

ALLEN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.) & Common problems with Petitions

- **When Do I Sign & Date the “Statement of Candidacy”?**: The “Statement of Candidacy” must be completed and signed **PRIOR** to passing the petition. Any signatures signed prior to the date the candidate signed are invalid.
- **Must I complete the “Statement of Candidacy” section on each part petition?**: Yes, however you can complete these sections and photocopy it, although the original petition with the candidates original signature must be filed when the petitions are filed.
- **Where can I find term dates, Election date and the filing deadline?**: These dates are posted in the Allen County Board of Elections office website or by calling our office during normal business hours.
- **Can one person sign the petition on behalf of another?**: One person may not sign a petition on behalf of another voter, even if the person signing has Power of Attorney with the exception of a process called “Attorney in Fact” that a person may file with the Board of Elections office to allow another person to sign on their behalf.
- **What if the Signature is illegible?**: The person signing the petition must sign the petition the same way their signature is on file at the Board of Elections; however, a voter can sign and print their name both in the “Signature” line to aid in identifying the voter.
- **Can a signer of the petition print their signature or use an “X” as their signature?**: The signature must match the Board of Elections records; however, a person may register with a printed signature or an “X” as their signature.
- **Can any sections be filled out by someone other than the voter on the petition signatures section?**: Yes, any field other than signature may be filled out by another person.
- **What if the County isn’t complete on the petition signature?**: If the county isn’t complete next to the petition signers signature it will not affect the validity of the signature.
- **What if the signature dates are not sequential?**: Dates being out of order will not affect the validity of the petition or the signatures contained on it; however, signatures must be the same day or after the candidate signs the statement of candidacy.

- **If I am a partisan candidate, who can sign my petition?:** Voters who are registered in the same party or as non-affiliated voters.
- **Does the circulator have to witness each and every signature?:** Yes, a single circulator must witness each signature on a petition.
- **Who cannot sign a petition?:** Any voter who lives outside the district the candidate is running for may not sign, the circulator may not sign the petition they are circulating (although they may sign another petition passed by another circulator) and the candidate may not sign. Also, if the candidate is running for a partisan office, no one of another political party may sign the petition. Please note that the candidate still signs the “Statement of Candidacy” and the Circulator still signs the “Circulator Statement”.
- **What if the person isn’t registered or needs to update their registration?:** They can still sign as long as they update their information prior to the filing of the petitions. The circulator may collect voter registration forms and they can be filed when the petitions are filed. Any registrations filed in this manner will be processed prior to processing the petitions.
- **If the “Circulator Statement” has a different number of signatures than the number who signed, will that invalidate the part petition?:** The number of signatures in the “Circulator Statement” should be the number of signatures contained on each petition minus any that are crossed out; however, if the number is more the petition is still valid. If the number contained in the “Circulator Statement” is less than the number of signatures on the petition, the part petition is invalid.
- **Can employees of the Board of Elections check my petitions prior to filing?:** No, however the Board of Elections office has a public lookup function available during normal business hours that will allow the filer to look up any voter and check their registered name and address prior to filing. Any other questions about the completeness of the petition will be directed to the information provided by the Secretary of State and the Board of Elections.
- **What is the minimum and maximum number of signatures I can file?:** Each office has a different number of required signatures, so the minimum number would be the number of required signatures and the maximum would be 3 times the number of required signatures. It is not recommended that you only file the minimum number of required signatures, even if you are confident that each signature is correct.
- **Can people from multiple counties sign my petition?:** If the district of the office you are filing for encompasses more than one county a separate petition must be used for each county. All petitions, regardless of county, are filed with the most populous county and then distributed to the other counties for verification.
- **Who can circulate my petitions?:** Anyone who is over 18 years of age, a resident of Ohio and is not incarcerated or on post release control for a felony may pass a petition. A circulator does not need to be a registered voter to pass a petition. If the candidate is running for a partisan race the circulator must also be a member of the same political party as the candidate.

- **If the candidate passes the petition do they still need to complete the “Circulator Statement”?**: Yes, if the circulators statement is not completed, including the signature, the petition is invalid.
- **On the Non-Partisan petition form there is a section for committee, what is this for?**: Since non-partisan candidates do not have a party to represent them if they are unable to run for office the candidate may appoint a “committee” to represent them and can do so by filling in the appropriate section of the petition form. This part is optional; however please note that the “Nominating Petition” section must be completed on each petition.
- **When is a term date required on a petition?**: If a candidate is running for an unexpired term the “unexpired term ending” date is always required. If a candidate is running for a full term then the “full term commencing” date is only required if the petition form has a section for “full term commencing”. If there is just a check box next to full term, checking the box is all that is required for the petition. If you do not know the term date for the office you seek, the information is posted in the Allen County Board of Elections office, website or by calling the office during normal business hours.
- **If I realize I made an error on my petitions after they are filed can I make a change?**: Once petitions are filed they cannot be changed, supplemented or returned to the candidate. You can withdraw your petitions any time prior to Board action and file a new set of petitions any time before the filing deadline. Please note that the City of Lima charter allows for filing of additional petitions after board action for City of Lima candidates only.