

How To Collect Signatures

Everyone has their own way of asking people to sign a Petition. These are a few of the legal guidelines for collecting signatures and how avoid petition rejection. The best advice is to read and understand what the petition does and always stick to the facts.

It is best to promote the petition with the advertisement followed by an explanation of the legal language of what the petition actually does.

Most people start by asking, “Would you like to sign the _____ petition” followed by “This petition does _____ “. When you get a “yes”, ask them if they are a registered voter in Clackamas County (if not, they cannot legally sign your petition).

When collecting signatures, do not let the petition sheets out of your sight as you must personally witness every signature made!

You must carry a copy of the legal text with the petition in case someone wants to read it.

You cannot pay for or take anything of value for a signature.

If a person signs in the wrong place on the line, it’s OK as long as it’s dated correctly and all of their information is on the same line. If they make a major mistake, they can draw a line through their mistake, initial it, and start over again on the next line.

Sometimes a person may object to your petition or what it says. It’s best to say, “I’m sorry you feel that way” and walk away. Arguments are a waste of your time.

If you wish to collect signatures on business property, you must get the manager’s permission first. You can collect signatures on public property usually outside of an entrance door or in a specific location. Again, it is best to ask first and be courteous.

Some people may go house to house to gather signatures. Under Oregon law, if you are not asking for money or services, you are not soliciting.

If anyone harasses you or blocks you from collecting signatures in any way on public property, they are in violation of election law and should be reported immediately to the local police or Sheriff.

You can help a handicapped person fill out their basic information on this petition as long as they sign it and date it.

Do not sign and date the circulator’s line at the bottom of the petition sheet until you have finished collecting signatures.