



**CITY OF OTSEGO**  
**PETITION PACKET**  
**NOVEMBER 3, 2020**  
**ELECTION**

## CITY COMMISSIONER – THREE OPEN SEATS NOVEMBER 3, 2020

Petition forms are now available at the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 117 E. Orleans St., for election to the Otsego City Commission. The City Election will be held Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Three City Commission seats will be open for election this fall.

The two candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be elected to four year terms and the third candidate will be elected to a two year term.

In order to qualify for the Office of City Commissioner, a candidate must be:

- \* A resident of the City for not less than one (1) year immediately preceding his or her election.

- \* A registered voter.

Nominations for office are determined by petition signed by not less than 40 registered voters of the City of Otsego. Petitions need to be submitted to the **City Clerk's Office** no later than Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

Please post in the June 4, 11 – July 9, 23, 2020, Editions of the Union Enterprise.

**PETITION PACKET**

I have received the following forms and information from the City of Otsego Clerk's Office regarding the filing of petitions for public office.

- |    |                                                                                    |       |                                            |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1) | Blank Petition Forms                                                               | _____ | Nominating Petition<br>(City Non-Partisan) |
| 2) | Affidavit of Identity Form<br>And Receipt of Filing                                | _____ |                                            |
| 3) | Affidavit Concerning<br>Qualifications of Elective<br>Office to the City of Otsego | _____ |                                            |
| 4) | Information pamphlet<br>Candidate Information                                      | _____ |                                            |

**Name of Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate for the office of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of person/candidate accepting packet:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(if someone other than candidate)

**Signature of person accepting packet:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Initials of office personnel:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Copy to person accepting packet.**

# Affidavit of Identity and Receipt of Filing

## how to file for elective office

### when to file

Visit [mi.gov/elections](http://mi.gov/elections) - Information for Candidates to confirm filing dates.

All affidavits must be received by the date and time specified. Affidavits of Identity received after, regardless of the postmark, are invalid.

### where to file

File with the Michigan Bureau of Elections for a federal or state district that includes more than one county (including statewide) and all judicial races

except probate or municipal.

File with the County Clerk for a federal or state district in only one county, a county or probate judge race, and precinct delegates.

File with the City or Township Clerk for all city or township offices.

Contact your County Clerk to determine the appropriate filing official for village, school, or library district offices.

You may file in person or by mail.

### withdrawals

The deadline for withdrawing from the ballot is three days after the filing deadline. Verify time at [mi.gov/elections](http://mi.gov/elections)

Once filed, an Affidavit of Identity may not be altered.

If the candidate decides during the filing period to change the Affidavit of Identity, the candidate must submit a new form.

## how to complete the form

### 1. candidate information

Print your information legibly. Provide a mailing address if you would like to receive mail at an alternate address.

### 2. additional information

A phone number, date of birth, email address, or website is not required, but recommended.

### 3. office sought/ballot information

If you are using a name not given at birth, you must complete the full former name field unless your name was formally changed because of marriage or divorce or formally changed for any reason more than 10 years ago (see MCL 168.558 & 560b).

Print the office name, the jurisdiction, and any district/circuit/ward defining the office for which you are a candidate. If a delegate candidate, put precinct number.

Print your name exactly as you wish it to appear on the ballot using upper and lower case letters. Michigan election law says that a candidate may use the following:

- first and middle name
- middle name only
- initials for first and/or middle name
- a name that is a recognized diminutive of given name
- common law name

Do not use a nickname or titles (e.g. Rev, PhD, etc.)

### Example:

#### Affidavit of Identity and Receipt of Filing

candidate information	1	→ John first name	Michael middle	Doe last
		123 Main St residential address		Sample, 44444 city / zip
additional information	2	N/A mailing address, if applicable		
		555-555-5555 phone number		01/01/1950 date of birth
office sought/ballot information	3	JohnDoe@email.com email address		voteforjohn.com campaign website
		I, my name formally changed in the last 10 years for a reason other than marriage or divorce; if checked, print full former name: Supervisor office name		
filer's acknowledgment	4	Political Party Name political party, if a partisan office (if running without party affiliation list "No Party Affiliation")	Sample Township jurisdiction	
		John M Doe exact name I would like printed on the ballot (use upper and lower case letters)		
statements and attestation	5	regular term <input checked="" type="radio"/> / <input type="radio"/> partial term expiring / <input type="radio"/> recall election type: <input checked="" type="radio"/> primary election / <input type="radio"/> general election	8-4-20	
		judicial candidates only: <input type="radio"/> incumbent position / <input type="radio"/> non-incumbent position / <input type="radio"/> new judgeship		
notary public		nominating or qualifying petitions (estimated number of signatures: 72) to be <input checked="" type="radio"/> destroyed / <input type="radio"/> returned in custody		
		a filing fee of \$100 (if applicable): <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> certification of party nomination and certificate of acceptance (if applicable): <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> affidavit of constitutional qualification: <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> affidavit of candidacy (incumbents only): <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
I am a citizen of the United States and I meet the statutory and constitutional requirements for the office sought. I swear, or affirm, that the facts I have provided and the facts contained in the statement set forth below are true. At this date, all statements, reports, late filing fees, and fines due from me or my candidate committee organized to support my election to office under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, PA 830 of 1976, have been filed or paid. I acknowledge that making a false statement in this affidavit is perjury - a felony punishable by a fine up to \$1,000.00 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both and may result in disqualification from the ballot (MCL 160.950, 955, and 956).				
sign here		John M. Doe	date here	01/01/2020
notary signature		Susie Notary	notary name	Susie Notary
notary public, state of Michigan, county of		first Sample	day of April	my commission expires 3-15-2022
acting in the county of				

