



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
**BOARD OF ELECTIONS**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20003-4733



**CIRCULATING AND FILING NOMINATING PETITIONS**

*(Notes begin on page 5)*

As a candidate seeking elected office in the District of Columbia, you are responsible for ensuring that each individual who circulates nominating petitions on your behalf complies with all pertinent rules and regulations regarding petition circulation. Each person who circulates petitions on your behalf must:

- Be at least 17 years of age and who will be 18 years of age on or before the next general election *and* either a resident of the District of Columbia or a resident of another jurisdiction who has registered as a petition circulator with the Board for your campaign prior to circulation of a petition;
- Personally circulate each petition sheet for which they sign a circulator's affidavit;
- Personally witness the signing of each signature on each petition sheet for which they sign a circulator's affidavit;<sup>1</sup>
- Inquire whether each signer is a registered voter in the District of Columbia and, if applicable, whether each signer is a registered voter in the same political party and/or ward or single-member district as the candidate, depending on the office sought;
- Complete and sign, under penalties of perjury, the circulator's affidavit on each petition sheet they circulate;<sup>2</sup>
- Make sure that only one circulator signature is affixed to a single petition sheet and that the date in the circulator's affidavit does not pre-date those of the registered voters who sign the petition sheets;
- Ensure that each signer legibly provides all required information, in addition to their signature; and
- Adhere to the provisions in the election statute and regulations regarding nominating petition circulation, with the understanding that any circulator who knowingly and willfully violates any such provisions could, upon conviction, be fined up to \$10,000 and/or imprisoned for up to six (6) months.<sup>3</sup>

**Non-Resident Petition Circulators**

Each non-resident petition circulator must register in-person with the Board by completing a Non-Resident Petition Circulator Registration Form and submitting valid proof of residence.<sup>4</sup> Valid proof of residence is any official document showing the circulator's name and residence address. Acceptable forms of proof of residence include:

- A copy of a current and valid government-issued photo identification;
- A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or government check;
- A copy of a government-issued document; or
- A copy of any other official document, including leases or residential rental agreements, occupancy statements from homeless shelters, or tuition/housing bills from colleges or universities.

**Electronic Circulation**

All candidate petitions can be circulated either electronically or via paper versions.

To circulate petitions electronically, candidates can request digital, PDF versions of their petitions, and then share the PDF version of the petition with qualified petition circulators to gather signatures from voters.

Because a circulator must personally witness the signing of each signature on each petition sheet for which they sign a circulator's affidavit, a signer who is affixing their digital signature to a petition sheet should also be the circulator of that sheet and complete and sign the circulator's affidavit accordingly.<sup>5</sup> (See the addendum on page 4.)

Similar to written signatures, digital signatures must be authentic to the signer; font scripts cannot be used.

Not Accepted: Font Script Signature

*Sam Sample*

Accepted: Authentic Digital Signature



When the qualified petition circulators finish gathering signatures, they can submit the petition sheets to the candidates electronically or in paper form. Candidates must submit hard copies of completed petition sheets to the Board. It is the duty of the candidate to ensure that when the petition is printed, the formatting matches the original document, which for nominating petitions is 8.5 x 11 inch, single-sided paper.

### Valid Petition Signatures

In order for a signature on a nominating petition to be valid:

- The signer must be a duly registered voter in the District of Columbia - i.e., they must reside at the address listed in the Board's records<sup>6</sup> - at the time the petition is signed;<sup>7</sup>  
(However, if an address on a petition is different than the address which appears in the Board's records, it shall be deemed valid if the signer's current address is within the electoral jurisdiction from which the candidate seeks nomination *and* the signer files a change of address form with the Board within ten (10) days after the date the candidate receives notice that a challenge has been filed to the nominating petition.)<sup>8</sup>
- The signer must be designated as "active" in the voter roll at the time the petition is signed;<sup>9</sup>
- The signature must not be a duplicate of a valid signature appearing elsewhere on the petition;
- The signature must be dated;
- The signature must be accompanied by the signer's address; (a P.O. Box number is not acceptable.)
- The signature must include the printed name of the signer if the signature is not sufficiently legible for identification;
- The circulator of the petition sheet must have been a qualified petition circulator at the time the petition was signed;
- The circulator of the petition must complete all required information in the circulator's affidavit;
- The signature must not be a forgery;<sup>10</sup>  
(**Note:** A voter who is unable to sign their name may make their mark in the space for the signature. Such mark will be counted as a valid signature if a completed Signature Attestation Form is inserted directly behind the page in the petition that bears the mark. The Signature Attestation Form is an affidavit indicating that the witness explained the content of the petition to the signer and witnessed their mark.)

