

**The Basic Steps To Do An Initiative In Michigan
Statutes And Amendments – Direct Initiative Process (Amendments),
Indirect Initiative Process (Statutes)**

Basic Procedures: The Michigan Department of State's Bureau of Elections offers its staff for consultations on the designing the petition format of an initiative measure. Upon determining through the consultation process that an initiative or referendum petition is properly formatted, it is submitted to the Board of State Canvassers for approval as to form. While Michigan election law does not require Board approval of an initiative or referendum petition form, such approval greatly reduces the risk that signatures collected on the form will be ruled invalid due to formatting defects. The Board does not review or approve the actual language of the proposed initiative.

When the Secretary of State certifies that enough valid signatures have been collected, the State Director of Elections writes the ballot question and summary. This ballot question and summary is submitted to the Board of Canvassers for review and changes. The Board of Canvassers also holds a public meeting so that proponents, opponents and the general public can comment on the language and ask for changes. Although, the Board of Canvassers relies on the suggestions of proponents, they need not heed them. If proponents are unsatisfied with the final ballot language and think it's unfair, they can take the Board of Canvassers to court to get the ballot language changed.

Date Initiative language can be submitted to state for November 2002:
Any time.

Signatures are tied to vote of which office: Governor

Next gubernatorial election: 2002

Votes cast for Governor in Gubernatorial election: 3,027,104

Net number of signatures required: For statutes, 8% of votes cast for Governor (242,169 signatures.) For amendments, 10% of votes cast for Governor (302,710 signatures.) For statutes, if the petition contains a sufficient number of valid signatures the state legislature has 40 session days to adopt or reject the proposal. If the legislature rejects the law, then the measure is placed on the next general election ballot. For amendments, if the petition contains a sufficient number of valid signatures the measure is placed immediately on the next general election ballot.

Distribution Requirement: None.

Circulation period: 180 days. (Michigan law states that proponents must submit signatures that have been gathered within a 180-day period and that the number of valid signatures must be at least equal to the required amount for the initiative to qualify for the ballot. The signatures can be gathered, however, within *any* 180-day period. Thus, proponents can gather signatures for as long as they want – but they can only submit signatures gathered within the same 180-day period.)

Do circulators have to be residents: Yes

Date when signatures are filed for certification: For amendments, at least 120 days prior to the 2002 general election (Early July – date to be confirmed). For statutes, signatures must be submitted at least 10 days prior to the start of the 2002 legislature (Late May – date to be confirmed)

Signature verification process: Random sample.

Single-subject restriction: No

Legislative tampering: Legislature can repeal and amend by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of each house or as otherwise provided by the initiative.