



## GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING REFERENDUM PETITIONS

This is a sample petition form based on the model form provided by the Government Accountability Board that is available on the internet at [https://elections.wi.gov/sites/electionsuat.wi.gov/files/gab\\_forms/4/el\\_172\\_petition\\_for\\_direct\\_legislation\\_fillable\\_pd\\_98485.pdf](https://elections.wi.gov/sites/electionsuat.wi.gov/files/gab_forms/4/el_172_petition_for_direct_legislation_fillable_pd_98485.pdf). Certain petitions under sections 117.08, 117.09, 117.10, 117.105, and 117.11, Wis. Statutes, must conform to the requirements of [section 8.40, Wis. statutes](#). Those petition requirements are as follows:

**8.40 Petition requirements** - 8.40(1) In addition to any other requirements provided by law, each separate sheet of each petition for an election, including a referendum, shall have on the face at the top in boldface print the word “PETITION”. Each signer of such a petition shall affix his or her signature to the petition, accompanied by his or her municipality of residence for voting purposes, the street and number, if any, on which the signer resides, and the date of signing. In addition, each signer shall legibly print his or her name in a space provided next to his or her signature. No signature is valid under this subsection unless the signer satisfies the requirements under this subsection.

8.40(2) The certification of a qualified circulator stating his or her residence with street and number, if any, shall appear at the bottom of each separate sheet of each petition specified in [sub. \(1\)](#), stating that he or she personally circulated the petition and personally obtained each of the signatures; that the circulator knows that they are electors of the jurisdiction or district in which the petition is circulated; that the circulator knows that they signed the paper with full knowledge of its content; that the circulator knows their respective residences given; that the circulator knows that each signer signed on the date stated opposite his or her name; that the circulator is a qualified elector of this state, or if not a qualified elector of this state, that the circulator is a U.S. citizen age 18 or older who, if he or she were a resident of this state, would not be disqualified from voting under [s. 6.03, Wis. stats.](#); and that the circulator is aware that falsifying the certification is punishable under [s. 12.13 \(3\) \(a\), Wis. stats.](#) The circulator shall indicate the date that he or she makes the certification next to his or her signature.

Other requirements and procedures are described in the Administrative Rules of the Government Accountability Board— see [http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/el/2/09](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/el/2/09).

**Required Signatures** - The number of signatures required for petitions under Chapter 117 is as follows;

- S.117.08 related to school district consolidation requires “at least 10% of the electors who reside in any affected school district”.
- S.117.09 related to consolidation of union high and elementary school districts requires “at least 10% of the electors who reside in any affected school district”.
- S.117.10 related to an advisory referendum regarding dissolution requires “at least 10% of the electors who reside in the affected school district”.
- S.117.105 (3) related to school district creation requires “at least 20% of the number of electors residing in the territory of the affected school districts”.
- S.117.11 related to the detachment and attachment of a large territory requires “at least 10% of the electors who reside in either affected school district”.

See s.115.01 (13), Wis. Statutes, to determine how to calculate the number of signatures required.

**Filing Officer** – Petitions under Ch. 117, Wis. Statutes, must be submitted to the appropriate official as follows:

- S.117.08 related to school district consolidation requires that the petition be filed with “the clerk of the school district that has the highest equalized valuation of the affected school districts”.
- S.117.09 related to consolidation of union high and elementary school districts requires that the petition be filed with “the clerk of the union high school district”.
- S.117.10 related to an advisory referendum on district dissolution requires that the petition “is filed with the school district clerk”.
- S.117.105 (3) related to school district creation requires that the petition be filed with “the clerk of the school district with the largest equalized valuation”.
- S.117.11 related to the detachment and attachment of a large territory requires that the petition be filed with “the clerk of the school district from which the territory is proposed to be detached”.

**Signatures of Electors** - Only qualified electors of the affected district or districts may sign the petition. **A printed name must be included.** Each elector’s municipality of residence must be listed on the petition, along with the mailing address, including any street, fire or rural route number, box number (if rural route) and street or road name. The Street & Number or Rural Route section for each elector’s address is split into two lines. The first line is for the street address. The second line is for the municipality for mailing purposes. The Municipality of Residence listed for each signing elector must clearly identify the town, village or city where the elector's voting residence is located. A post office box number alone does not show where the elector actually resides. The date the elector signed the petition, including month, day and year, must be indicated. Ditto marks that follow correct and complete address or date information are acceptable. The circulator may add any missing or illegible address or date information before the petition is filed with the filing officer

**Certification of Circulator** - The circulator shall personally present the petition to each signer. The circulator may not leave the petition papers unattended on counters or posted on bulletin boards. After obtaining the signatures, the circulator must complete, sign and date the certification on each page of the petition.

**Page Numbers** - Number each page consecutively, beginning with “1”, before submitting to the filing officer. A space for page numbers has been provided in the lower right-hand corner of the form.