

VOTE CUYAHOGA COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS



PETITION PROTOCOLS

Candidate and Petition Services

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Petition Criteria

Prior to circulating petitions, the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (CCBOE) will provide candidates who pull petitions from the CCBOE with general information regarding what needs to appear on petitions as well as information about the process of filing. Additionally, candidates are directed to review the Secretary of State’s (SOS) free publications, especially the [Ohio Candidate Requirement Guide](#).

It is critical that candidates review the municipal charter for the jurisdictions they are seeking prior to circulating petitions. Not every municipality has the same petition criteria. The Law Department for each municipality is the subject matter expert for their municipality’s charter.

If duplicate signatures are received in municipalities with elector signature limitations, the official petition filing timestamp is utilized to rank the order of petitions received. This timestamp and not the date the elector signed the petition will be reviewed to process duplicate signatures on multiple candidate petition filings.

No Petition Pre-Checks

Pursuant to SOS Directive¹, no board of elections shall pre-check any petition to determine the petition’s validity and sufficiency before such time as the original petition has been filed, along with the appropriate filing fee, with a board of elections, the SOS Office, or other public office as provided by law.

While pre-checks may appear to be a public service that potential candidates might rely on to improve their chances of being certified to the ballot pre-checks provide a false sense of security for candidates and issue groups. It is a well-established principle of Ohio election law that the candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that his or her own petition satisfies the requirements of law. Candidates and issue groups are obligated to investigate, learn, and know the law governing the election process.

¹ <https://www.sos.state.oh.us/globalassets/elections/directives/2022/eom/dir2022-17-ch13.pdf>

Official Time and Location of Filing

The CCBOE accepts petition filings at its offices at 2925 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115. To be considered as timely filed, candidates must obtain an official CCBOE timestamp no later than 4:00 p.m. on the date of the filing deadline. The timestamp clock(s) located in the CCBOE's Candidate and Petition Services Department holds the official time for petition filings.

Simply being on the Board's property (e.g., CCBOE parking lot) prior to the time of the filing deadline does not constitute a timely filing. Candidates' petitions must contain an official timestamp on or before the time of the filing deadline to be considered timely filed.

Petition filings will be accepted through mail/delivery service; however, the petition must arrive at the CCBOE offices by 4:00 p.m. on the date of the filing deadline with the applicable filing fee. A postmark is not a timestamp for the purpose of determining if a petition is timely filed. Any petition received via mail/delivery service without the applicable filing fee is considered an incomplete petition filing.

No petition filed *in person* shall be timestamped or accepted for filing after 4:00 p.m. on the date of the filing deadline.