Fill in the appropriate circles to indicate the term and election and any associated dates.

### 4. filer's acknowledgement

Fill in the appropriate circle to indicate the items included in your filing. If submitting petitions, indicate the estimated number being submitted and if you'd like them destroyed or returned to you.

### 5. statements and attestation

Fill in the circle to indicate you meet the statutory and constitutional requirements for the office sought and are a citizen of the United States. Read, sign, and date the attestation. The affidavit is not complete until signed and notarized.

Campaign Finance Act compliance: do not sign or submit this affidavit if the appropriate campaign finance items have not been filed or paid.

# Affidavit of Identity and Receipt of Filing

→

**candidate information** 1

first name \_\_\_\_\_ middle \_\_\_\_\_ last \_\_\_\_\_

residential address \_\_\_\_\_ city / zip \_\_\_\_\_

mailing address, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_ city / zip \_\_\_\_\_

**additional information** 2

phone number \_\_\_\_\_ date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ / /

email address \_\_\_\_\_ campaign website \_\_\_\_\_

my name formally changed in the last 10 years for a reason other than marriage or divorce; if checked, print full former name: \_\_\_\_\_

**office sought/ ballot information** 3

office name \_\_\_\_\_ jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_ district/circuit/ward \_\_\_\_\_

political party, if a partisan office. if running without party affiliation list "No Party Affiliation."

exact name I would like printed on the ballot (use upper and lower case letters)

term (check one):  regular term  partial term expiring / /  recall

election (check one):  primary election / /  general election / /

judicial candidates only:  incumbent position  non-incumbent position  new judgeship

**filer's acknowledgment** (check one) 4

nominating or qualifying petitions (estimated number of signatures \_\_\_\_\_) to be  destroyed  returned in January

a filing fee of \$100 (if applicable)

certification of party nomination and certificate of acceptance (if applicable)

judicial candidates only:  affidavit of constitutional qualification  affidavit of candidacy (incumbents only)

**statements and attestation**

I am a citizen of the United States and I meet the statutory and constitutional requirements for the office sought.

I swear, or affirm, that the facts I have provided and the facts contained in the statement set forth below are true.

*At this date, all statements, reports, late filing fees, and fines due from me or any Candidate Committee organized to support my election to office under the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, PA 388 of 1976, have been filed or paid.*

I acknowledge that making a false statement in this affidavit is perjury - a felony punishable by a fine up to \$1,000.00 or imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both and may result in disqualification from the ballot (MCL 168.558, 933, and 936).

5

sign here \_\_\_\_\_ date here \_\_\_\_\_

notary signature \_\_\_\_\_ notary name \_\_\_\_\_

subscribed and sworn to me on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

notary public, state of Michigan, county of \_\_\_\_\_ my commission expires / /

acting in the county of \_\_\_\_\_

**for office use only**

received by \_\_\_\_\_ number of petition sheets \_\_\_\_\_ receipt number \_\_\_\_\_

reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_ date of filing \_\_\_\_\_

jurisdiction/district of office sought \_\_\_\_\_ campaign finance number \_\_\_\_\_



ORIGINAL OR AMENDED  
STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION FORM FOR LOCAL CANDIDATE COMMITTEES FILED WITH A COUNTY CLERK  
Information on this form is made public.

