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Ohio Secretary of State

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**DIRECTIVE 2015-11**  
**July 31, 2015**

To: All County Boards of Elections  
Directors, Deputy Directors, and Board Members

Re: Instructions Regarding the Review, Examination, and Verification of the Supplemental  
Petition Proposing an Amendment to the Ohio Constitution (ResponsibleOhio)

**SUMMARY**

ResponsibleOhio filed its supplemental petition with the Secretary of State's office on Thursday, July 30, 2015. Please note that R.C. 3519.16 requires county boards of elections to examine the supplemental petitions and report the results to the Secretary of State within 8 days of receipt of the petitions.

Therefore, each board of elections must complete its review, examination, and verification of the supplemental petitions consistent with the "Instructions for the Examination and Verification of the Petition" contained in [Directive 2015-10](#) and return its certification to the Secretary of State's Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11, 2015.

**CHECKING SIGNATURES ON THE PETITIONS**

Please carefully read this Directive and the "Instructions for the Examination and Verification of the Petition" provided in [Directive 2015-10](#) before you examine the supplemental part-petitions sent to your county.<sup>1</sup>

As the Instructions state, each county board of elections must process all new, valid voter registrations and changes of names and/or address to existing registrations received by the board or the Secretary of State's Office as of the date the petition was filed with the Secretary of State (i.e., Thursday, July 30, 2015) before verifying the signatures on the part-petitions.<sup>2</sup> These registrations are effective as of the date filed with the Secretary of State.<sup>3</sup>

Prior to verifying the validity of individual signatures contained on a part-petition, the board of elections must verify the validity of that part-petition. First, the board must check each part-petition to determine whether the circulator's statement on the last page of the part-petition has been properly completed. The entire part-petition is invalid if the circulator's statement is not completed as required by law.

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3501.11(K).

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3501.38(A); 3519.15.

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 3501.38; 3503.19.

Second, the board must visually inspect each part-petition to ensure that it is the unique petition provided to petitioners for the purpose of collecting supplemental signatures. The unique petition contains a sun symbol in the top, right corner of every page of the petition—the summary pages, each page on which an elector may sign the petition, each page containing the full text of the proposed amendment, and the page bearing the circulator’s statement. Additionally, in every signature block of the unique petition, the line number and the word “signature” are italicized, bolded and changed from mixed case to all capital letters. If a part-petition is not the unique petition provided to petitioners, the signatures contained on that part-petition are invalid.<sup>4</sup>

Third, only signatures that were signed and collected during the ten days beginning July 20, 2015 and ending July 30, 2015 may be submitted.<sup>5</sup>

**Finally, no elector may sign a statewide issue petition more than once. A board must determine whether any elector who signed the original petition also has signed the supplemental petition. A board must invalidate any signature on the supplemental petition if it also appeared on the original petition.**<sup>6</sup>

### **PART-PETITION BELONGS TO ANOTHER COUNTY**

If you receive a part-petition that belongs to another county, please follow the process outlined in the “Instructions for the Examination and Verification of the Petition” beginning on page 7 of [Directive 2015-10](#). **It is imperative that a copy of a part-petition belonging to another county is transmitted to the other county as quickly as possible for signature verification.**

### **FULFILLING PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS**

Your board of elections may receive one or more public records requests for copies of the part-petitions. Boards should consult with their statutory legal counsel, the prosecuting attorney, before rejecting, fulfilling, or responding to any public records request.

### **CERTIFICATION AND RETURN OF THE PETITIONS**

As soon as you finish verifying the signatures on your county’s supplemental part-petitions, you must return your completed certification form. The certification form must be completed and submitted electronically via Elect Collect by clicking the “Submit” button. The certification form must also be saved and printed. The Director must sign the certification form and return the signed certification form to Laura Pietenpol via email to [lpietenp@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov](mailto:lpietenp@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov). **All certification forms must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 11, 2015.**

Additionally, all supplemental part-petitions must be received by the Secretary of State’s Office, Elections Division, 180 East Broad Street, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215, no later than Thursday, August 13, 2015.

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<sup>4</sup> R.C. 3519.16.

<sup>5</sup> R.C. 3519.16.

<sup>6</sup> R.C. 3519.16.

If you have any questions regarding this Directive, please contact the Secretary of State's elections counsel assigned to your county at (614) 466-2585.

Sincerely,

  
Jon Husted