



GUIDE TO NYC PETITIONING

PETITIONING BASICS

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO PETITION?

In order to qualify for the Democratic primary ballot, a candidate must gather signatures of registered Democrats who live in the area where the candidate is running for office. Signing a petition is not a vote or endorsement of a candidate. It simply qualifies a candidate's name to appear on the ballot.

The number of signatures required to get on the ballot varies by district or area.

WHO CAN CARRY A PETITION?

Any registered democrat who is register to vote in the State of New York.

You may only witness a petition for one candidate per office. If you witness a petition for two or more candidates for the same office, both petitions will be considered invalid and none of the signatures on them will count toward the candidates' total.

If you are not a registered Democrat in the state of New York, you can go out with a petitioning partner and help with the approach people, but you **may not witness the signing of the petition.**

WHO CAN SIGN A PETITION?

Citywide Races: Any registered Democrat who resides and is registered to vote in the city.

Borough Races: Any registered Democrat who resides and is registered to vote in the borough.

District Races: Any registered Democrat who resides and is registered to vote in the district.

Note: In presidential races signatures must be gathered by congressional district as well as on a statewide basis. This means you carry two petitions and the voter signs twice.

You may only sign a petition for one candidate per office. If you sign for two or more candidates for the same office, only the first signature will count.

YOU MAY NOT SIGN A PETITION THAT YOU WITNESS. This invalidates the entire petition.

WHO IS CONSIDERED A REGISTERED DEMOCRAT?

You must be an enrolled in the Democratic Party to sign or witness a petition. The deadline to change your party registration is in October prior to a November general election. If you are registered in another state or are not registered to vote, you may register in New York with any party of your choosing. Once your registration is completed with the Board of Elections, providing you register as a Democrat, you may sign or carry a petition for the Democratic primary.

WHEN CAN YOU PETITION?

Petitioning is open for approximately one month based on the election calendar for the year. You may not collect signatures prior to the start date of petitioning or after the filing deadline.

HOW TO PETITION

THE APPROACH

There are two ways to petition:

1. Carry a “walk list” of registered democrats in the area you are petitioning. Go door to door and ask them to sign.
2. Approach people on the street or in public areas. When approaching someone on the street you must ask if he or she is a registered Democrat and if he or she is registered to vote in the area for which you are collecting signatures.

When approaching people on the street:

- Walk right up to someone. Standing on a corner and yelling is not as effective as approaching someone and looking him or her in the eye.
- Ask the signer if he or she is a registered Democrat first.
- If you are at a subway stop, approach people coming out, not going in.

When approaching people:

- Always be polite and courteous. Think about how you would want to be approached.
- Tell them it will only take a minute of their time. Thank them for their time.
- Even if they do not sign, educate them about the candidate. It is a good idea to carry literature about the candidate. Not only does this raise awareness, but people will often sign once they have read something about your candidate.
- Explain that signing only qualifies the candidate to appear on the ballot. The signer may still vote for whomever they choose.
- Remember to thank them again. A good impression of a petitioner is a good impression of a candidate.

BEST PRACTICES

A really good petitioner usually gets about 10 signatures in an hour. Getting more signatures is great, but do not be discouraged if you only get 5 in an hour –this is normal.

Petitioning in groups is not only fun, it can be productive. When you encounter two or more people who want to sign at once, you have more people to help.

If you are going door to door it is a good idea to split up. Each petitioner can take one side of a street or a hall.

DFNYC believes in sending groups out with a “petitioning captain.” Petitioning captains are good petitioners who not only know the rules, they know how to approach people and be an effective petitioner. A petitioning captain motivates the group, witnesses the witness statements, and knows when it’s time to quit or take a break. Petitioning captains should also bring the petitions and collect them at the end of the day.

COLLECTING THE SIGNATURES

1. **YOU FILL IN THE DATE.** An error in the sequence of dates will disqualify the petition.
2. ASK THE SIGNER TO SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE.
3. YOU SHOULD COMPLETE THE REST OF THE INFORMATION. This insures that the information is accurate and legible and helps to prevent errors. Ask the signer the following and PRINT the answers on the appropriate lines.
 - a. The signers name as it appears on his or her voter registration form (below the signature)\
 - b. The residence address including apartment number.
 - c. The name of the city (on the line below)
 - d. The county of residence
4. IF YOU OR THE SIGNER MAKES A MISTAKE, YOU MUST CROSS OUT THE ENTIRE LINE AND INITIAL EITHER SIDE, OR YOU CAN CROSS OUT THE MISTAKE, INITIAL, AND CORRECT IT.
5. **Once again, you may not sign a petition that you witness.**

REQUIRMENTS FOR SIGNATURE LINES

THE DATES:

- Must be within the regulated petitioning period.
- Must be in sequence, i.e. you may not have someone sign line 1 with a date of June 11 and someone sign line 2 with a date of June 10. **This will disqualify the entire petition.**

THE SIGNATURE:

- Instruct the person to sign as he or she would any legal document.
- A woman may not use her husband's first name, e.g. Mrs. Bob Roberts.

