From the Office of the Secretary of the State
Legislative & Elections Administrative Division - 2nd Floor
30 Trinity Street
Hartford CT 06115-0470

INSTRUCTION PAGE FOR NOMINATING PETITIONS

Nominating Petition Procedure: A candidate for an elective office who is not nominated for such office by a major or minor party may secure a place on the ballot by filing a nominating petition pursuant to the provisions of Conn. Gen. Stats. §§9-6b, 9-379, 9-380 and 9-453a through 9-453u. A nominating petition may be filed only on the form prescribed and provided by the Secretary of the State. *See §9-453t for certain exceptions.*

Application: Before the Secretary of the State may issue nominating petition pages; a person must apply for them in writing. Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-453b. The application must contain the following: (1) the name(s) of the candidate(s) to appear on the nominating petition, compared by the town clerk of the town of residence of each such candidate with the candidate's name as it appears on the town's registry list, and verified and corrected by the town clerk; (2) a signed statement by each candidate that he consents to having his name on the petition, and (3) the party designation, if any. Petition application forms are provided by the Secretary of the State upon request.

Petition Without Party Designation: A nominating petition need not include a party designation. If a party designation is not included, the petition may propose only one candidate. A candidate nominated by a petition listing no party designation is not guaranteed a separate row on the ballot. If several petitions are filed and approved for candidates without party designations for different offices, or for the same multiple-opening office, the names of these candidates may appear together on the same ballot row, which will be labeled "Petitioning Candidates". If several petitions are filed and approved for candidates without party designations for the same single-opening office, the names of such candidates will appear on the ballot in the appropriate office column (i.e., vertically) in the order which they applied for the petitions. See §9-453r.

Petition With Party Designation: A nominating petition listing a party designation will be issued only if (1) a valid "Application for Reservation of Party Designation and Formation of Party Designation Committee" is properly on file for such designation with the Secretary of the State, or (2) the designation requested is the same as the name of a minor party eligible to nominate candidate(s) for different office(s) on the same ballot label as the office(s) sought by the nominating petitioner(s).

A new party designation specified in an "Application for Reservation of Party Designation and Formation of Party Designation Committee" may not consist of more than three words or more than twenty-five letters; may not incorporate the name of any major political party; may not incorporate the name of any minor party entitled to nominate candidates for any office which will appear on the same ballot as any office listed in the application; may not be the same as any party designation for which a reservation with the Secretary of the State is in effect for any office listed in the application; and may not be the word "none", or incorporate the words "unaffiliated" or "unenrolled" or similar negative forms of the words "affiliated" or "enrolled". Party designation reservation forms are provided by the Secretary of the State upon request. The application for reservation must be signed by at least twenty-five people who constitute the Party Designation Committee, and must **precede or accompany** the separate application for the petition itself (see **"Application"** above).

A single petition listing a party designation may propose the names of candidates for different statewide offices, including the office of presidential elector; or for different at-large municipal offices. **In the case of the office of Governor or Lieutenant Governor, the petition must include the name of a candidate for both offices.** In the case of the office of presidential elector, the petition must include the names of seven candidates for Presidential Elector, a candidate for President and a candidate for Vice-President.

A nominating petition filed with a party designation ***will not*** be approved by the Secretary of the State unless a statement endorsing the candidate(s) listed on the petition is filed, with the Secretary of the State, by the agents for the party designation committee, or by the chairman or secretary of the minor party eligible to nominate candidate(s) for a different office(s) on the same ballot, by **4:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 2, 2015.**

The rules for ballot position of nominating petition candidates using party designations are prescribed in CGS §§9-249a and 9-453r. Approved petitioning candidate(s) with a particular party designation appear on a separate ballot row, labeled with such designation, and above any row(s) used for petitioning candidates without a party designation.

Petition Form: Before any electors may sign a nominating petition page, the blanks at the top of the page must be completed. Each candidate's name, address, the office sought, the election date, the party designation, if any, and the town (and district, if applicable) in which the petition will be circulated must be stated. No changes in such information may be made after any person has signed the page and the Secretary of the State will not count the signatures on any nominating petition page which has omitted this information. **Each applicant will be issued one petition form that must be reproduced prior to receiving signatures.**

Who Can Be a Circulator: Each circulator of a nominating petition page must be a United States citizen, at least eighteen years of age, a resident of a town in this state and shall not be on parole for conviction of a felony.

Misrepresentation Prohibited: It is a Class D felony for any person to intentionally misrepresent the contents of a nominating petition. Conviction of a Class D felony shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not less than one year nor more than five years and a fine not exceeding $5,000, or both.

