HOW CAN *YOU* PARTICIPATE in the *DEMOCRATIC PROCESS*??
Sign or Circulate
PETITIONS in Pennsylvania!

Signing or Circulating CANDIDATE PETITIONS or BALLOT INITIATIVES is a way registered voters may PARTICIPATE in the democratic process by allowing a candidate (or a ballot initiative) to be placed on a ballot. Signing and/or Circulating a Petition, DOES NOT compel a registered voter to vote for that candidate, ballot question or initiative!

The Petitioning Process:

1. When a candidate decides to run for an elected office, a prescribed number of signatures are required in order to get onto the ballot. *See the gold box on the right. Find more at your* <u>County Election Office</u>.
2. *The signature must be of a REGISTERED VOTER of the candidate's political party. Only the two major parties are represented in PA Primaries -- Democratic or Republican.*
3. Cross-filing: Magisterial District Judge candidates , Common Pleas Judge candidates, and School Board candidates may CROSS-FILE or run on BOTH the Democratic and Republican tickets.
4. The registered voter must LIVE in the district the candidate will represent.
5. Each voter may only SIGN ONE PETITION PER SEAT to be FILLED. In a school board race, there may be 5 seats to be filled, so a voter could sign up to 5 petitions for at-large seats. In a race for a State Representative or Magisterial Judge, this would be 1 signature per race. For cross-filed Common Pleas judge seats, voters may sign the number of petitions of the political party for which they are registered for each seat to be filled.

Step 1

Allegheny County List of Fees and Number of Signatures-- <u>Elected Office Requirements</u>.

Candidates Always Needed for Judges of Elections/Inspectors of Elections. CONSIDER RUNNING in YOUR DISTRICT!

What the Voter (Elector) Must Do

Step 2

1. Voters ("Electors") must first:
   --write their SIGNATURE to be followed by:
   --the VOTER'S PRINTED NAME,
   --then the VOTER'S ADDRESS,
   --including the name of the MUNICIPALITY where the voter PAYS TAXES. This address can not be the mailing address if it is not the municipality where the voter pays their taxes. *For example, signature; printed name; house number; street or road name; municipality where the voter pays taxes,*
   --and then the DATE the petition is SIGNED.
2. Voters MAY NOT use DITTO MARKS to indicate that their street name or municipality or date is the same as the one before them.

What the Person Circulating the Petition Must Do:

1. Once the petition has been completed, the person who circulates the petition must sign the "Statement of Circulator".
2. The petition usually must be NOTARIZED by a Notary Public.
3. Watch for deadlines to file and circulate nomination petitions.
4. For PA State Offices and for Court of Common Pleas Judges, the petitions must be hand-delivered to the Harrisburg State Board of Elections.
5. For Allegheny County races, petitions must be delivered to the Allegheny County Elections Division, City County Building, 542 Forbes Ave., Ste. 609, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

Step 3

After Delivery of Petitions, What's Next?

Step 4

1. Once the petitions are DELIVERED, the petitions are reviewed to VERIFY the voter ("elector") signatures and other information and are deemed valid or not.
2. Candidates may file objections (by a deadline), hearings are held by Court of Common Pleas judges, and challenges are resolved. Candidates may withdraw by a deadline.
3. The petitions are then considered to be CERTIFIED.
4. Once the petitions are certified, Candidate NAMES can be placed on the PRIMARY ELECTION BALLOT for their party. BALLOT INITIATIVES are placed on either Primary or General Election ballots.

Allegheny County Website Information for <u>Nomination Petitions</u>

LOCAL INITIATIVES : The PETITION process is also used for BALLOT INITIATIVES. For example, a Ballot Initiative may be added to a Primary or General Election Ballot for the City of Pittsburgh and/or for <u>Allegheny County</u>. Both have charter amendment by initiative.

STATE INTITIATIVES: Pennsylvania DOES NOT have STATE-WIDE, CITIZEN-GENERATED initiatives, so ballot measures that appear state-wide can ONLY be generated by the Pennsylvania Legislature.