

§354. Petition requirements

A nomination petition shall be on a form provided by the Secretary of State and is governed by the following provisions. [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

1. Content. A nomination petition must contain the name of only one candidate, the candidate's municipality of residence, the office sought and electoral division. A nomination petition may contain as many separate papers as necessary and may contain the candidate's consent required by section 355. It may also contain the candidate's political designation. This designation may not exceed 3 words in length, may not incorporate the candidate's name or the designation or an abbreviation of the designation of a party that is qualified to nominate candidates by primary election and may not consist of or comprise language that is obscene, contemptuous, profane or prejudicial, promotes abusive or unlawful activity or violates any other provision of the laws of this State with respect to names. A candidate who intends to form a new party about that person's candidacy must use the proposed party's designation.

A. When 2 United States Senators are to be nominated, the nomination petition must contain the term of office sought by the candidate. [PL 2019, c. 371, §11 (AMD).]

B. The names of presidential electors must be placed on the petition as a slate. The names of the candidates for President and Vice President must be placed on a petition for the nomination of presidential electors. [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]
[PL 2023, c. 389, §3 (AMD).]

2. By whom signed. A nomination petition may be signed only by voters of the electoral division which is to make the nomination, except that nomination petitions for presidential electors may be signed by any Maine voter. Other signatures are void.
[PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

3. How signed. The voter must personally sign that voter's name in such a manner as to satisfy the registrar of that voter's municipality that the voter is a registered voter. Either the voter or the circulator of the petition must print the voter's name.
[RR 2019, c. 2, Pt. B, §46 (COR).]

4. Residence. The voter or the circulator of the petition must write or print the voter's residence address and municipality of registration. Ditto marks are permitted for residence address and municipality of registration only.
[PL 2005, c. 453, §49 (AMD).]

5. Number of signatures required. Nomination petitions must be signed by the following numbers of voters:

A. For a slate of candidates for the office of presidential elector, at least 4,000 and not more than 5,000 voters; [PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD).]

B. For a candidate for Governor, at least 4,000 and not more than 5,000 voters; [PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD).]

C. For a candidate for United States Senator, at least 4,000 and not more than 5,000 voters; [PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD).]

D. For a candidate for United States Representative, at least 2,000 and not more than 2,500 voters; [PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD).]

E. For a candidate for county office other than county commissioner or county charter commission member, at least 300 and not more than 400 voters; [PL 1991, c. 362, §2 (AMD).]

E-1. For a candidate for county commissioner, at least 100 and not more than 150 voters; [PL 1991, c. 362, §3 (NEW).]

F. For a candidate for State Senator, at least 200 and not more than 300 voters; [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

G. For a candidate for State Representative, at least 50 and not more than 80 voters; and [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

H. For a candidate for county charter commission member, at least 50 and not more than 80 voters. [PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

[PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD).]

6. When signed. A nomination petition may not be signed before January 1st of the election year in which it is to be used.

[PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW).]

7. Certification of petitions. A nomination petition shall be verified and certified as follows.

A. The circulator of a nomination petition shall verify by oath or affirmation before a notary public or other person authorized by law to administer oaths or affirmations that the circulator personally witnessed all of the signatures to the petition and that to the best of the circulator's knowledge and belief each signature is the signature of the person whose name it purports to be; each signature authorized under section 153-A was made by the authorized signer in the presence and at the direction of the voter; and each person is a resident of the electoral division named in the petition. [PL 2009, c. 253, §20 (AMD).]

B. Petitions must be delivered to the registrar, or clerk at the request or upon the absence of the registrar, for certification by 5 p.m. on May 25th in the election year in which the petitions are to be used, except that petitions for a slate of candidates for the office of presidential elector must be delivered for certification by 5 p.m. on July 25th in the election year in which the petitions are to be used. [PL 2013, c. 131, §12 (AMD).]

C. The registrar, or clerk at the request or upon the absence of the registrar, of each municipality concerned shall certify which names on a petition appear in the central voter registration system as registered voters in that municipality and may not certify any names that do not satisfy subsection 3. [PL 2005, c. 453, §50 (AMD).]

[PL 2013, c. 131, §12 (AMD).]

8. Filed with the Secretary of State.

[PL 1985, c. 383, §7 (RP).]

8-A. Filed with the Secretary of State. A nomination petition must be filed in the office of the Secretary of State by 5 p.m. on June 1st in the election year in which it is to be used, except that petitions for a slate of candidates for the office of presidential elector must be filed in the office of the Secretary of State by 5 p.m. on August 1st in the election year in which the petitions are to be used.

[PL 2013, c. 131, §13 (AMD).]

9. Petition validity. For a candidate to qualify for the ballot, a nomination petition must meet all of the requirements of this section. If the circulator swears an oath or affirmation in accordance with subsection 7, paragraph A that the circulator reasonably believes to be true and accurate at the time the oath or affirmation is sworn and there is no proof of fraud or a knowingly false statement by the circulator, then the voters' signatures that do not meet the requirements of subsection 7, paragraph A may not be counted, but the petition is otherwise valid.

[PL 2009, c. 253, §21 (RPR).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1985, c. 161, §6 (NEW). PL 1985, c. 383, §§7,8 (AMD). PL 1985, c. 614, §§14,15 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 362, §§2,3 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 459, §§26-28 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 436, §50 (AMD). PL 1999, c. 264, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 447, §12 (AMD). PL 2005, c. 196, §5 (AMD). PL

2005, c. 453, §§49,50 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 455, §14 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 253, §§ 20, 21 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 131, §§12, 13 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 371, §11 (AMD). RR 2019, c. 2, Pt. B, §46 (COR). PL 2021, c. 273, §6 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 389, §3 (AMD).

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