1. Committee ID #:	*2. Type of Filing: <input type="checkbox"/> Original: <input type="checkbox"/> Amendment to items:	Eff. Date:
*3. Full Name of Committee (must include Candidate's first and last name):		
*4a. Candidate Full Name: Last Name	First Name	M.I.
*4b. Political Party (if applicable):	*4c. County of Residence:	
*4d. Office Sought:	*4e. District or Jurisdiction:	
*5. Date Committee was Formed:		
*6a. Committee Phone:	6b. Committee Fax #:	
*6c. Committee Email Address:	6d. Committee Website Address:	
*7a. Complete Committee Mailing Address (May be PO Box):		
*7b. Complete Committee Street Address (May not be PO Box):		
*8. Treasurer Name and Complete Residential Address:		
Phone #:	Email Address:	
9. Designated Record Keeper Name and Complete Address:		
Phone #:	Email Address:	
*10. REPORTING WAIVER REQUEST:		
<input type="checkbox"/> YES, I/We WANT TO APPLY FOR THE REPORTING WAIVER. The committee does not expect to receive or expend in excess of \$1,000.00 in an election. I/We understand that if the committee does not spend or received in excess of \$1,000.00 in an <i>election</i> , the committee does not owe detailed campaign statements. I/We further understand that the Reporting Waiver will be automatically lost if the committee exceeds the \$1,000.00 threshold and all required campaign statements must be filed. <i>A Reporting Waiver does not exempt a committee from filing Late Contribution Reports.</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> NO, I/We DO NOT WANT TO APPLY FOR THE REPORTING WAIVER. The committee expects to receive or expend in excess of \$1,000.00 in an election. I/We understand that the committee owes detailed campaign statements even if the committee does not spend or receive in excess of \$1,000.00 in an election. I further understand that the Reporting Waiver cannot be requested retroactively to avoid filing requirements and to avoid paying late filing fees. Further information regarding Reporting Waivers can be found in <a href="#">Appendix C</a> of the Committee Manual.		
*11. Name and Address of Depositories or Intended Depositories of committee funds. (Michigan Bank, Credit Union or Savings & Loan Association) While this item must be completed, an account does not have to be opened until the first contribution is received.		
*Official Depository (name and address):		
Secondary Depository (name and address):		
12. Verification: I/We certify that all reasonable diligence was used in the preparation of the above statement and that the contents are true, accurate and complete to the best of my/our knowledge or belief. If filing campaign statements electronically, we further agree that the signatures below shall serve as the signatures that verify the accuracy and completeness of each statement filed electronically by the committee. I/We certify that all reasonable diligence will be used in the preparation of each statement electronically filed by this committee and that the contents of each statement will be true, accurate and complete to the best of my/our knowledge or belief. (Sign Name and Date)		
*Candidate:	Date:	*Current Treasurer
		Date:
*Designated Record Keeper (If Applicable)		Date:

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION  
FOR LOCAL CANDIDATE COMMITTEES  
STATE LEVEL COMMITTEES FILE THIS FORM ELECTRONICALLY**

As soon as an individual becomes a "candidate" under Michigan's Campaign Finance Act, P.A. 388 of 1976, as amended, he or she has 10 calendar days to form a Candidate Committee. After the committee's formation date, the candidate has an additional 10 calendar days to register the committee. A candidate registers a Candidate Committee by filing a Statement of Organization form with his or her filing official. A person becomes a candidate under the Campaign Finance Act on the date he or she:

- files a nominating petition, a filing fee or an affidavit of candidacy; or
- receives a contribution or makes an expenditure, or gives consent to someone else to receive a contribution or make an expenditure with a view to bringing about the individual's nomination or election to an elective office; or
- is nominated for an elective office by a political party caucus or convention.

**Candidates exempted from Statement of Organization Filing Requirements:**

- A candidate who seeks a precinct delegate position is not required to file a Statement of Organization.
- A candidate who seeks a school board position in a school district with a pupil membership count of 2,400 or less AND receives or spends \$1,000.00 or less for the election is not required to file a Statement of Organization.

**NOTE: The information contained on the Statement of Organization must be kept up-to-date. If a change in the information takes place, an amendment to the form must be filed no later than the due date of the first campaign statement required of the committee after the change. The treasurer serving at the time of the change must sign the amendment.**

**WHERE TO FILE THIS FORM**

**Offices that file with the County Clerk's Office:**

- A candidate for a county, city, township, village, public school board, community college board or other local elective office is required to file two copies of this form with the clerk for the county in which the candidate resides.  
**EXCEPTION:** A local candidate whose district crosses county boundaries is required to file this form with the clerk of the county where the greatest number of voters eligible to vote on the office resides.

**Offices that file with the Michigan Department of State Bureau of Elections must file this form electronically using the assigned Internet application:**

- A candidate for Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Senate, State Representative, State Board of Education, University of Michigan Regent, Michigan State University Trustee, Wayne State University Governor, Michigan Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Circuit Court, District Court, Probate Court and Municipal Court.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Type or clearly print in ink all information requested on the Statement of Organization form. Each entry on the form is discussed below.

