refers to the name of the local post office. In some instances, the post office name will correspond to the name of the person's city or township, but in other cases, the post office name differs. As a result, the jurisdiction written on the petition may not always correspond to the name of the city or township where the signer is registered to vote. See Usps.com for a list of local post offices by state.

D. Jurisdiction name variations

Abbreviations for jurisdiction names are acceptable if the abbreviation reasonably corresponds to the name of the appropriate city, township, local post office, unincorporated place, or village. Examples of some commonly used abbreviations are listed in Appendix E.

E. Signature verification

Circulators should encourage voters to sign petitions in a way that reasonably resembles the signature given for driver's license/state ID or voter registration purposes, but it is not necessary for the voter's signature to perfectly match the signature on file. When performing their signature verification duties, filing officials should keep in mind that there are numerous legitimate reasons that may explain an apparent mismatch:

- Petition signatures are often written on a clipboard, which may cause the signature to appear more slanted or less precise than the signature on file, or cause breaks or pauses in a cursive signature.
- Petition signatures (or voter registration or pin-pad signatures collected during the driver's license/state ID application process) could have been written in haste.
- A medical condition or advancing age may cause the signature to be different.
- The electronic signature on file may be smaller or larger than the signature given on a petition sheet.
- The signature may have been written using a pen with a finer tip or one with fading ink as compared to the signature on file.

None of these differences will result in the invalidation of the petition signature. **If there are redeeming qualities in the petition signature as compared to the signature on file, the filing official should treat the signature as valid.** Redeeming qualities may include but are not limited to similar distinctive flourishes, more matching features than nonmatching features, and the examples in numbers 1-5 in Appendix B: Signature Verification Examples.

A voter's signature should be considered questionable only if it differs in significant and obvious respects from the signature on file; see examples 6-7 in Appendix B: Signature Verification Examples. Slight dissimilarities should be resolved in favor of the voter whenever possible.

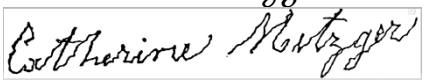
Appendix A: Election Dates and Filing Deadlines

2026 Election Dates

General Election	Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Type of Petition	Signatures Needed	Filing Location	Filing Deadline
Initiative to create new or amend an existing statute	356,958	Michigan Bureau of Elections	5/27/2026 5:00 p.m.
Initiative to amend the State Constitution	446,198	Michigan Bureau of Elections	7/6/2026 5:00 p.m.
Referendum on Legislation	223,099	Michigan Bureau of Elections	90th day following the final adjournment of the legislative session at which the law was enacted, by 5:00pm

Appendix B: Signature Verification Examples

#	Petition Signature Verification Examples	Recommended Result
1.	Signature appears as if voter's hand is trembling or shaking, possibly due to a health condition or advancing age: Catherine Metzger versus 	Valid signature
2.	Only part of the signature matches the signature on file such as only the first letters of the first and last name match, but rest of signature does not match: J. D. versus Jane Doe J. Doe versus Jane Doe	Valid signature
3.	Signature is partially printed but at the same time, partially matches the signature on file: Alice Robinson versus Alice Robinson	Valid signature
4.	Signature is a recognized diminutive of the voter's full legal name: Bill Smith versus William Smith	Valid signature
5.	Signature style has changed slightly over time: Lucinda Jones versus Lucinda Jones	Valid signature
6.	Signature is entirely printed but signature on file is entirely written in cursive: JAMES DAVIS versus James Davis	Questionable signature
7.	Signature differs in multiple, significant and obvious respects: John Hancock vs	Questionable signature
	vs.	Questionable signature

Appendix C: Circulator Best Practices

A: Circulators

Train your petition circulators, whether they are paid or volunteer circulators. Informing petition circulators of the requirements described in this publication can minimize the likelihood that whole petition sheets and individual signatures are rejected. Errors may be averted if circulators take the following actions:

- Write the name of the county of circulation in the heading of the petition and verify with signers that they reside in the county listed.
- Ask potential signers whether they are registered to vote.
- Instruct signers to provide their street address or rural route where they are registered to vote in the column indicated; a P.O. Box is invalid.
- Remind signers to write the date of signing, not their date of birth.
- Review each signer's entry for completeness. If information is omitted, ask the signer to fill in the blank(s).
- Encourage signers to sign in a way that reasonably resembles the signature given for driver's license or voter registration purposes. It is not necessary for the signer's petition signature to be a perfect match with the signature on file. See Appendix B: Signature Verification Examples.
- Once circulation of a petition sheet is complete, ensure that the circulator signs and dates the certificate of circulator properly and provides the required information. If the circulator is not a Michigan resident, he or she must also check the nonresident box in the bottom left corner of the petition sheet and write the name of the county where registered to vote, if any.

If hiring paid circulators, petition sponsors and candidates should research circulator companies and check their work. Candidates and petition sponsors should be sure they are hiring reputable companies or circulators that will collect and submit valid signatures as required by law. Petition sponsors and circulators should review petition sheets collected by

circulators periodically during the collection period to ensure valid signatures are being collected and all required components are accurately completed to maintain signature and petition sheet validity.

B: Crossing county lines

Exercise care when circulating in or near cities and villages that cross county lines.

Several cities and villages in Michigan overlap county boundary lines. When obtaining a signature from a voter who is registered in a city or village that crosses county boundaries, make sure the voter signs the petition sheet that aligns with the signer's county of registration.

