



Date: February 3, 2012
From: California Catholic Conference
Re: **Petitions: Legal Requirements and Circulation Do's and Don'ts**

REQUIREMENTS FOR PEOPLE CIRCULATING PETITION FORMS:

In order to circulate ballot measure petition forms, a person must:

Be registered to vote in the State of California; or,

Be qualified to vote in the State of California (i.e., be a **California resident, over 18 years of age, a citizen of the United States, and not a convicted felon**).

The person circulating the petition form must **personally circulate** the petition form him/herself.

He or she must **personally witness each person sign** the petition form.

He or she must be able to state, under penalty of perjury, that:

the signatures appearing on the petition form are genuine (i.e., not forged); and,

to the best of his/her knowledge, the signature of the people signing the petition form are, in fact, the people they claim to be.

Each person circulating a petition form must execute, under penalty, the "circulator's declaration" on **each** petition form that he or she circulated.

It is critical that the "circulator's declaration" be **completely and accurately** filled out by the person circulating the petition and include the following information filled in the spaces provided:

The printed name of the person circulating the petition form.

That person's residence address, including street and number.

The dates between which all the signatures affixed to the petition were obtained.

WARNING: The signatures and information written by signatories on a petition form may **not** be used for any purpose other than qualification of the proposed measure for the ballot.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PEOPLE SIGNING PETITION FORMS:

Only persons who are **registered voters at the time of signing** are entitled to sign the petition.

A person can only sign a petition that is being circulated **in his or her county of registration**. Thus, people should be directed to sign petition forms that are designated for signature by residents of the signer's county of registration.

If a petition circulator is a registered voter, he or she may sign the petition he or she is circulating.

Each signer must **personally** place on the petition his or her **signature, printed name, residence address, and the name of the incorporated city or unincorporated community**.

Each signer may sign an initiative petition only **once**.

PETITION CIRCULATION DO'S AND DON'TS

PETITION DO'S

Use volunteers exclusively at the parish level to circulate, assemble, tabulate, and collect petition forms.

Use only literature, flyers, and petition forms approved by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.
www.la-archdiocese.org/archbishop/CALifeInitiatives2012

Call the Archdiocese if you have any questions regarding the rules as to how to gather signatures, who is qualified to gather them, and who is qualified to sign the petitions.
(Contact: Monica Marquez, mmarquez@la-archdiocese.org, (818) 290-2286.)

Gather signatures after Masses and parish events:

Set up tables staffed by volunteer signature gatherers at key locations outside the church building, parish hall, parking lot, etc.

Have volunteer signature gatherers, holding clipboards with petition forms ready to sign, stand outside the church exits after each Mass and ask parishioners exiting the church to sign the petitions.

If any money is expended by the parish in connection with the circulation effort, keep receipts for each such expenditure, indicate as to which initiative (i.e., the Parental Notification Initiative or Death Penalty Initiative) the expenditure was made and report these expenditures immediately to the Archdiocese. (We strongly discourage making any expenditure on the parish level if it can be avoided.)

PETITION DON'TS

Do not spend any money (e.g., printing costs, copying costs, etc.) with regard to the petition circulation effort. All the material and literature required to circulate the petitions will be provided by the Archdiocese.

Do not use parish employees or paid parish staff members to perform any tasks associated with the petition circulation effort.

Do not accept any donations or contributions in connection with the petition circulation effort. This includes things like food donated for volunteers, donated printing, donated copies, donated workers, and so forth.

Do not permit minors or children to circulate petition forms. This specifically includes high school students under the age of 18.

Do not use any literature, flyers, brochures, or materials in connection with the petition circulation other than the material provided by the Archdiocese

Material provided by the Archdiocese has been reviewed and approved by the Bishop's Office, the California Catholic Conference, and legal counsel for use in our parishes.

Materials prepared by other organizations has not been reviewed and screened. Such being the case, its use may endanger the parish's tax-exempt status and/or expose the parish to significant monetary fines and penalties imposed by the State of California.

Do not permit outside groups or organizations to circulate these, or any other petitions, on parish property.

Discourage people from taking petition forms home for signature later. It is best to gather signatures on the spot, outside of church after Masses and parish events. Parishioners desiring to gather signatures independently should be encouraged to visit the websites of the initiative sponsors, obtain petition forms on-line, and follow the directions of the initiative sponsors regarding circulation.

Do not permit out-of-county voters to sign petition forms for another county.