**Note: If filing an Original Statement of Organization, all fields preceded with an \* are required fields.**

- ITEM 1:** On the original Statement of Organization, leave Item 1 blank. An identification number will be assigned to the committee by the filing official. For an amendment enter the assigned identification in Item 1.
- \*ITEM 2:** Indicate whether the Statement of Organization is an original or amendment. If this is an amendment, list all item number(s) and effective date of the change.
- \*ITEM 3:** Enter the committee's official name. **The committee name *must* include the candidate's first and last name.**
- \*ITEM 4a:** Enter the candidate's full name.
- \*ITEM 4b:** If the office sought by the candidate is a partisan office, enter the candidate's party affiliation.
- \*ITEM 4c:** Enter the candidate's county of residence.
- \*ITEM 4d:** Enter name of the office sought by the candidate.
- \*ITEM 4e:** Enter the district number or jurisdiction (county, city, township, village, school district) served by the office.
- \*ITEM 5:** Enter the date the committee was formed. This form must be received by your filing official within **10 calendar days** after the committee's formation date. A late filing fee of \$10.00 per business day is assessed if this form is filed late.
- \*ITEM 6a:** Enter the committee's phone number including the area code.
- ITEM 6b:** Enter the committee's fax number.
- \*ITEM 6c:** Enter the committee's e-mail address.
- \*ITEM 7a:** Enter the committee's mailing address. A post office box is acceptable. All mail from the filing official will be directed to the committee's mailing address.
- \*ITEM 7b:** Enter the committee's street address. A post office box is not acceptable. (List the candidate's or treasurer's home address if no other address is available.)
- \*ITEM 8:** Enter the full name (last name, first name, middle initial), complete residential address, telephone number and e-mail address of the committee's treasurer. The candidate may serve as the committee's treasurer. A committee treasurer must be listed in this item.

**ITEM 9:** If the committee has a designated recordkeeper enter his or her name, (last name, first name, middle initial) residential complete address. This is the person, other than the treasurer, who will be responsible for the committee's records and campaign statement filings. If the committee's treasurer will personally handle these responsibilities, leave this item blank. An individual designated in this item may sign campaign statements in place of the treasurer, but does not have the authority to sign a Statement of Organization form in place of the treasurer.

**\*ITEM 10: Reporting Waiver Request.**

•Select **"YES, I/We WANT TO APPLY FOR THE REPORTING WAIVER"** if the committee does not expect to receive or spend more than \$1,000.00 in an election. The committee does not owe detailed campaign statements as long as the committee does not receive or spend more than \$1000.00. This option must be selected to obtain the Reporting Waiver.

•Select **"NO, I/We DO NOT WANT TO APPLY FOR THE REPORTING WAIVER"** if the committee expects to receive or expend in excess of \$1,000.00 in an election. This means that the committee owes detailed campaign statements even if the committee does not spend or receive in excess of \$1,000.00 in an election. Election means primary, general, special or millage election, or a convention or caucus of a political party held in this state to nominate a candidate. Election also includes a recall vote.

**\*ITEM 11:** Enter the name and address of the Michigan bank, savings and loan association or credit union that the committee now uses, intends to use or would use as its "official depository". While this item must be completed, an account does not have to be opened until the first contribution is received. Enter the name and addresses of any "secondary depositories" the committee uses or intends to use. A secondary depository may be used only for the deposit of contributions; it may not be used for committee expenditures.

**\*ITEM 12:** This form **must** be signed and dated by the candidate, the committee's treasurer and designated recordkeeper. If the candidate is serving as the committee's treasurer, the candidate signs once on the line for the candidate's signature.





# CITY OF OTSEGO

117 E. ORLEANS STREET

OTSEGO MI 49078

269-692-3391

269-692-2643 (F)

WWW.CITYOFOTSEGO.ORG

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a resident at \_\_\_\_\_

Meet the following requirements to run for the Office of City Commissioner for the City of Otsego:

1. I am a resident of the City of Otsego – for not less than one year immediately preceding the election.
2. I am currently a City of Otsego Registered Voter.

I duly affirm that the above statements are true,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

City Clerk, Angela Cronen \_\_\_\_\_



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**CIRCULATING AND CANVASSING  
CITY/TOWNSHIP PETITION FORMS**

**NOMINATING AND QUALIFYING PETITIONS**

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Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
April 2020

[Michigan.gov/Elections](https://www.michigan.gov/Elections)

## CIRCULATING AND CANVASSING CITY/TOWNSHIP PETITION FORMS NOMINATING AND QUALIFYING PETITIONS

This publication summarizes the laws, court rulings and Attorney General Opinions governing the validity of signatures on the following types of city/township petition forms:

Nominating Petition (City/Township Partisan)  
Nominating Petition (City/Township Nonpartisan)  
Qualifying Petition Candidate Without Party Affiliation (City/Township)  
Village Non-Partisan Nominating Petition  
School Nominating Petition  
Metropolitan District Nominating Petition

### WHICH PETITION FORM SHOULD BE USED?

There are several different types of petitions provided for candidates depending on the office sought, which are described below. A candidate's failure to use the proper petition form (i.e., partisan versus non-partisan, non-partisan versus qualifying) will result in his or her disqualification.

This publication explains the laws governing the circulation of city/township petitions, including the following:

***City/Township Partisan Nominating Petition:*** Must be used by major party candidates seeking the office of County Commissioner and may be used by any major party candidate who seeks a partisan office.

***City-Township Non-Partisan Nominating Petition:*** May be used by any candidate who seeks a nonpartisan office, except for candidates seeking the offices of school board member, intermediate school board member, community college trustee, library or district library board member. **Note:** The term "non-partisan" refers to the legal classification of the office sought, not the candidate's preference to refrain from associating with a particular political party. Examples of non-partisan offices include judicial offices, certain city offices, etc.