C: Quality control

Implement a quality control process before filing the petition. Candidates are strongly encouraged to obtain a copy of the Qualified Voter File (QVF) for pre-filing verification purposes. Any petition signatures found to be invalid during the quality control process (i.e., because the street address or date is omitted) can be crossed out prior to filing; crossed out signatures are excluded when determining the maximum number of signatures filed.

Review all petition sheets prior to filing for completeness, especially the name of the county of circulation and the certificate of circulator.

File enough signatures. Candidates are strongly encouraged to gather and file substantially more signatures than the minimum number required. The number of excess signatures needed will vary depending on the vigorousness of the candidate's quality control process. Even if the petition has been verified by a professional signature gathering firm prior to filing, note that (1) A challenge may be filed against the sufficiency of the nominating or qualifying petition, and (2) There is a likelihood that some signatures or whole petition sheets may be found to be invalid during the canvass process. However, note that there is an upper limit on the maximum number of signatures that may be filed; see MCL 168.544f for further information.

Note: This information is offered as a summary of the provisions governing the validity of petition signatures; it is not a complete description or interpretation of all pertinent laws. Questions may be addressed to: File-Canvass@Michigan.gov.

D: Facilitating efficient review

Submitting petition signatures to facilitate efficient review. The Michigan Board of State Canvassers (BSC) is responsible for canvassing petitions to determine whether a petition has sufficient valid signatures for placement on the ballot. The Michigan Bureau of Elections (BOE) supports the Board in this responsibility by reviewing petition signatures and producing a staff report for the Board's review. The thorough review of petition signatures is a labor intensive and time-consuming process typically requiring as many as 1,900 personnel hours to sort, review, number, count and review the sample for a single petition.

The guidance below is offered to aid petition filers in submitting petition signatures to streamline the review process for placement before the BSC for determination.

- All petition sheets should be unfolded, flattened, and neatly organized.
- If petition sheets contain tear-off sections, tear-off sections must be completely removed prior to submission.
- All petition sheets should be sorted by number of valid signatures per sheet.
- All petition sheets should be sorted into bundles, with consistent numbers of sheets per bundle easily combined into a bundle of 100; for example, 25 or 50 per bundle.
- All bundles should be sorted into boxes, with a consistent number of bundles per box.
- Each box should include cover sheets containing estimates of the number of signatures and pages per box.
- Petition filers should cross out invalid signatures (using a single strikethrough line with a ballpoint pen) and remove wholly invalid signature sheets it has identified prior to submission.

Note: The BOE cannot provide a specific estimate on how long it will take to complete each canvass. These timelines are also affected by staff availability and other responsibilities.

Appendix D: Signature Coding

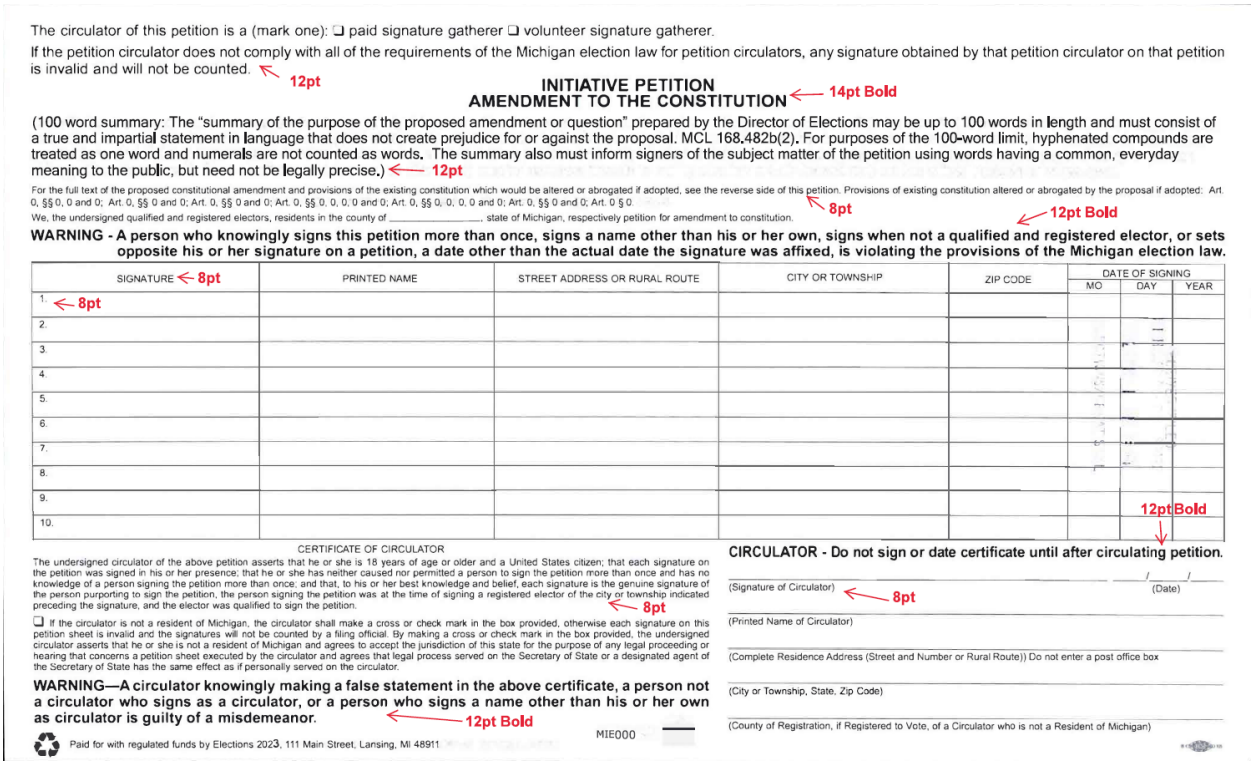
ENTRY CODE	CODE NAME	EXPLANATION
SIGNATURE ERRORS		
CO	Crossed off	Signature was crossed out prior to filing.
DUP	Duplicate	Voter signed petition multiple times, or signed nominating petitions for more candidates than there are persons to be elected to the office (e.g. 3 judicial candidates when there are 2 vacant positions).
IS	Invalid Signature	The petition signature is omitted or does not sufficiently agree with the signature on file.
NR	Not Registered	On the date of signing, the signer was not registered to vote anywhere in the city or township indicated. Note: If a signer is registered to vote at a different address within the same city or township as written on the petition, the signature is valid. See examples below: Petition Address — Registration Address — Result 456 Maple St., Flint — 456 Maple St., Mt. Morris — Invalid [NR] 123 Main St., Mason — 987 Maple St., Mason — Valid [R]
ADDRESS AND JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES		
IA	Invalid Address	Address is blank, missing house number or street name, or PO Box listed.
IC	Invalid City or Township	There is no city or township by that name located within the county listed at the top or the city or township field was left blank.
NC	Nonexistent County	County listed does not exist (misspelled county is not "NC").
OD	Outside District	The address given is located within the city or township listed, but outside of the electoral district for the office sought.
R	Registered/Registered at Other Address in Jurisdiction	Registered at address provided on petition or registered at another address within city/township listed on the petition.
DATE ERRORS		