Electors' Signatures: In order for a candidate to qualify for the ballot, a nominating petition must be signed by a number of qualified electors (see below) equal to the lesser of (1) at least one percent of the votes cast for the same office at the last preceding election for such office, or (2) seven thousand five hundred. In the case of multiple openings for the same office (e.g., Board of Education, Town Council, Presidential Electors), the number of certified signatures must equal to the lesser of (1) at least one percent of the total number of electors checked as having voted at the last preceding election at which such office appeared on the ballot label, or (2) seven thousand five hundred. In the case of newly created offices, special rules set forth in Section 9-380 apply. The Elections Services Division makes a computation of the signature requirements **at the time of issuance of the petition**, but the law prevails.

A signature, in order to be counted, must be that of an elector of a town, or portion of a town if applicable, which is within the geographical jurisdiction of the office(s) being sought (i.e., the signer must be eligible to vote for all the offices and candidates listed on the petition). Each signature must be the personal signature of the elector, and one individual may not under any circumstances or degree of relationship sign for another. Any person who signs a name other than his own to a nominating petition page shall be fined not more than $100.00 or imprisoned not more than one year or both. There is space on the petition page for each elector to print his name and address after signing his name, and the circulator should request each elector to do so. No page of a nominating petition may be circulated among electors of more than one town and any page which contains certification of the Number of Signed Names of Electors by the clerks of two or more towns will be rejected by the Secretary of the State. Signatures shall be obtained only on the official Petition Signature Page distributed by the Secretary of the State or on duplicates of the pages issued by the Secretary of the State.

Assistance to Blind Persons in the Signing of Petitions: Any person who is blind may cause his name to be placed on a petition if an authorized agent (not the circulator) reads aloud the full text of the petition in the presence of the circulator, and the blind person consents to having his name appear on it. If a blind person is unable to write, his authorized agent may write the name of the blind person followed by the word "by" and his own signature.

Circulator's Statement of Residence and Authenticity of Signatures: Boxes on the back of each petition page setting forth the circulator's name, street address and town of residence in this state must be filled out before the circulator signs the Circulator's Statement of Residence and Eligibility and of the Authenticity of Signatures.

Each nominating petition page must contain a statement, signed by the circulator under the penalties of false statement, attesting that each person whose name appears on the petition page signed the petition in the presence of the circulator and that the circulator either knows each signer or that each signer satisfactorily identified himself to the circulator. This statement must be signed after obtaining all electors' signatures on the page and before filing the page with the town clerk of the town in which the signers of the page reside. This statement must be signed in the presence of one of the following persons: a town clerk, the Secretary of the State, a notary public, a judge of a court of record, a family support magistrate, a clerk or deputy clerk of a court having a seal, a commissioner of deeds, a justice of the peace, or an attorney admitted to practice in Connecticut. The person before whom the circulator signed this statement must also certify, on the petition page, that the circulator signed the Circulator's Statement of Authenticity of Signatures before him and that he either knows the circulator or that the circulator satisfactorily identified himself. Neither the town clerk of the town of residence of the signers nor the Secretary of the State may accept a page unless it contains the foregoing statement and certification. The circulator must be certain that signers sign in his presence and that his own signed statements are true, or he may be guilty of a class A misdemeanor. A sentence of imprisonment for a class A misdemeanor is not more than one year and a fine for the conviction of a class A misdemeanor shall not exceed $2000.00.

Time and Place of Filing: Each nominating petition page must be submitted either to the Secretary of the State, or to the town clerk of the town in which the signers of the page reside, not later than ***4:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 5, 2015***. The town clerk or assistant town clerk in each town in which the election is to be held must be in their office between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on this deadline day to accept petition pages. The town clerk must give a receipt to the person submitting petition pages, indicating the number of pages submitted and the date upon which they were submitted.

Checking of Signatures by Town Clerk or Registrars of Voters: When the pages are submitted to the town clerk the town clerk must certify on each such page the date upon which it was submitted to him. Within two weeks of the town clerk's receipt of any petition page, the town clerk must check the signers of the petition page against the names of electors on the registry list, certify the petition page, and file the page with the Secretary of the State. The town clerk may delegate the duty to check the names of signers to the Registrars of Voters in his town, if the Registrars consent. In this case the Registrars must execute a receipt stating the number of nominating petition pages so received from the clerk; check the names; certify that the names have been checked; and, after making the required certifications, return the checked petition pages to the town clerk for transmittal to the Secretary of the State.

Check marks may be placed before each signed name which is verified to be a name of an elector eligible to vote for the office(s) listed on the petition. Any signed name which is not the name of an elector eligible to vote for the office(s) listed on the petition must be rejected. A name will also be rejected if both the signature and the printed name are illegible, or if the elector previously signed for the same candidate(s). The reason for rejection must be noted immediately to the left of the signature, on the same line; the rejection code appears at the bottom of each signature page.

Withdrawal of Signatures: Any signer of a nominating petition page may withdraw his signature at any time up to ***Wednesday, August 5, 2015*** by sending written notice by registered or certified mail to the candidate(s) named in the petition and a copy of such notice by registered or certified mail to the Secretary of the State.