THE PRINTED NAME:

- Must appear in the same form as it does on their voter registration.
- Do not use shortened forms of names, e.g. Bob for Robert.
- A woman may not use her husband's first name, e.g. Mrs. Bob Roberts.

THE STREET ADDRESS:

- Must be the address where her or she is registered to vote, usually his or her current residence.
- May not be a P.O. Box.
- You may use standard abbreviations, e.g. E. for East, St. for Street, Ave. for Avenue, etc.
- You may not use non-standard abbreviations such as CPW for Central Park West.

THE CITY AND STATE:

- Fill in the city as appears on his or her mail, i.e. New York, Brooklyn, Flushing, etc.
- The state is usually completed already, but if not, write in New York or NY.

THE COUNTY:

- Write in the county name, not the name of the borough
 - Bronx = Bronx
 - Brooklyn = Kings
 - Manhattan = New York
 - Queens = Queens
 - Staten Island = Richmond

UNCOMPLETED LINES

If you have uncompleted signature lines at the end of a petitioning outing, you can resume with the same petition on another day. **Make sure you keep the dates in sequence!**

If you do not want to continue petitioning and want complete the petitioning page, you must cross out any blank space and initial the four corners of the x.

THE WITNESS STATEMENT

Proper completion of the witness statement is essential. **Errors in the witness statement will disqualify an entire petition!** You should have an experienced petitioner witness your completion of the witness statement. **You may not witness a petition that you sign.**

PROPER COMPLETION OF THE WITNESS STATEMENT

NAME OF WITNESS:

- Must appear in the same form as he or she registered to vote.
- Do not use shorted forms of names, e.g. Bob for Robert.
- A woman may not use her husband's first name, e.g. Mrs. Bob Roberts.

RESIDENCE ADDRESS:

- Must be the address where he or she is registered to vote, usually his or her current residence.
- May not be a P.O. Box.
- You may use standard abbreviations, e.g. E. for East, St. for Street, Ave. for Avenue, etc.
- You may not use non-standard abbreviations such as CPW for Central Park West.
- You do not need to enter the city and state.

NUMBER OF SIGNATURES:

- Fill in the number of valid signatures on the petition.
- **Do not count any blank, crossed out lines or lines that have been crossed out due to errors.**

DATE:

- The date must be equal to or later than the last date of the last signature.
- The date must fall within the legal petitioning period.

THE SIGNATURE:

- Instruct the person to sign as he or she would any legal document.
- A woman may not use her husband's first name, e.g. Mrs. Bob Roberts.

TOWN OR CITY:

- Fill in the city as appears on his or her mail, e.g. New York, Brooklyn, Flushing, etc.

COUNTY:

- Write in the county name, not the name of the borough
 - Bronx = Bronx
 - Brooklyn = Kings
 - Manhattan = New York
 - Queens = Queens
 - Staten Island = Richmond

DO NOT ENTER THE SHEET NUMBER!!! This will disqualify the petition.

PROPERLY COMPLETED PETITION

Date	Name of Signer (signature required)	Residence	County
1. <u>June 10</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Tracey Denton</i> → Tracey Denton	420 Amsterdam Ave. New York, New York	New York
2. <u>June 10</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Heather Alexa Woodfield</i> → Heather A. Woodfield	594 Union St. Brooklyn, New York	Kings
3. <u>June 11</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Billy James Cobin</i> → Billy James Cobin	PN P.O. Box 21-50 44 th Dr. Long Island City, New York	Queens
4. <u>6/12</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Ying-Chi I</i> → Ying-Chi I	781 Castle Hill Ave. Bronx, New York	Bronx
5. <u>June 13</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Bernadette Evangelist</i> → Bernadette Evangelist	388 Van Duzer Street Staten Island, New York	Richmond
6. <u>June 13</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Lewis Cohen</i> → Lewis Cohen	332 E. 11 th St., #1A NY, New York	New York
7. <u>6/14</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Andrew Kling</i> → Andrew Kling	59 Christopher St. New York, New York	New York
8. <u>June 14</u> , 2005 DN Print Name	<i>Wole Parks</i> → Wole Parks	742 Evergreen Terrace Springfield	DN
9. <u>June 14</u> , 2005 Print Name	<i>Steven Larson</i> → Steven Larson	329 Flatbush Avenue Brooklyn, NY	Kings
10. <u> </u> , 2005 DN Print Name	→	 	DN

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

I Dana Northcraft state: I am a duly qualified voter of the State of New York and am
(Name of Witness)
an enrolled voter of the Democratic Party. I now reside at 12345 Fake St. Apt. 2 New York.
(Residence Address)

Each of the individuals whose names are subscribed to this petition sheet containing 8 signatures,
(Fill in Number)
subscribed the same in my presence on the dates above indicated and identified himself to be the individual
who signed this sheet.

I understand that this statement will be accepted for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit and, if it contains a material false statement, shall subject me to the same penalties as if I had been duly sworn.

Date June 14, 2005 Dana Northcraft

WITNESS IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION:

The following information must be completed prior to filing with the board of elections in order for this petition sheet to be valid.

Town or City New York County New York

SHEET No.