

June 2010 Newsletter

Candidate and Initiative Petitions

One of the many responsibilities of the Supervisor of Elections' office is to verify signatures on candidate and initiative petitions. In 2009, the Elections' office processed a total of 114,048 petitions which required a name-by-name, signature-by-signature check of each individual petition within 30 days of receiving it in the supervisor's office.

Passing out petitions and collecting signatures is just one of two ways a candidate can get their name on the ballot. The other method is to pay a fee levied according to the office the candidate seeks and in proportion to the amount of registered voters within the district the office represents. Committees aspiring to have an amendment to the constitution on the ballot must collect signatures from registered voters to earn ballot placement.

As petitions are collected, and then received in the elections' office, they are processed within the 30-day statutorily required period. Each petition is examined individually by staff to ensure the petition signature matches the signature on file for that voter, that the petition contains the required signature date, the voter's name, street address, county, and voter registration number or date of birth. When all petitions have been scrutinized and the number of valid signatures determined, the Supervisor of Elections' office certifies that number to the Department of State. In the case of initiative petitions, federal, state, or multicounty district offices, Pasco County's totals are added to the statewide tally of constitutionally required signatures. Once the total is attained, the Secretary of the State issues a certificate of ballot position.

As a voter this is why it is important to make sure your voter registration is up-to-date, specifically your signature and address. To update your voter registration record, you must complete an application which can be obtained from any one of our offices, libraries, post offices or online at www.pascovotes.com. By keeping your record active and up-to-date, you ensure that any petition you sign will be validated and your voice heard. You can check your voter registration status at pascovotes.com or by calling 800-851-8754.