***City/Township Qualifying Petition:*** Must be used by a candidate who does not affiliate with a recognized political party seeking the office of County Commissioner and may be used by any candidate without political party affiliation who seeks a partisan office. **Note:** The qualifying petition is used by candidates who express no preference for a particular political party (i.e., are sometimes referred to independents) but are seeking an office that is legally classified as a partisan office. Examples of partisan offices include County Commissioner, Township Trustee, etc.

*Continued on next page*

**School Nominating Petition:** Restricted to candidates seeking school board positions including school board member, community college trustee, library or district library board member. Specially designed options are available for candidates seeking election as an intermediate school board member or community college trustee.

**Village Non-Partisan Nominating Petition:** Restricted to candidates seeking village offices.

**Metropolitan District Nominating Petition:** Restricted to candidates seeking metropolitan district offices.

**Recall Petition:** Recall petitions are restricted to the City/Township format and cannot be circulated on a countywide basis.

Other types of candidate petitions not covered by this publication include the Countywide Partisan Nominating Petition, Countywide Qualifying Petition, and Countywide Non-Partisan Nominating Petition. Candidates using one of these types of petition forms should refer to the publication, Circulating and Canvassing Countywide Nominating and Qualifying Petition Forms.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- A petition sheet is valid if it includes the circulator's signature; the date on which the circulator signed the petition; the circulator's complete residence address (street address or rural route number, city or township and state); and for a circulator who is not a Michigan resident, the name of the county where the circulator is registered to vote (if applicable) and the circulator's mark (cross or check mark) in the nonresident box in the Certificate of Circulator.
- A petition sheet is invalid and none of the signatures affixed to the sheet will be counted as valid if the circulator is not a resident of Michigan and fails to mark the nonresident box in the Certificate of Circulator.
- A petition sheet must include the name of the county and city or township where it was circulated; each sheet must list only a single county, city or township.
- An individual signature is valid if it includes the signer's signature; the street address or rural route number; and the date on which the signature was affixed to the petition.
- An individual signature entry is invalid if the QVF indicates that on the date of signing, the signer was:
  1. Not registered to vote in Michigan, or
  2. Registered to vote in this state but not in the city or township indicated.

**Certain variations or errors are acceptable and will not cause a signature or entire petition sheet to be rejected.** For further information, see "Acceptable Sheet Variations" and "Acceptable Signature Variations" below.

## PETITION SHEET VALIDITY

Imperfections in the petition sheet heading, certificate of circulator, or body of the petition sheet may jeopardize the validity of signatures appearing on the sheet.

**Defects in the petition heading which render an entire sheet invalid.** A petition sheet is invalid if it contains one or more of the following defects in the heading:

- The county, city or township of circulation is omitted, or two or more jurisdictions are listed, and it is not apparent that circulation was confined to a single county, city or township.
- For villages that lie within more than one township, the city/township petition sheet is invalid if only the name of the village is given in the heading of the petition.
- For cities and townships located within a single county that share the same name, the city/township petition sheet if the wrong unit of government is designated in the petition heading. Examples include but are not limited to a candidate seeking election to a public office in the City of Lansing who incorrectly designates Lansing Township in the heading of the petition.
- Required information concerning candidate or office sought omitted, including the candidate's name, residence address, party affiliation (if applicable), the office sought, and the district served by the office (if any). (Note: In addition, candidates seeking judicial offices must follow the instructions for completing the heading, which are printed on the reverse side of the City/Township Non-Partisan petition form.)

**Defects in the certificate of circulator which render an entire sheet invalid.** A petition sheet is invalid if it contains one or more of the following defects in the circulator's certificate:

- The petition sheet is not signed by the circulator or is signed by more than one circulator.
- The circulator's date of signing is omitted, incomplete or earlier than the date entered by every petition signer.
- The circulator's residence address is omitted, incomplete or includes a P.O. Box in place of a street address or rural route. (Note: The circulator's failure to include the correct zip code, by itself, is not a fatal defect.)
- Attention nonresident petition circulators: A petition sheet is invalid if the circulator is not a Michigan resident and fails to mark the nonresident box in the certificate of circulator.

### **Other fatal defects that render an entire petition sheet invalid.**

- Damaged, mutilated or torn petition sheets where any of the mandatory elements (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, etc.) are illegible or omitted.
- Sheets where any of the mandatory elements (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, etc.) are obscured or covered by white-out, permanent marker, stickers or other opaque material.

**Acceptable sheet variations.** The following variations will not cause an entire petition sheet to be rejected:

- The circulator fails to designate "City" or "Township" in the petition heading, regardless of whether a city and township located within the same county share the same name. Examples include but are not limited to the failure to differentiate the City of Kalamazoo from Kalamazoo Township.
- The circulator designates both the "City" and "Township" in the petition heading, regardless of whether a city and township within the same county share the same name
- For all offices except certain judicial offices, the failure to include the "Term Expiration Date" does not render a petition sheet invalid if the filing official can ascertain which position the candidate is seeking. For example, if a candidate is seeking nomination or election to the office of County Clerk, the candidate is not required to include the "Term Expiration Date" because there is only one position to be elected. If there are multiple positions available with different term ending dates, the candidate should include the "Term Expiration Date."