- The signer must have been a registered voter in the ward or single-member district from which the candidate seeks nomination at the time the petition was signed; or
- (For primary elections) The signer must have been registered to vote in the same party as the candidate at the time the petition was signed.
- For the offices of President, Delegate to the US House of Representatives, US Representative, and US Senator, the signature is valid if the signer is a US citizen.

Note: Qualified petition circulators who are also registered voters may sign the petition sheet they are circulating, provided they are eligible to sign the petition.

### **Filing Nominating Petitions and Other Supporting Documents**

- The Board will **not** make copies of each petition sheet for you, so if you would like copies for your own records, make copies or take pictures of each sheet before coming to the office to file.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your petition is complete and contains the minimum number of valid signatures for ballot access before you file it with the Board. You can do this by: verifying each signature you collect against the voter list provided for your electoral jurisdiction; proactively providing a voter registration form to each eligible voter whose address on the petition differs from the Board's records, encouraging the voter to update their information by the appropriate deadline; checking for any other defects as you collect signatures; and getting more signatures than the minimum requirement to offset errors.<sup>11</sup>
- Before filing, make sure that each signer's address matches the address listed for that voter in the Board's records. If a signer's address on the petition is not the same as their address in the Board's records, but the voter resides in the same electoral jurisdiction in which you are seeking office, the voter can complete and submit a change of address up until the 10<sup>th</sup> day after the candidate has received notice that a challenge has been filed to the nominating petition, if any.<sup>12</sup>
- Make sure the Circulator's Affidavit on each petition sheet is completed correctly and signed. All the required fields should be filled out, only one circulator signature should be affixed to a single petition sheet, and the circulator's signature and date should not pre-date those of the registered voters who sign the petition sheets.
- Please arrive at the Board ready to file. Petition sheets should be complete, in numerical order, and correctly assembled. For example, if you collect signatures and end up using 10 sheets, you would label the petitions in the top right-hand corner as follows: 1 of 10, 2 of 10, 3 of 10, and so on. If a petition sheet has no signatures on it, do not include it in the count.
- While not required, filing the minimum number of signatures *prior to the filing deadline* can be very helpful. This will give you time to correct any errors before the deadline. You can always file supplemental petition sheets until the deadline once you have made the initial filing with the minimum signature requirement.
- Make sure you have the Receipt for Completed Ballot Access Documents completed and signed. You will be given a copy of this receipt for your records, once it's signed and date stamped by BOE staff.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Board's Voter Services Division at (202) 727-2525 or by email at [candidate@dcboe.org](mailto:candidate@dcboe.org).

# ADDENDUM

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PETITION TO NOMINATE

Sheet 1 of 5

Pretend Candidate

(Name of Candidate)

for the office of 8F04

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONER for SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ in the November 5, 2024 General Election

1015 Half St SE, Unit 750 Washington, DC 20003

111222333

CANDIDATE'S ADDRESS (INCLUDING ZIP CODE)

VOTER REGISTRATION NUMBER

We, the undersigned, being duly registered voters in the District of Columbia who reside in the same Single Member District (SMD) from which the candidate seeks election, request that the DC Board of Elections place the name of the individual nominated by this petition on the November 5, 2024 General Election ballot.

PRINTED NAME AND ADDRESS OF PETITIONER		SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER	DATE SIGNED
Sample 0	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER John Q. Public	SIGN HERE <i>John Q. Public</i>	6/14/24 Sample
	ADDRESS 1015 Half Street, SE		
1	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER Sam Sample	SIGN HERE <i>Sam Sample</i>	6/14/24
	ADDRESS 1015 Half St SE Unit 700		
2	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
3	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
4	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
5	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
6	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
7	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
8	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
9	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		
10	PRINT NAME OF PETITIONER	SIGN HERE	
	ADDRESS		

NOTE: Any duly registered voter who resides in the same SMD from which the candidate seeks election may sign this petition regardless of party affiliation.

