

The Basic Steps To Do An Initiative In Alaska Statutes – Indirect Initiative Process

Basic Procedures: Proponents must first file an application and leave a deposit with the Lieutenant Governor's office. The deposit is \$100 made payable to the State of Alaska; it will be refunded if the petition is properly filed and the measure is certified for the ballot. The application must contain the signatures of 3 prime sponsors with a statement that they are the initiative committee representing all sponsors. Proponents must also file with the application a full copy of the proposed bill, and the signatures of at least 100 qualified voters who will serve as sponsors for circulation purposes. A copy of the proposed bill must be attached to each signature page; and each signature page must contain a statement that the voter signed the application with the proposed bill attached.

After the application is filed, the Lieutenant Governor has the 100 signatures reviewed by the Division of Elections for verification of the required 100 qualified voters. At this time, the Department of Law reviews the application for legal content and advises the Lieutenant Governor. The application would be denied if it is not in proper form or does not include all required elements, there are an insufficient number of qualified voter sponsors, or the bill covers an issue restricted by the constitution. The proposed bill must be confined to one subject and the subject of the bill must be expressed in the title which must contain the enacting clause "Be it enacted by the People of the State of Alaska." The bill can not deal with subjects restricted under the Alaska Constitution; namely, dedicate revenues, make or repeal appropriations, create courts, define jurisdiction of courts, or enact local or special legislation.

When the application is certified, the Lieutenant Governor will notify sponsors of acceptance and include a copy of the Department of Law's formal legal opinion and impartial summary. The prime sponsors have the opportunity to review the impartial summary and title of the bill proposed by the Department of Law. The Division of Elections is responsible for printing 500 petition booklets and the initial distribution of the booklets to the prime sponsors. The prime sponsors distribute petition booklets to each of the other qualified sponsors who will circulate the petition and gather the required signatures.

Proponents file signatures with the Lieutenant Governor who must review them within 60 days from the date the petition was filed. If enough valid signatures have been submitted, the proposition will be placed on the election ballot of the first statewide general, special or primary election that is held after the petition has been filed, a legislative session has convened or adjourned, and a period of 120 has expired since the adjournment of the legislative session.

Date Initiative language can be submitted to the state: Any time.

Signatures are tied to vote of which office: Number of votes cast in the general election prior to when the application was filed.

Next General election: 2002

Number of votes cast in last general election: 287,825 (2000)

Net number of signatures required: 10% of the number of votes cast in the last general election. (28,782)

Distribution Requirement: One signature in 2/3 of state house districts.

Circulation period: Proponents have one year from the day they were notified that petition booklets were available for distribution to gather signatures and submit the petition to the Division of Elections.

Do circulators have to be residents: Yes – additionally, compensation to initiative circulators is limited to \$1.00 per signature.

Date when signatures are due for certification: Signatures must be submitted prior to the convening of the legislative session in the year in which the initiative is to appear on the ballot. (Early January for 2002.)

Signature verification process: Signatures are turned into the Division of Elections who verify each signature until the minimum number needed is met.

Single-subject restriction: Yes

Legislative tampering: The legislature can repeal an initiative only after two years of it passing; but the legislature may amend the initiative anytime.