DATE	Invalid Date	• Signature is dated before the first date signatures may be circulated. For example, the signor provides the date of birth. Note: For qualifying petitions only, any signature that is dated more than 180 days prior to the date of filing is invalid. • Signature is dated before the filing of the petition (483a filing). • Signer's signature is dated after the circulator dated their signature. • Date is incomplete, illegible or missing.
HEAD	Invalid Heading Entries	• Failure to include candidate name, address, name of office, party affiliation (if applicable), and date of primary. • Failure to include whether incumbent, non-incumbent, or new position, or incorrect designation as such. • Font size deviates from requirements (Certain items are 24-point or 12-point font; everything else is 8-point font.)
FORM ISSUES		
DMG	Damaged	Damaged, mutilated or torn petitions sheets that are damaged in a way that interferes with the presence of any of the mandatory elements (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, signer entries).
FORM	Form Error	Incorrect form used or incorrect petition submitted with filing.
MRE	Missing Required Element	Missing a required element, e.g., warning cut off when printed, illegible words (crossed out with marker).
CIRCULATOR ISSUES		
CIRC	Circulator Information Missing	• Failure to include the circulator name, complete residential address (street or rural route number (PO Box is invalid), city or township and state). • Not signed by circulator. • Circulator date is omitted or illegible.
OS	Out-of-State Box Blank	Out-of-state circulator failed to check non-residency box in the Certificate of Circulator.
PV	Paid/Volunteer Box Blank	Circulator did not mark paid/volunteer box.
MISCELLANEOUS ERRORS		
IL	Illegible	Unable to read enough information provided by the signer(s) to identify the signer.
MC	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous errors identified not provided above.

Appendix E: Jurisdiction Name Variations

Abbreviation	Corresponds to …	County
AA, A[2]	Ann Arbor city, Ann Arbor Township	Washtenaw
BC	Battle Creek	Calhoun
BH	Benton Harbor	Berrien
BH, Blfd Hlls	Bloomfield Hills	Oakland
D'born	Dearborn	Wayne
D'born Hts	Dearborn Heights	Wayne
Det	Detroit	Wayne
EL, E Lan	East Lansing	Ingham
Farm	Farmington	Oakland
FH, Farm Hlls	Farmington Hills	Oakland
Fnt	Flint city, Flint Township	Genesee
GR	Grand Rapids	Kent
GP	Grosse Pointe	Wayne
GPF	Grosse Pointe Farms	Wayne
GPP	Grosse Pointe Park	Wayne
GPS	Grosse Pointe Shores	Wayne
GPW	Grosse Pointe Woods	Wayne
HP	Highland Park	Wayne
Kal, K'zoo	Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo
Lan	Lansing	Ingham
Musk	Muskegon	Muskegon
Sag	Saginaw city, Saginaw Township	Saginaw
SSM	Sault Ste. Marie	Chippewa
SH	Shelby Township	Macomb
SH, Ster Hgts	Sterling Heights	Macomb
S'fld	Southfield	Oakland
SCS	St. Clair Shores	Macomb
St. Joe	St. Joseph	Berrien
TC	Traverse City	Grand Traverse
WB	West Bloomfield	Oakland
Ypsi	Ypsilanti	Washtenaw

Appendix F: Petition Size Requirements



The circulator of this petition is a (mark one): ❑ paid signature gatherer ❑ volunteer signature gatherer.

