



STATE OF MICHIGAN
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

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Submitting Petition Signatures to Facilitate Efficient Review

The Michigan Board of State Canvassers is responsible for canvassing signatures to determine whether a petition has a sufficient number of valid signatures. The Michigan Bureau of Elections 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. On average over the last number of years, completing petition signature reviews have taken more than 100 days from the date of submission.

This guidance is offered to petition filers to facilitate the efficient review of their petitions and signatures by Bureau of Elections staff, both to provide insight into the process for the public and to ease the burden on staff undertaking the review. While submitting petition signatures under this guidance will streamline the review process, the Bureau cannot provide a specific estimate on how long it will take to count signatures, draw random samples, and determine the validity and eligibility of each petition signature; these timelines are also affected by staff availability and other responsibilities.

The recommended practices below are for *submitting* petition signatures; the entire petition process has many stages. For a full summary of laws and procedures governing sponsoring a statewide petition, see [Sponsoring a Statewide Initiative, Referendum, or Constitutional Amendment Petition](#).

Recommended Practices for Petition Submission

- All petition sheets should be unfolded, flattened, and neatly organized.
 - o If petition sheets contain tear-off sections, tear-off sections should be completely removed prior to submission.
- All petition sheets should be sorted by number of signatures per sheet.
- All petitions 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 signatures (using a single strikethrough line with a ball-point pen) and remove wholly invalid signature sheets it has identified prior to submission.