

CIRCULATING PETITIONS

The regulations, 950 CMR § 48.07, require the Secretary to review all initiative petition forms to ensure that they contain the signatures of at least three registrars of voters and for extraneous markings and compliance with exact copy requirements. If a petition is not signed by at least three registrars of voters, the signatures contained on such sheet will not be counted towards the total number of required signatures and instead will be designated as "uncertified." Signatures contained on petition forms that have extraneous markings and/or signatures contained on petition forms that are not exact copies will not be counted towards the total number of required signatures and instead will be designated as "disqualified."

Examples of extraneous markings include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. highlighting;
2. underlining;
3. scribbles;
4. doodles;
5. instructional language (*i.e.* "over" or "see other side");
6. the name or initials of the circulator; or
7. the telephone number of the circulator.

Examples of petition forms which are not exact copies include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. the paper size or color is different than that prepared by the Secretary;
2. the original text is missing or altered;
3. the petition form is one which was sent by facsimile;
4. the petition form contains printing on only one side;
5. the petition form contains two front sides, and therefore there is no box for the Registrars of Voters to certify the number of signatures certified signatures contained thereon; or
6. the petition form contains a different number of signature lines than the number on the original petition form as prepared by the Secretary.

Accordingly, petitioners should ensure that any petitions circulated conform to the above standards. Signatures contained on petitions that contain extraneous markings and/or that are not exact copies will not be accepted as valid signatures towards the total number of required signatures.

ELECTRONIC VERSION OF PETITION

Upon written request, this Office will provide petitioners with a disk containing a .pdf file of the petition. This electronic version will be available on the same day as the blank initiative petition forms. Please note that by providing an electronic version of