

<p style="text-align: center;">The Basic Steps To Do An Initiative In Washington Statutes Only – Direct And Indirect Initiative Process</p>
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Basic procedures: The sponsor must file a printed or typewritten copy of the complete text of the proposed initiative or referendum with the Secretary of State. The sponsor must include an affidavit of sponsorship and a five-dollar (\$5.00) filing fee. Each measure, when filed with the Secretary of State, must be accompanied by a sworn affidavit that the sponsor is a legal voter of the state. (Affidavits are available from the state.) The sponsor of an initiative should contact and file with the Public Disclosure Commission in conjunction with the preliminary filing of the initiative language.

There are two types of initiatives: 1) **Initiatives to the People:** Initiatives to the people, if certified to have sufficient signatures, are submitted for a vote of the people at the next state general election and 2) **Initiatives to the Legislature:** Initiatives to the Legislature, if certified, are submitted to the Legislature at its regular session each January. Once submitted, the Legislature must take one of the following three actions: a) the Legislature can adopt the initiative as proposed, in which case it becomes law without a vote of the people; b) the Legislature can reject or refuse to act on the proposed initiative, in which case the initiative must be placed on the ballot at the next state general election; or c) the Legislature can approve an amended version of the proposed initiative, in which case both the amended version and the original proposal must be placed on the next state general election ballot.

Date initiative language can be submitted to state for the 2001 or 2002 election: *Initiatives to the people* must be filed within 10 months prior to the next state general election, and the petitions (signatures) must be filed not less than 4 months before such general election. *Initiatives to the Legislature* must be filed within 10 months prior to the next regular session of the Legislature, and the petitions (signatures) must be filed not less than 10 days before such regular session of the Legislature.

Signatures are tied to vote of which office: Governor

Next Gubernatorial election: 2004

Votes cast for governor in last election: 2,469,852 (2000)

Net number of signatures required: 8% of votes cast for Governor in last gubernatorial election for both direct and in-direct initiatives. (197,588).

Distribution requirement: None.

Circulation period: For initiatives to the people – 6 months and for initiatives to the Legislature it is 10 months.

Do circulators have to be residents: No

Date when signatures are due for certification: Petitions supporting an **initiative to the people** must be filed with the Secretary of State no later than four (4) months before the date of the state general election (first week of July 2001 and 2002) and petitions supporting an **initiative to the Legislature** must be filed with the Secretary of State no later than 10 days before a regular session of the Legislature convenes (Early January 2001 for 2001 general election and early January 2002 for 2002 general election.) Petitions must be filed not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the last business day in the specified period for submission of signatures. If a filing deadline falls on a Saturday, the office of the Secretary of State will be open on that Saturday for the transaction of business from 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m.

Signature verification process: Random sampling

Single-subject restriction: Yes

Legislative tampering: The legislature can repeal or amend an initiative by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of each house during the first 2 years of enactment, majority vote thereafter.

General comments: Following is a more detailed outline of what occurs once the initiative language is filed:

- 1) A copy of the text of a proposed initiative is sent to the office of the Code Reviser by the Secretary of State immediately after filing. The Code Reviser must, within seven (7) **working** days, perform the following:
 - a) Review the draft for technical errors and style;
 - b) Advise the sponsor of any potential conflicts between the proposal and existing statutes; and
 - c) Return the proposal with a "certificate of review" to the sponsor with any recommended changes. All changes made by the Code Reviser are advisory and are subject to approval by the sponsor.
- 2) The sponsor has 15 **working** days after the submittal of the initiative to the Code Reviser to file the final draft of the measure, accompanied by the Code Reviser's certificate of review, with the Secretary of State. If the sponsor has made changes in the final draft as prepared by the Code Reviser, those changes should be initialed by the sponsor prior to filing that

draft with the Secretary of State. At this point, the Secretary of State will assign a serial number to the proposal and forward the initiative measure to the office of the Attorney General for formulation of the ballot title and summary. Referendum measures are **not** reviewed by the Code Reviser; they are immediately assigned a serial number and transmitted to the Attorney General.

3) Upon receipt of a proposed ballot measure, the Attorney General has seven (7) **calendar** days to formulate and return a ballot title and a summary to the Secretary of State. The **ballot title** for initiatives must be no more than 20 words, phrased as a question, and impartial and non-argumentative in nature; the **ballot summary** must be no more than 75 words and impartial and non-argumentative in nature. Immediately after receiving the ballot title and summary, the Secretary of State must notify the sponsor by telephone and by mail of the wording of the ballot title. Any person dissatisfied with either the ballot title or summary prepared by the Attorney General may seek judicial review of those statements by petitioning the Thurston County Superior Court in Olympia. Such action must be taken within five (5) days of the filing of those statements with the Secretary of State and the court is required to expeditiously review the statements and render a decision within five (5) days. The decision of the court is final. After filing the proposal and obtaining an official serial number and a ballot title and summary, the sponsor of an initiative or referendum measure may print signature petition sheets (sheets are printed at the sponsor's own expense). The Secretary of State may reject any petition that does not meet statutory requirements. The statute requires:

a) Petitions must be printed on sheets of good quality paper. (Petitions printed on newsprint will be accepted by the Secretary of State, assuming other statutory requirements are met.)

b) The petition sheets must measure not less than 11 inches in width and not less than 14 inches in length.

c) In addition, the following must be printed on the **front** of each petition sheet:

i) The official ballot title and summary as prepared by the Attorney General;

ii) The serial number assigned by the Secretary of State;

iii) The heading specified by RCW 29.79.090, 29.79.100 or 29.79.110;

iv) Not more than 20 numbered lines, each with space for a voter's signature, his/her printed name and his/her legal voting address; and

v) The following warning, which must occupy not less than four (4) square inches: "Every person who signs this petition with any other than his or her true name, knowingly signs more than one of these petitions, signs this petition when he or she is not a legal voter or makes any false

statement on this petition may be punished by fine or imprisonment or both."

vi) The **full text** of the measure must also appear on the petition. To verify the signatures on any petition, the Secretary of State must be able to ascertain that the signer, at the time of signing the petition, had the opportunity to read the complete text of the measure.