Note: Judicial candidates seeking office in a district in which a combination of full terms and partial terms will appear on the ballot must follow the instructions printed on the reverse side of the Countywide Non-Partisan nominating petition with respect to the "Term Expiration Date."

- All of the following variations are acceptable: The circulator's signature is illegible; circulator prints his or her name in space provided for the signature and signs in the space for printed name; circulator omits his or her printed name; circulator enters his or her cursive signature in space provided for printed name. (Note: The petition sheet is invalid if the circulator merely prints his or her name and fails to sign the petition.)
- The circulator omits his or her zip code or enters an incorrect zip code.
- The circulator prints the name of a village or unincorporated place instead of the township in which he or she resides, as long as the village or unincorporated place is wholly contained within a single township.
- The circulator omits the county of registration.

- The circulator is a resident of Michigan and inadvertently checks the out-of-state circulator checkbox and/or writes the name of the Michigan county where he or she is registered to vote.

### VALIDITY OF INDIVIDUAL SIGNATURES

A signature is valid if the voter signs the petition and prints his or her street address or rural route, and date of signing. (The signer's omission of his or her printed name or zip code is an acceptable variation.) Filing officials use the code "R" (registered) for valid entries.

A signature is invalid if it contains one or more of the defects or omissions listed below. The codes used to mark defects and omissions on petition sheets are shown to the left of the descriptions.

INVALID ENTRY CODE	EXPLANATION									
<i>SIGNATURE ERRORS</i>										
CO	Signature was crossed out prior to filing.									
DUP	Signer signed petition multiple times, or signed nominating petitions for more candidates than there are persons to be elected to the office. <i>Note:</i> Duplicate signatures are invalid only if both entries would have been coded R, but for the fact that the signer signed the petition multiple times or for multiple candidates seeking the same office. <sup>1</sup>									
NR	On the date of signing, the signer was not registered to vote anywhere in the city or township indicated or was not registered within the electoral district. <i>Note:</i> If a signer is registered to vote at a different address within the same city or township as is written on the petition, the signature is valid. See examples below: <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Petition Address</td> <td style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Registration Address</td> <td style="text-align: center; border-bottom: 1px solid black;">Result</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">123 Main St., Mason</td> <td style="text-align: center;">987 Maple St., Mason</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Valid entry</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">456 Maple St., Flint</td> <td style="text-align: center;">456 Maple St., Mt. Morris</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Invalid entry</td> </tr> </table>	Petition Address	Registration Address	Result	123 Main St., Mason	987 Maple St., Mason	Valid entry	456 Maple St., Flint	456 Maple St., Mt. Morris	Invalid entry
Petition Address	Registration Address	Result								
123 Main St., Mason	987 Maple St., Mason	Valid entry								
456 Maple St., Flint	456 Maple St., Mt. Morris	Invalid entry								
IN	Incomplete signature, meaning the petition signature given as follows and does not match the signature on file: "Ms. Smith," "Mr. Jones," "Jane," "JD."									
NS	No signature, meaning the signature was omitted or signer printed his or her name and the signature on file is cursive.									
<i>ADDRESS AND JURISDICTION ERRORS</i>										
NA	Street address or rural route is omitted or incomplete, or signer wrote a P.O. Box in place of a street address.									
OC	The address given is located outside of the city or township listed.									
OD	The address given is located within the city or township listed, but outside of the electoral district for the office sought.									
NC	There is no city or township by that name located within the county listed in the heading of the petition.									

<sup>1</sup> For example, if a voter signs a petition twice but omits the date of signing for one of the signatures (rendering that entry invalid), no duplicate is found.

INVALID ENTRY CODE	EXPLANATION
DUAL	Dual jurisdiction entry, meaning the heading includes the names of two or more jurisdictions in the space for the city or township where registered.
IC	A village or unincorporated place was listed instead of the township where the signer is registered, but only if the village or unincorporated place lies within two or more townships.
<b>DATE ERRORS</b>	
ED	Voter's signature is dated before the first date of the current term of the office sought. For example, a Nominating Petition (City/Township Partisan) filed by a candidate seeking the office of Township Trustee in 2020 may be circulated as early as January 1, 2017. <i>Note:</i> For qualifying petitions only, any signature that is dated more than 180 days prior to the date of filing is invalid.
ND	The signature is undated, or an incomplete date is given.
SDC	The signature is dated after the circulator dated his or her signature.
<b>MISCELLANEOUS ERRORS</b>	
CIRC	A fatal defect in the circulator's certificate that renders the entire petition sheet invalid. Examples include but are not limited to the omission of the circulator's signature; an incorrect or incomplete address or date of signing; an out-of-state circulator's failure to check the box; etc.
HEAD	A fatal defect in the petition heading that renders the entire sheet invalid. Examples include but are not limited to omission of the candidate's name, residence address, party affiliation (if applicable), the office sought, etc.
DMG	A petition sheet that is damaged, mutilated or torn such that any mandatory element (heading, warning statements, circulator certificate, etc.) is illegible or omitted; or petition sheets where any of the mandatory elements are obscured or covered by white-out, permanent marker, stickers or other opaque material.
MC	Miscellaneous identification problem.