If the petition circulator does not comply with all of the requirements of the Michigan election law for petition circulators, any signature obtained by that petition circulator on that petition is invalid and will not be counted. 12pt

INITIATIVE PETITION
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION 14pt Bold

(100 word summary: The "summary of the purpose of the proposed amendment or question" prepared by the Director of Elections may be up to 100 words in length and must consist of a true and impartial statement in language that does not create prejudice for or against the proposal. MCL 168.482b(2). For purposes of the 100-word limit, hyphenated compounds are treated as one word and numerals are not counted as words. The summary also must inform signers of the subject matter of the petition using words having a common, everyday meaning to the public, but need not be legally precise.) 12pt

For the full text of the proposed constitutional amendment and provisions of the existing constitution which would be altered or abrogated if adopted, see the reverse side of this petition. Provisions of existing constitution altered or abrogated by the proposal if adopted: Art. 0, §§ 0, 0 and 0; Art. 0, §§ 0 and 0; Art. 0, §§ 0 and 0; Art. 0, §§ 0, 0, 0, 0 and 0; Art. 0, §§ 0, 0, 0, 0 and 0; Art. 0, §§ 0 and 0; Art. 0 § 0 8pt

We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the county of _____, state of Michigan, respectively petition for amendment to constitution. 12pt Bold

WARNING - A person who knowingly signs this petition more than once, signs a name other than his or her own, signs when not a qualified and registered elector, or sets opposite his or her signature on a petition, a date other than the actual date the signature was affixed, is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

SIGNATURE 8pt	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING MO	DAY	YEAR
1. 8pt							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

12pt Bold

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 registered elector of the city or township indicated preceding the signature, and the elector was qualified to sign the petition. 8pt

❑ If the circulator is not a resident of Michigan, the circulator shall make a cross or check mark in the box provided, otherwise each signature on this petition sheet is invalid and the signatures 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. 12pt Bold

Paid for with regulated funds by Elections 2023, 111 Main Street, Lansing, MI 48911

MIE000

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

(Signature of Circulator) 8pt _____ (Date) __/__/__

(Printed Name of Circulator)

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

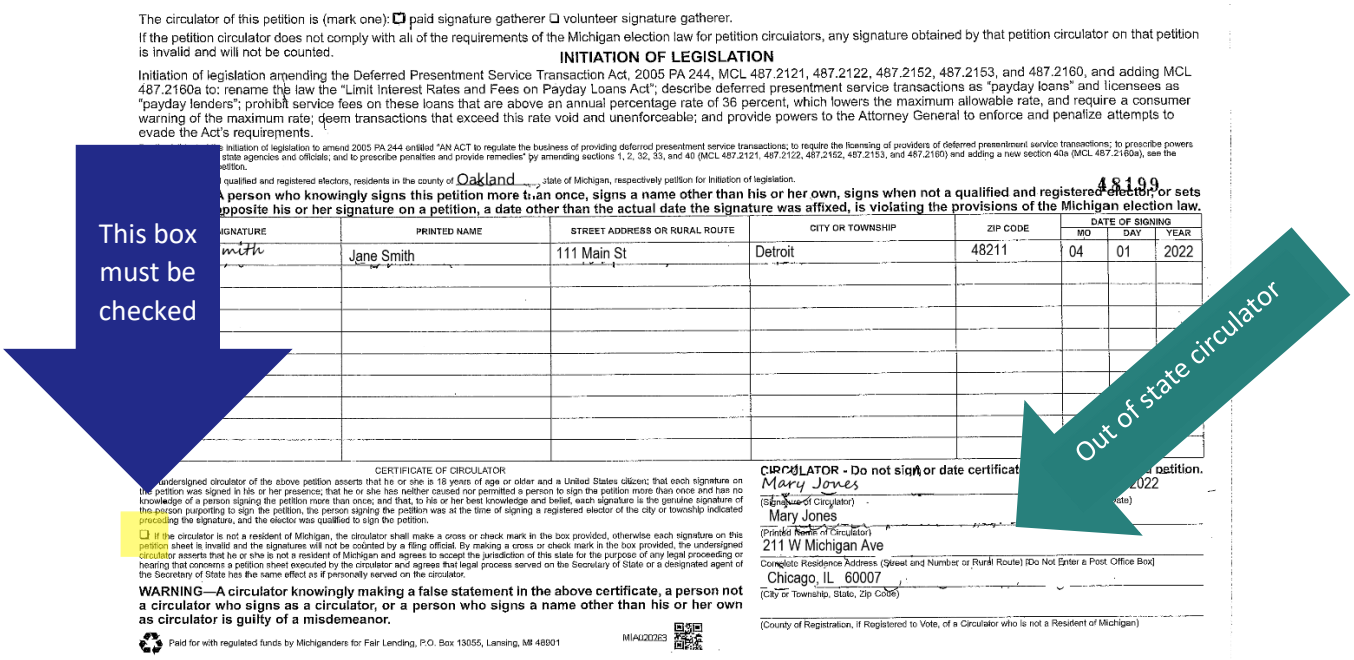
(City or Township, State, Zip Code)

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

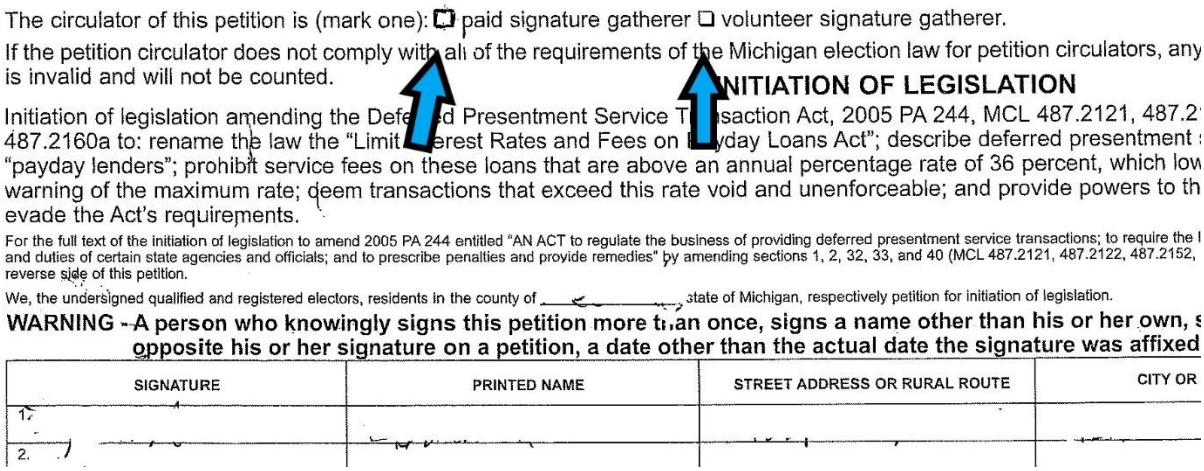
Appendix G: Invalid Sheet Examples

All examples provided below are considered fully invalid sheets, where no signature will be considered valid.

