

Signature, Geographic Distribution and Single Subject (SS) Requirements for Initiative Petitions

State	Type	SS	Net Signature Requirement for Constitutional Amendments	Net Signature Requirement for Statutes	Geographic Distribution	Deadline for Signature Submission	Circulation Period
AK	IDS	Yes	Not allowed by state constitution	10% of votes cast in last general election.	At least 1 signature in 2/3 of Election Districts	Prior to the convening of the legislature ¹	1 year
AZ	DA/DS	Yes	15% of votes cast for Governor	10% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Four months prior to election	20 months
AR	DA/DS	No	10% of votes cast for Governor	8% of votes cast for Governor	5% in 15 of 75 counties	Four months prior to election	Unlimited
CA	DA/DS	Yes	8% of votes cast for Governor	5% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	To be determined by state each year ²	150 days
CO	DA/DS	Yes	5% of votes cast for SOS	5% of votes cast for SOS	No geographical distribution	Three months prior to election	6 months
FL	DA	Yes	8% of ballots cast in the last Presidential election	Not allowed by state constitution	8% in 12 of 23 Congressional Districts	90 days prior to election ³	4 years
ID	DS	No	Not allowed by state constitution	6% of registered voters	6% in each of the 22 counties ⁴	Four months prior to election	18 months
ME	IDS	No	Not allowed by state constitution	10% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	To be determined by state each year ⁵	1 year
MA	IDA/IDS	No	3% of votes cast for Governor	3½% of votes cast for Governor ⁶	No more than 25% from a single county	To be determined each year by state ⁷	64 days
MI	DA/IDS	No	10% of votes cast for Governor	8% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Constitutional amendment ⁸ Statute ⁹	180 days
MS	IDA	No	12% of votes cast for Governor	Not allowed by state constitution	20% from each Congressional District	90 days prior to the convening of the legislature	1 year
MO	DA/DS	Yes	8% of votes cast for Governor	5% of votes cast for Governor	5% in 6 of 9 Congressional Districts	Eight months prior to election	16 months
MT	DA/DS	Yes	10% of votes cast for Governor	5% of votes cast for Governor	Statute: 5% in 34 of 50 Legislative Districts Amendment: 10% in 40 of 50 Legislative Districts ¹⁰	Second Friday of the fourth month prior to election	1 year
NE	DA/DS	Yes	10% of registered voters	7% of registered voters	5% in 38 of 93 counties	Four months prior to election	1 year

¹ In Alaska, 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. The lieutenant governor shall place the initiative on the election ballot of the first statewide general, special, or primary election that is held after (1) the petition and any supplementary petition signatures have been submitted, (2) a legislative session has convened and adjourned, and (3) a period of 120 days has expired since the adjournment of the legislative session.

² In California, each year the Secretary of State will set a complete schedule showing the maximum filing deadline and the certification deadline by the counties to the Secretary of State. There is a recommended submission date for "full check" and "random check". These dates are only recommended. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no initiative shall be placed on a statewide election ballot that qualifies less than 131 days before the date of the election.

³ In Florida, certification must be received by the Secretary of State from the county supervisors stating the number of valid signatures submitted by the initiative proponent no later than 90 days prior to the general election ballot for the initiative to be considered for that ballot. However, there are several additional criteria that must be met prior to the certification of an initiative for the ballot. This includes the requirement that the proposed initiative has been approved for the ballot by the state supreme court. An initiative can only be submitted to the court for review after 10% of the required number of signatures have been collected and certified to the Secretary of State by the county supervisors. The court is under no statutory time frame to render a decision. Therefore, there is no precise date in which the signatures must be submitted in order to insure that you qualify for any specific general election ballot.

⁴ This distribution requirement was struck down as unconstitutional by the Federal District Court of Idaho in early 2002. The decision was appealed by the state and as of the writing of this Almanac, the appeal had not been decided.

⁵ In Maine, signatures must be submitted on or before the 50th day after the convening of the Legislature in the first regular session or on or before the 25th day after the convening of the Legislature in the second regular session.

⁶ In Massachusetts, the initial petition must include 3% of the total votes cast for Governor. If the legislature has not passed an initiated statute by the first Wednesday in May, petitioners must file a supplementary petition with petitions equal in number to one-half of one percent of the total votes cast in the previous gubernatorial election to place the issue on the ballot.

⁷ In Massachusetts, the initial petition signatures shall be submitted no later than the first Wednesday in December in the year in which the Initiative was submitted. If the legislature has not passed the initiated statute by the first Wednesday in May, petitioners must file a supplementary petition with petitions equal in number to one-half of one percent of the total votes cast in the previous gubernatorial election no sooner than the first Wednesday in June and no later than the first Wednesday in July in for the initiative statute to be placed on the ballot.