**Acceptable signature variations.** The following variations are acceptable and will not result in the rejection of an individual signature:

- The signature includes one or more of the signer's initials plus his or her last name. Acceptable entries include but are not limited to: J. Smith; J.B. Smith; Mrs. J. Jones; A. John Doe.
- The signature is illegible.<sup>2</sup>
- All of the following variations are acceptable: The signer prints his or her name in space provided for signature and signs in the space for printed name; signer omits his or her printed name; signer enters his or her cursive signature in space provided for printed name.

<sup>2</sup> Note, however, that if *all* the personally identifiable information in the petition entry is illegible and cannot be validated (signature, printed name, address, city or township), the signature may be coded as invalid.



(Note: A signature is invalid if the signer merely prints his or her name in the space provided for printed name, fails to sign the petition, and the signature on file is a cursive signature.)

- The signer is unable to sign his or her name and uses a signature stamp (instead of a pen-and-ink signature).
- The signer enters ditto marks in the space(s) provided for address, zip code or date of signing.
- On the date of signing, the signer was registered to vote in the city or township indicated but at a different street address within the same city or township.
- The signer omits his or her zip code or enters an incorrect zip code.

**SPECIAL NOTES REGARDING POSTAL ADDRESSES,  
UNINCORPORATED PLACES AND VILLAGES**

- While some villages and unincorporated places are wholly contained within a single township, others cross township boundaries. A village resident who signs a City/Township petition form must sign a sheet that aligns with his or her township of registration. (Note: Some villages also cross county lines; voters must sign the petition sheet that aligns with their county of registration.)
- If the name of a village is listed in the heading of a City/Township petition, the sheet is valid only if the village is wholly contained within a single township. A City/Township petition sheet will be found invalid if the heading lists the name of a village and that village is located within multiple townships.

**\*NEW FOR 2019-2020\*** Abbreviations for jurisdiction names are acceptable if the abbreviation reasonably corresponds to the name of the appropriate city, township, local post office, unincorporated place, or village. Examples of commonly used abbreviations include but are not limited to the following:

Abbreviation	Corresponds to ...	County
AA, A <sup>2</sup>	Ann Arbor city, Ann Arbor Township	Washtenaw
BC	Battle Creek	Calhoun
BH	Benton Harbor	Berrien
BH, Blfd Hlls	Bloomfield Hills	Oakland
D'born	Dearborn	Wayne
D'born Hts	Dearborn Heights	Wayne
Det	Detroit	Wayne
EL, E Lan	East Lansing	Ingham
Farm	Farmington	Oakland
FH, Farm Hlls	Farmington Hills	Oakland
Fnt	Flint city, Flint Township	Genesee

Abbreviation	Corresponds to ...	County
GR	Grand Rapids	Kent
GP	Grosse Pointe	Wayne
GPF	Grosse Pointe Farms	Wayne
GPP	Grosse Pointe Park	Wayne
GPS	Grosse Pointe Shores	Wayne
GPW	Grosse Pointe Woods	Wayne
HP	Highland Park	Wayne
Kal, K'zoo	Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo
Lan	Lansing	Ingham
Musk	Muskegon	Muskegon
Sag	Saginaw city, Saginaw Township	Saginaw
SSM	Sault Ste. Marie	Chippewa
SH	Shelby Township	Macomb
SH, Ster Hgts	Sterling Heights	Macomb
S'fld	Southfield	Oakland
SCS	St. Clair Shores	Macomb
St. Joe	St. Joseph	Berrien
TC	Traverse City	Grand Traverse
WB	West Bloomfield	Oakland
Ypsi	Ypsilanti	Washtenaw


## SIGNATURE VERIFICATION

Circulators should encourage voters to sign petitions in a way that reasonably resembles the signature given for driver's license/state ID or voter registration purposes, but it is not necessary for the voter's signature to perfectly match the signature on file. Filing officials must perform their signature verification duties with the presumption that a voter's petition signature is his or her genuine signature, as there are numerous legitimate reasons that may explain an apparent mismatch:

- Petition signatures are often written on a clipboard, which may cause the signature to appear more slanted or less precise than the signature on file, or cause breaks or pauses in a cursive signature.
- Petition signatures (or voter registration or pin-pad signatures collected during the driver's license/state ID application process) could have been written in haste.
- A medical condition or advancing age may cause the signature to be different.
- The electronic signature on file may be smaller or larger than the signature given on a petition sheet.
- The signature may have been written using a pen with a finer tip or one with fading ink as compared to the signature on file.