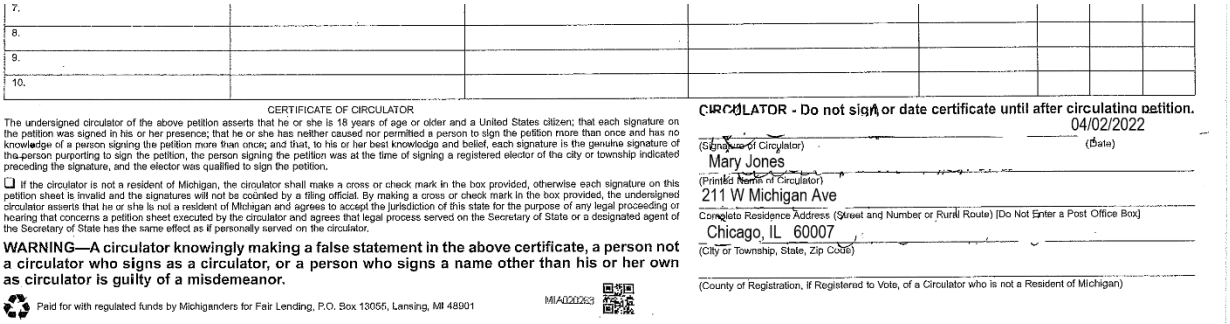
1. The out of state circulator box is blank when the circulator's address is out of state.



2. Neither box is checked at the top of the sheet.



3. Circulator did not sign the petition.



7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

CERTIFICATE OF CIRCULATOR

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Paid for with regulated funds by Michiganders for Fair Lending, P.O. Box 13055, Lansing, MI 48901

MIA020263

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

(Signature of Circulator) 04/02/2022 (Date)

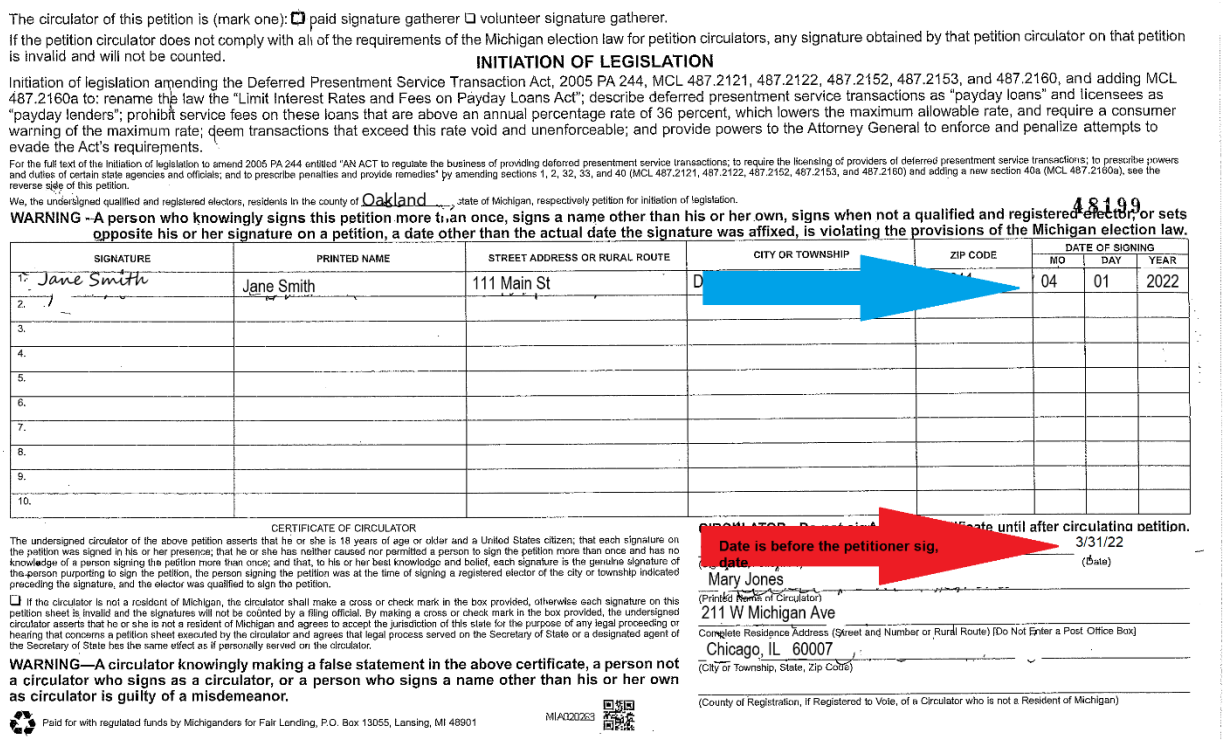
Mary Jones
(Printed Name of Circulator)

211 W Michigan Ave
Complete Residence Address (Street and Number or Rural Route) [Do Not Enter a Post Office Box]

Chicago, IL 60007
(City or Township, State, Zip Code)

(County of Registration, If Registered to Vote, of a Circulator who is not a Resident of Michigan)

4. Circulator dated petition before the date of all the petitioners on the sheet (Note: if there are any signatures that are on or before the date of the circulator on the sheet, those signatures would be valid and only those dated after the circulator would remain invalid if all other parameters are met).



