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Pasco County**

Petitions, Petitions, and more Petitions

In Florida, the people have a right to propose amendments to the Florida Constitution through an initiative petition process. In addition to other requirements, this initiative petition process requires a specific number of petitions to be signed by registered Florida voters before the proposed amendment by initiative can appear on the ballot. Per the Florida Constitution, the number of signatures needed is based on eight percent of the voters who cast votes in the last presidential election. In addition, the signatures must also come from voters in at least one-half of the congressional districts of the state.

For the 2018 election, to get an initiative placed on the ballot the sponsoring group must collect 766,200 valid petition signatures in order to make ballot placement. These signatures must come from at least 14 of Florida's 27 congressional districts.

Once our office receives a batch of petitions, we have a 30-day window to process them per Florida statute. Every individual petition is reviewed to ensure that the signature matches what is on our voter file, that the petition has an accurate sign date, and that the voter's name, street address, county and voter registration number or date of birth matches our files as well.

All initiative petitions received by this office must be reviewed and certified to the Department of State/Division of Elections within that 30-day window. The deadline to receive petitions as well as verify them is February 1, 2018.

There is another type of petition allowed in the state of Florida. That petition is used by candidates to qualify for ballot placement in lieu of paying a qualifying fee. For example, in Pasco County, a person running for Board of County Commissioners can pay a fee of \$5,091.77 or collect 3,360 petitions in order to have their name placed on the ballot. Other elected offices may require different fees and numbers of petitions. Candidates are already collecting petition signatures on a form prescribed by the Department of State in order to have their name on the ballot for 2018.

By keeping your voter record active and up-to-date, you insure that any petition you sign for an initiative or a candidate will be validated and your voice heard. You can check your voter registration status at www.pascovotes.com or by calling 800-851-8754. Address updates can be accepted online or by phone. But signature updates must be submitted on a voter registration application which is also available on our website for you to print out, complete and mail to PO Box 300, Dade City, FL 33526.