None of these differences will result in the invalidation of the petition signature. If there are any redeeming qualities in the petition signature as compared to the signature on file, the filing official should treat the signature as valid. Redeeming qualities may include but are not limited to similar distinctive flourishes, more matching features than nonmatching features, and Examples 1-5 below.

A voter's signature should be considered questionable only if it differs in multiple, significant and obvious respects from the signature on file; see Examples 6-7 below. Slight dissimilarities should be resolved in favor of the voter whenever possible.

#	Petition Signature Verification Examples	Recommended Result
1.	Signature appears as if voter's hand is trembling or shaking, possibly due to a health condition or advancing age: <i>Catherine Metzger</i> versus <i>Catherine Metzger</i>	Valid signature
2.	Only part of the signature matches the signature on file such as only the first letters of the first and last name match, but rest of signature does not match: <i>J. D.</i> versus <i>Jane Doe</i> <i>J. Doe</i> versus <i>Jane Doe</i>	Valid signature
3.	Signature is partially printed but at the same time, partially matches the signature on file: <i>Alice Robinson</i> versus <i>Alice Robinson</i>	Valid signature
4.	Signature is a recognized diminutive of the voter's full legal name: <i>Bill Smith</i> versus <i>William Smith</i>	Valid signature
5.	Signature style has changed slightly over time: <i>Lucinda Jones</i> versus <i>Lucinda Jones</i>	Valid signature
6.	Signature is entirely printed but signature on file is entirely written in cursive: <b>JAMES DAVIS</b> versus <i>James Davis</i>	Questionable signature
7.	Signature differs in multiple, significant and obvious respects:  versus <i>John Hancock</i>	Questionable signature

## PETITION CANVASS PROCESS

Nominating and qualifying petitions must be timely filed with the filing official designated by law to accept filings for the elective office sought. Petitions are canvassed by the designated filing official.

A sworn complaint (challenge) alleging that the nominating or qualifying petition contains an insufficient number of valid signatures or is otherwise defective may be submitted to the appropriate filing official within 7 days of the filing deadline. Challenges are resolved by the filing official.

## BEST PRACTICES

**Train your petition circulators.** Informing petition circulators of the requirements described in this publication can minimize the likelihood that whole petition sheets and individual signatures are rejected. Errors may be averted if circulators take the following actions:

- Write the name of the county of circulation in the heading of the petition.
- Ask potential signers whether and where they are registered to vote.
- Instruct signers to provide their street address or rural route where indicated; a P.O. Box is invalid.
- Remind signers to write the date of signing, not their date of birth.
- Review each signer's entry for completeness. If information is omitted, ask the signer to fill in the blank(s).
- Encourage signers to sign in a way that reasonably resembles the signature given for driver's license/state ID or voter registration purposes. It is not necessary for the signer's petition signature to be a perfect match with the signature on file. See "Signature Verification" above.
- Once circulation of a petition sheet is complete, ensure that the circulator signs and dates the certificate of circulator and provides the required information. If the circulator is not a Michigan resident, he or she must also check the nonresident box in the bottom left corner of the petition sheet and write the name of the county where registered to vote, if any.

**Exercise care when circulating in or near cities and villages that cross county lines.**

Several cities and villages in Michigan overlap county boundary lines. When obtaining a signature from a voter who is registered in a city or village that crosses county boundaries, make sure the voter signs the petition sheet that aligns with the signer's county of registration.

**Implement a quality control process before filing the petition.** Candidates are strongly encouraged to obtain a copy of the Qualified Voter File (QVF) for pre-filing verification purposes. Any petition signatures found to be invalid during the quality control process (i.e., because the street address or date is omitted) can be crossed out prior to filing; crossed out signatures are excluded when determining the maximum number of signatures filed.

**Review all petition sheets prior to filing** for completeness, especially the name of the county of circulation and the Certificate of Circulator.

**File enough signatures.** Candidates are strongly encouraged to gather and file substantially more signatures than the minimum number required. The number of excess signatures needed will vary depending on the vigorousness of the candidate's quality control process. Even if the petition has been verified by a professional signature gathering firm prior to filing, note that (1) A challenge may be filed against the sufficiency of the nominating or qualifying petition, and (2) There is a likelihood that some signatures or whole petition sheets may be found to be invalid during the canvass process. However, note that there is an upper limit on the maximum number of signatures that may be filed; see MCL 168.544f for further information.

### IMPORTANT

The information in this brochure is offered as a summary of the provisions governing the validity of petition signatures; it is not a complete description or interpretation of all the applicable laws. Questions may be addressed to:

Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
P.O. Box 20126  
Lansing, Michigan 48901-0726  
Telephone: (517) 335-3234

Email: [Elections@Michigan.gov](mailto:Elections@Michigan.gov)

Web: [Michigan.gov/Elections](http://Michigan.gov/Elections)