### TO THE CIRCULATOR

#### Validity of Signatures:

1. At the time this petition is signed, each signer must be registered to vote at the address listed on the petition page. If the signer is registered at a District address other than the one listed on the petition, and their signature is challenged on that basis, the signer must file a change of address within ten (10) days after the date the candidate receives notice that a challenge has been filed to the nominating petition or the signature will not be counted. 2. The signer's printed name and address, as well as the date that the signer signed the petition, must appear in the spaces provided. 3. As the circulator of this petition sheet, you must personally witness the signing of each signature that appears on this petition, and you must swear or affirm that you have done so in the circulator's affidavit below. 4. Attach a Signature Attestation Form for each signer that is unable to independently sign the nominating petition, due to an injury or disability.

#### Filing Deadline:

The deadline to file this petition is 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7, 2024. The petition must contain the minimum number of signatures required by law. Supplemental petition sheets may be filed, but only after the candidate has made an initial filing containing the minimum number of signatures. Petitions must be filed in person at the D.C. Board of Elections, 1015 Half Street, SE, Suite 750.

#### Required Affidavits:

1. At the time the initial submission is filed, the person filing must complete an affidavit attesting that the petition contains the minimum number of signatures. 2. The candidate's signed and notarized Declaration of Candidacy must be filed when their petition is issued. 3. For the affidavit below, only one circulator signature should be affixed to the petition sheet; and the circulator's signature and date should not pre-date those of the registered voters who sign the sheet.

#### CIRCULATOR'S AFFIDAVIT (TO BE COMPLETED BY PERSON CIRCULATING THIS PETITION PAGE)

I, Sam Sample, residing at 1015 Half St SE, Unit 700, Washington, DC 20003,  
Printed Name of Circulator Address of Circulator

swear or affirm: (a) that I am at least 17 years of age and will be 18 years of age on or before the next general election; (b) that I am either a resident of the District of Columbia or a resident of another jurisdiction who registered as a petition circulator with the Board prior to the circulation of this petition sheet; (c) that I personally circulated this petition sheet; (d) that I personally witnessed the signing of each signature hereon; and (e) that I have personally inquired from each signer whether the signer is a duly registered voter in the District of Columbia.

WARNING! READ THE ABOVE AFFIDAVIT AND MAKE SURE IT IS TRUE BEFORE YOU SIGN BELOW. IF YOU ARE CONVICTED OF MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT, YOU CAN BE FINED UP TO \$1,000 AND/OR JAILED UP TO 180 DAYS [D.C. OFFICIAL CODE SECTION 22-2405(b)].

*Sam Sample*  
Signature of Circulator

6/14/24  
Date

Circulator's Telephone Number (Optional)

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The Board invalidated all petition sheets where circulators failed to personally witness signatures or where affidavits were false, emphasizing the seriousness of circulator obligations. *Ronald Drake et al. v. Citizens Committee for the D.C. Video Lottery Terminal Initiative of 2004*, BOE Order No. 04-020. The Board imposed a \$150 civil fine on a circulator who failed to personally witness two signatures on a petition sheet and emphasized that strict compliance with personal witnessing requirements is enforced even for unintentional violations. *Sherice Muhammad*, BOE Order No. 25-002. The Board imposed a \$150 civil fine on a circulator who entered fraudulent signatures and falsely attested to witnessing them, reinforcing strict enforcement of personal witnessing and affidavit requirements. *Tommy Herbert*, BOE Order No. 25-005.

<sup>2</sup> Petitions with defective circulator affidavits (e.g., unsigned) resulted in disqualification from the ballot; the Board strictly enforces affidavit requirements. *Calvin H. Gurley*, BOE Order No. 22-016. Ballot access was denied where the petition was one signature short after invalidation for lack of personal witnessing by the circulator, with the Board reaffirming that strict compliance with personal witnessing requirements applies, and that signatures collected outside the presence of the circulator are invalid. *James Harnett v. Jill Stein*, BOE Order No. 24-005. The Board referred a circulator for criminal prosecution after finding substantial evidence that he forged multiple voter signatures and falsely attested to personally witnessing them, emphasizing that each violation of petition circulation laws is a separate offense subject to severe penalties, including referral for criminal investigation. *Ashish Kanswal*, BOE Order No. 24-013.