The circulator of this petition is (mark one): ☐ paid signature gatherer ☐ volunteer signature gatherer.

If the petition circulator does not comply with all of the requirements of the Michigan election law for petition circulators, any signature obtained by that petition circulator on that petition is invalid and will not be counted.

INITIATION OF LEGISLATION

Initiation of legislation amending the Deferred Presentment Service Transaction Act, 2005 PA 244, MCL 487.2121, 487.2122, 487.2152, 487.2153, and 487.2160, and adding MCL 487.2160a to: rename the law the "Limit Interest Rates and Fees on Payday Loans Act"; describe deferred presentment service transactions as "payday loans" and licensees as "payday lenders"; prohibit service fees on these loans that are above an annual percentage rate of 36 percent, which lowers the maximum allowable rate, and require a consumer warning of the maximum rate; deem transactions that exceed this rate void and unenforceable; and provide powers to the Attorney General to enforce and penalize attempts to evade the Act's requirements.

For the full text of the initiation of legislation to amend 2005 PA 244 entitled "AN ACT to regulate the business of providing deferred presentment service transactions; to require the licensing of providers of deferred presentment service transactions; to prescribe powers and duties of certain state agencies and officials; and to prescribe penalties and provide remedies" by amending sections 1, 2, 32, 33, and 40 (MCL 487.2121, 487.2122, 487.2152, 487.2153, and 487.2160) and adding a new section 40a (MCL 487.2160a), see the reverse side of this petition.

We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the county of Oakland, state of Michigan, respectively petition for initiation of legislation.

48199

WARNING - A person who knowingly signs this petition more than once, signs a name other than his or her own, signs when not a qualified and registered elector, or sets opposite his or her signature on a petition, a date other than the actual date the signature was affixed, is violating the provisions of the Michigan election law.

	SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING MO	DAY	YEAR
1.	Jane Smith	Jane Smith	111 Main St	D		04	01	2022
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								
10.								

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Paid for with regulated funds by Michiganders for Fair Lending, P.O. Box 13055, Lansing, MI 48901

MIA020263

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

Date is before the petitioner sig, date.

(Signature of Circulator) 3/31/22 (Date)

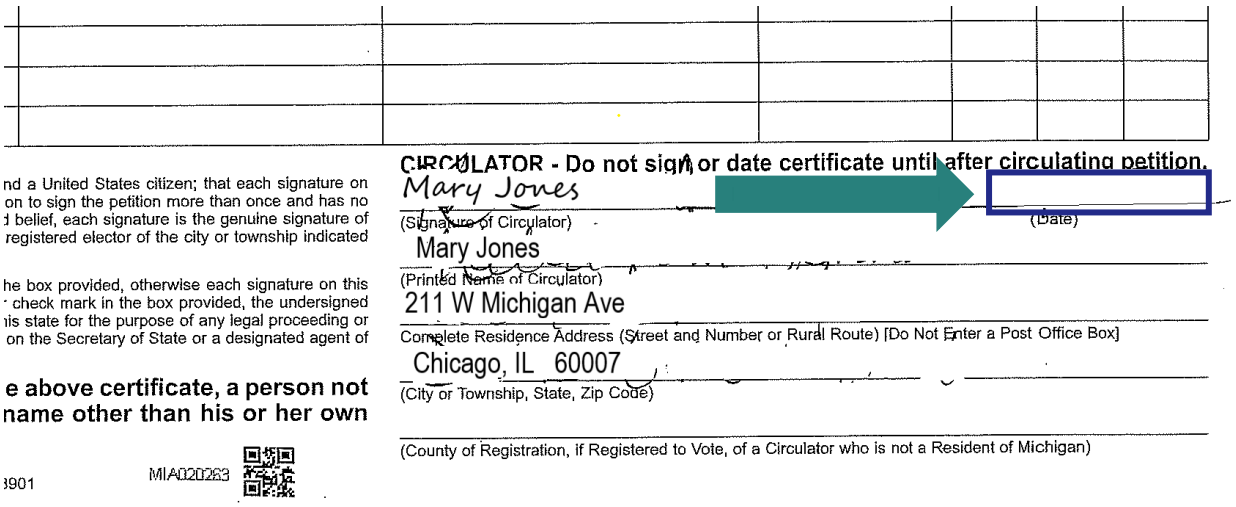
Mary Jones
(Printed Name of Circulator)

211 W Michigan Ave
Complete Residence Address (Street and Number or Rural Route) [Do Not Enter a Post Office Box]

Chicago, IL 60007
(City or Township, State, Zip Code)

(County of Registration, If Registered to Vote, of a Circulator who is not a Resident of Michigan)

5. Circulator fails to date the petition.



nd a United States citizen; that each signature on
on to sign the petition more than once and has no
d belief, each signature is the genuine signature of
registered elector of the city or township indicated

he box provided, otherwise each signature on this
check mark in the box provided, the undersigned
is state for the purpose of any legal proceeding or
on the Secretary of State or a designated agent of