⁸ In Michigan, signatures for constitutional amendments must be submitted not less than 120 days prior to the general election.

⁹ In Michigan, signatures for statutes must be submitted ten days prior to the start of the legislative session.

¹⁰ The legislature has placed a constitutional amendment on the November 2002 that would increase the state's distribution requirement. If it passes the requirement will be based on counties and not on legislative districts.

State	Type	SS	Net Signature Requirement for Constitutional Amendments	Net Signature Requirement for Statutes	Geographic Distribution	Deadline for Signature Submission	Circulation Period
NV	DA/IDS	No	10% of registered voters	10% of votes cast in last general election.	10% in 13 of 17 counties	Constitutional amendment ¹¹ Statute ¹²	CA: 11 months ¹³ Statute: 10 months ¹⁴
ND	DA/DS	No	4% of population	2% of population	No geographical distribution	90 days prior to election	1 year
OH	DA/IDS	Yes	10% of votes cast for Governor	6% of votes cast for Governor ¹⁵	Statute: 1½% in 44 of 88 counties Amendment: 5% in 44 of 88 counties	Constitutional amendment ¹⁶ Statute ¹⁷	Unlimited
OK	DA/DS	Yes	15% of votes cast for Governor	8% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Eight months prior to election ¹⁸	90 days
OR	DA/DS	Yes	8% of votes cast for Governor	6% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Four months prior to election	Unlimited
SD	DA/DS	No	10% of votes cast for Governor	5% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Constitutional amendment ¹⁹ Statute ²⁰	1 year
UT	DS/IDS	No	Not allowed by state constitution	Direct statute: 10% of votes cast for Governor In-direct statute: 10% of votes cast for Governor ²¹	10% in 20 of 29 counties	Direct statute ²² In-direct statute ²³	Direct: Unlimited In-direct: Unlimited
WA	DS/IDS	No	Not allowed by state constitution	8% of votes cast for Governor	No geographical distribution	Direct: statute ²⁴ In-direct statute ²⁵	Direct: 6 months In-direct: 10 months
WY	IDS	Yes	Not allowed by state constitution	15% of votes cast in the last general election.	15% of total votes cast in the last election from at least 2/3 of the counties	One day prior to the convening of the legislature ²⁶	18 months

¹¹ In Nevada, signatures for constitutional amendments must be submitted 90 days prior to the election.

¹² In Nevada, signatures for statutes must be submitted 30 days prior to the convening of the legislature.

¹³ In Nevada, petition language for constitutional amendments can be filed no sooner than September 1 of the year preceding the election and all signatures are due 90 days prior to the election.

¹⁴ In Nevada, petition language for statutes can be filed no sooner than January 1st of an even numbered year and signatures must be submitted no later than November 1st of that same even numbered year.

¹⁵ In Ohio, the initial petition must include 3% of the total votes cast for Governor. A supplementary petition containing an additional 3% is required in the event the proposed statute is defeated, amended or left idle by the legislature.

¹⁶ In Ohio, signatures for amendments must be submitted 90 days prior to the election.

¹⁷ In Ohio, signatures for statutes must be submitted 10 days prior to the convening of legislature.

¹⁸ In Oklahoma, an initiative must be submitted to the state Supreme Court for review before it can be certified for the ballot by the Secretary of State. Due to the fact that there is no statutory deadline for the court to make this determination, the state recommends that you submit your signatures eight months prior to the election that you desire the measure to be considered for.

¹⁹ In South Dakota, signatures for amendments must be submitted at least one year prior to the election.

²⁰ In South Dakota, signatures for statutes must be submitted by the first Tuesday in May in the general election year.

²¹ In Utah, direct statutes require signatures equal in number to 10% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the next preceding gubernatorial election for the statute to be placed on the ballot. Indirect statutes must contain signatures from 5% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the next preceding gubernatorial election. If the legislature rejects or does not enact the proposed statute, a supplemental petition contacting additional signatures equal in number to 5% of the votes cast for all candidates for Governor in the next preceding gubernatorial election for the statute to be placed on the ballot.

²² In Utah, signatures for direct statutes must be submitted at least four months prior to the election.

²³ In Utah, signatures for in-direct statutes must be submitted at least 10 days before the commencement of the annual general legislative session.

²⁴ In Washington, signatures for direct statutes must be submitted four months prior to the election.

²⁵ In Washington, signatures for indirect statutes must be submitted ten days prior to the convening of the regular session of the legislature.

²⁶ In Wyoming, signatures must be submitted prior to the convening of the legislature. The state constitution states that the legislature shall convene at noon on the second Tuesday in January.