<sup>3</sup> The Board has authority to disallow all signatures affected by circulator misconduct, including fraud or failure to witness signatures, and can refer circulators for criminal prosecution. *Williams v. D.C. Bd. of Elections & Ethics*, 804 A.2d 316 (D.C. 2002). The Board imposed a \$37,500 civil fine on circulators who altered petition signer addresses after signatures were collected, in violation of strict prohibitions against making false statements. The Board found that altering signer information is a strict liability offense, regardless of intent, and subjects violators to substantial penalties, mandatory training, and potential criminal prosecution. The Board emphasized that address mismatches must be cured through proper voter registration updates, not by post-signature alterations by circulators. *In the Matter of Lisa Rice, Adam Eidinger, Nikolas Schiller, and Kristin Furnish*, BOE Order No. 25-010.

<sup>4</sup> Non-resident circulators must submit a registration form for each campaign; failure to do so results in all signatures being rejected. *Silverman v. Allen*, BOE Order No. 18-033.

<sup>5</sup> The Board invalidated signatures where the circulator did not personally witness the electronic signing, even though the signer later appeared to confirm the signature. The personal witnessing requirement is strictly enforced. *Buechner v. Cox*, BOE Order No. 20-020.

<sup>6</sup> Signatures are invalid if the address does not match the Board's records. *Orange v. Board of Elections*, 629 A.2d 575 (D.C. 1993). The Board denied ballot access to a candidate whose petition fell short of the required number of valid signatures, reaffirming that the address on the petition must match the Board's records and that statutory requirements for address cures are strictly enforced. *James Harnett v. Wendy Hamilton*, BOE Order No. 24-006. See also *Trezell Ragas v. Wendy Hamilton*, BOE Order No. 24-007; *Singleton v. Bettmann*, BOE Order No. 14-005.

<sup>7</sup> Simply submitting a voter registration application does not mean that an individual is a duly registered voter in the District of Columbia. Voters can use the *Check Your Voter Registration Status* tool on [www.dcboe.org](http://www.dcboe.org) to confirm their registration status and candidates can use a Data Request Form to get a list of voters and verify the status of each signature they collect.

<sup>8</sup> The 10-day period for submitting address updates is strictly enforced and begins upon notice of a challenge. *Jaffe v. Thomas*, BOE Case No. 22-011

<sup>9</sup> Signatures of inactive voters are not counted. *Cheeseboro v. Baranano*, BOE Order No. 20-003.

<sup>10</sup> The Board found and invalidated 160 forged signatures and referred circulators for criminal prosecution. *Guyot v. Mara*, BOE Order No. 11-003.

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<sup>11</sup> Candidates are solely responsible for submitting the statutory minimum of valid signatures and for updating addresses; the Board will not extend deadlines for address corrections. *Tracelosky v. Settles*, BOE Order No. 13-03. Petitions filed after the 5:00 pm deadline are strictly rejected; the Board has no discretion to accept late filings. *Will Cobb, Candidate*, BOE Order No. 06-001; *Reform Party v. BOE*, BOE Order No. 00-021.

<sup>12</sup> The Board denied ballot access to a candidate whose petition failed to meet the minimum valid signature requirement. The Board reaffirmed that it is the candidate's and signers' responsibility, not the Board's, to cure address discrepancies, and that statutory requirements for address matching are strictly enforced. *Brian Strege v. Doc Adams*, BOE Order No. 25-011. The Board denied ballot access to a candidate whose petition was 44 signatures short, emphasizing that statutory requirements for registered status and jurisdiction cannot be waived, and that candidates must verify signatures and address defects before filing. *Gretchen Wharton v. Rondell Magic Jordan*, BOE Order No. 24-026. The Board rejected the argument that it should update addresses based on petition information; the candidate must ensure addresses are current. *Michael v. Gurley*, BOE Case No. 18-007. See also *James Harnett v. Chrysanthe Courniotes*, BOE Order No. 24-020; *Joe Bishop-Henchman v. Kevin Rapp*, BOE Order No. 24-025; *James Harnett v. Sherice Muhammad*, BOE Order No. 24-028.