**e above certificate, a person not
name other than his or her own**

3901 MIA020263

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

Mary Jones (Signature of Circulator) (Date)

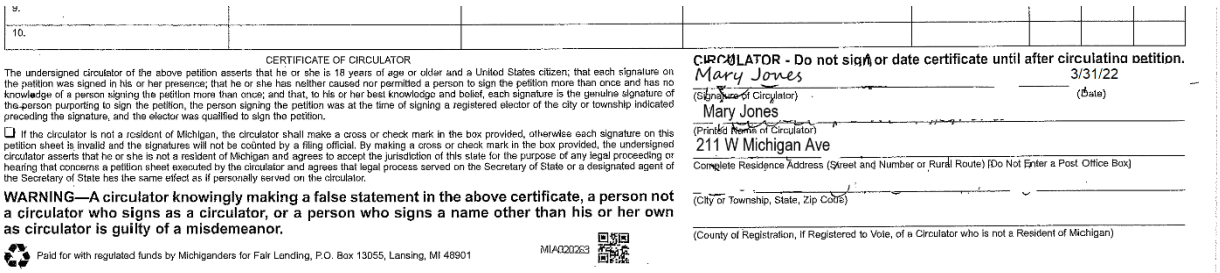
Mary Jones (Printed Name of Circulator)

211 W Michigan Ave Complete Residence Address (Street and Number or Rural Route) [Do Not Enter a Post Office Box]

Chicago, IL 60007 (City or Township, State, Zip Code)

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

6. Circulator address missing or incomplete.



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Paid for with regulated funds by Michiganders for Fair Lending, P.O. Box 13055, Lansing, MI 48901 MIA020263

CIRCULATOR - Do not sign or date certificate until after circulating petition.

Mary Jones (Signature of Circulator) 3/31/22 (Date)

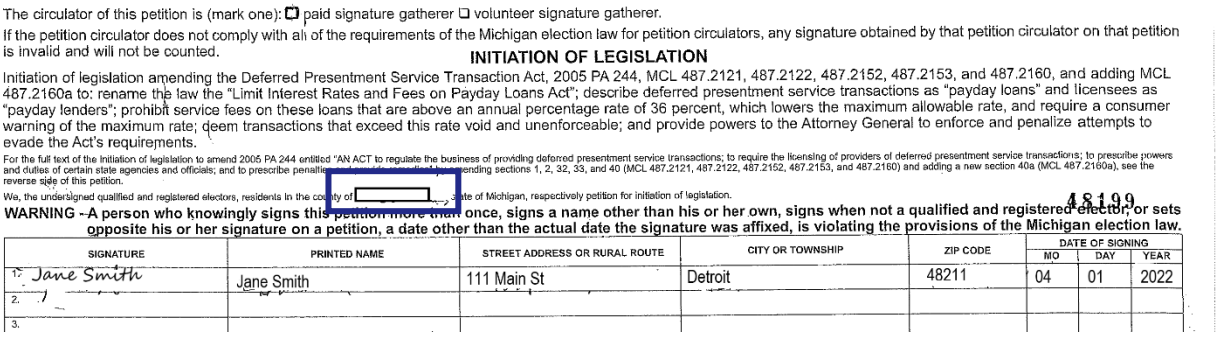
Mary Jones (Printed Name of Circulator)

211 W Michigan Ave 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)

7. County of circulation is omitted or lists a nonexistent county, such as a city.



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For the full text of the initiation of legislation to amend 2005 PA 244 entitled "AN ACT to regulate the business of providing deferred presentment service transactions; to require the licensing of providers of deferred presentment service transactions; to prescribe powers and duties of certain state agencies and officials; and to prescribe penalties [illegible] amending sections 1, 2, 32, 33, and 40 (MCL 487.2121, 487.2122, 487.2152, 487.2153, and 487.2160) and adding a new section 40a (MCL 487.2160a), see the reverse side of this petition.

We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors, residents in the county of [illegible] State of Michigan, respectively petition for initiation of legislation.

48199

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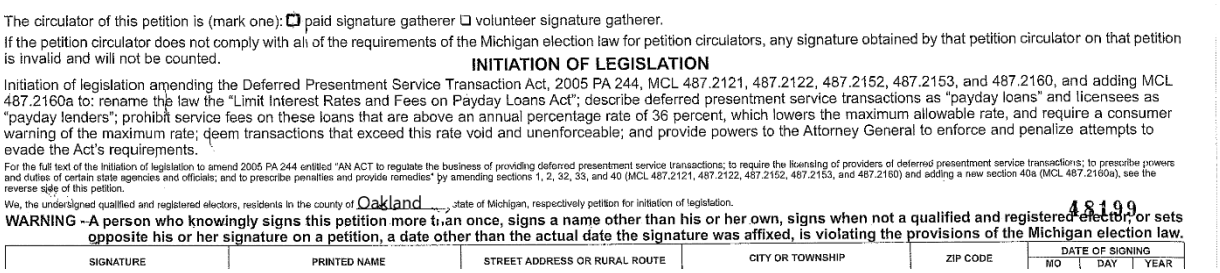
	SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING MO	DAY	YEAR
1.	Jane Smith	Jane Smith	111 Main St	Detroit	48211	04	01	2022
2.								
3.								

8. The petition sheet submitted is for a different ballot question.



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48199

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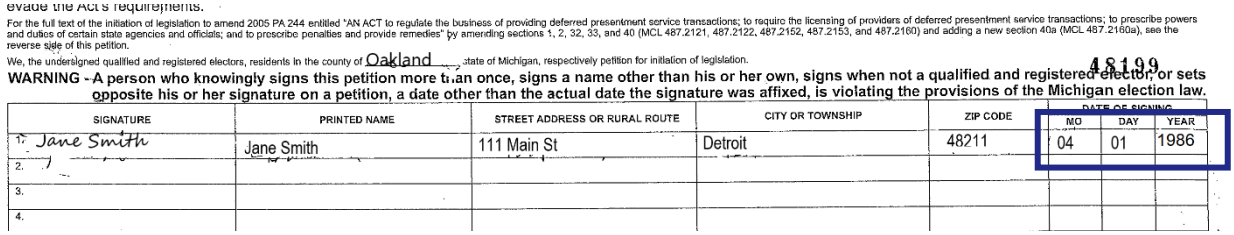
SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING MO	DAY	YEAR

9. Signor put their date of birth rather than the date of signing (Note: if there were any signatures on the sheet with proper dates, they would remain valid if all other parameters are met).



evade the Act's requirements.

For the full text of the initiation of legislation to amend 2005 PA 244 entitled "AN ACT to regulate the business of providing deferred presentment service transactions; to require the licensing of providers of deferred presentment service transactions; to prescribe powers and duties of certain state agencies and officials; and to prescribe penalties and provide remedies" by amending sections 1, 2, 32, 33, and 40 (MCL 487.2121, 487.2122, 487.2152, 487.2153, and 487.2160) and adding a new section 40a (MCL 487.2160a), see the reverse side of this petition.

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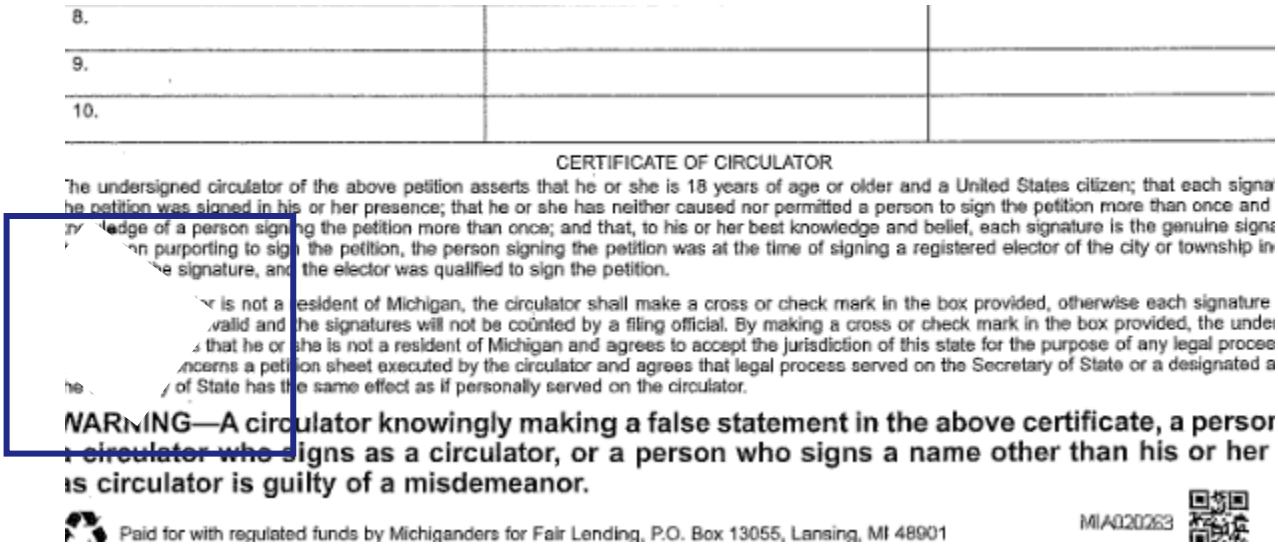
	SIGNATURE	PRINTED NAME	STREET ADDRESS OR RURAL ROUTE	CITY OR TOWNSHIP	ZIP CODE	DATE OF SIGNING MO	DAY	YEAR
1.	Jane Smith	Jane Smith	111 Main St	Detroit	48211	04	01	1986
2.								
3.								
4.								

10. Mandatory elements in the circulator warning statement have been cut off or omitted.



8.		
9.		
10.		

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circulator who signs as a circulator, or a person who signs a name other than his or her
as circulator is guilty of a misdemeanor.**

Paid for with regulated funds by Michiganders for Fair Lending, P.O. Box 13055, Lansing, MI 48901

MIA020263

Appendix H: 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 14 inches.
3. That the circulator compliance statement ("If the circulator of this petition does not comply . . .") is printed in 12-point type.
4. That the heading of the petition is presented in the following form and printed in capital letters in 14-point boldface type:

INITIATIVE PETITION
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION
or
INITIATION OF LEGISLATION
or
REFERENDUM OF LEGISLATION
PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION

1. That the summary of the purpose of the proposal is printed in 12-point type and does not exceed 100 words in length.
2. That the words, "We, the undersigned qualified and registered electors . . ." are printed in 8-point type.
3. That the two warning statements and language contained therein are printed in 12-point boldface type.
4. That the words, "CIRCULATOR – Do not sign or date . . ." are printed in 12-point boldface type.
5. That the balance of the petition is printed in 8-point type.
6. That the font used on the petition is _____.
7. 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 Sponsor of Proposal

Subscribed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on this _ day of___ _____, 20____.

_____ _____
Signature of Notary Public Printed Name of Notary Public Notary Public,
State of Michigan, County of _____.
Acting in the County of _____. My commission expires _____.