



# **Guide to Qualifying San Francisco Initiative Measures**

March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election

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## I. Introduction

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This guide has been prepared by the Department of Elections (the Department) to assist with the procedures and requirements for qualifying Charter Amendments, Ordinances, and Declarations of Policy for the ballot through the initiative process. This guide applies only to the qualification of initiative measures for the City and County of San Francisco. For information about the state (rather than local) initiative process, see the Statewide Initiative Guide produced by the California Secretary of State. Visit [sos.ca.gov](https://sos.ca.gov) for information.

This guide does not have the force and effect of law, regulation, or rule, and interested parties should not rely on this guide as a substitute for consulting an attorney or applicable laws and regulations. If there is a conflict between this guide and any applicable law, regulation, or rule, then the law, regulation, or rule applies. The San Francisco Charter, San Francisco Municipal Elections Code, and California Elections Code are available online:

- San Francisco Charter: [codelibrary.amlegal.com](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com)
- San Francisco Municipal Elections Code: [codelibrary.amlegal.com](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com)
- California Elections Code: [leginfo.legislature.ca.gov](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov)

The Department strongly recommends that proponents consult an attorney on the initiative process, including technical requirements for the format of initiative petitions. The Department does not review initiative petitions prior to circulation. The Department's receipt of an initiative petition is not an indication that the petition meets all legal requirements.

If you are circulating an initiative petition, you may be required to file campaign financial disclosure statements under the State's Political Reform Act. Consult your legal counsel, the Technical Assistance Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) at (866) 275-3772 or [fppc.ca.gov](https://fppc.ca.gov), or the San Francisco Ethics Commission at (415) 252-3100 or [sfethics.org](https://sfethics.org) for more information.

**Schedule an appointment with Department personnel**, using our online appointment form: [sfelections.org/tools/csappt](https://sfelections.org/tools/csappt) or contact us by phone. The Department will prepare documents ahead of time, answer any questions you may have, and expedite your visit.

**San Francisco Department of Elections**  
**1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl, Rm 48**  
**San Francisco, CA 94102**  
**(415) 554-4375**

**Office hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

## II. Resources

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In addition to this guide, the Department encourages ballot measure proponents and campaigns to familiarize themselves with other important resources:

- A. The Department's website, [sfelections.sfgov.org](https://sfelections.sfgov.org) contains information for candidates and voters, including registration and voting calendars, details about ranked-choice voting, opportunities to observe elections processes, and up-to-date results reports from Election Night through certification of the results.
- B. Ballot measure proponents may apply to purchase voter data files for campaign purposes.
- C. Any committee that raises or spends funds to support or oppose a measure during the circulation of the measure shall file supplemental campaign statements with the San Francisco Ethics Commission, which publishes a general guide that explains state and local campaign finance and campaign disclosure requirements; the Ethics Commission and the FPPC also provide information regarding laws that govern political literature and advertising.
- D. The California Secretary of State (SOS) and the FPPC play a role in the administration and enforcement of laws regulating campaigns and elections. The FPPC has created "Campaign Disclosure Manual 3", available at [fppc.ca.gov](https://fppc.ca.gov), which details filing and disclosure requirements for local ballot measure committees.
- E. The Department provides a Ballot Argument Guide, which details the process for submitting proponent, opponent, rebuttal, and paid arguments for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet.

This guide will reference the various state and local laws that regulate elections processes. The table below lists the citations to these laws and regulations referenced in this guide.

<b>Code References:</b> <i>the following abbreviations are used throughout this guide for citations of supporting legal codes</i>	
CA Const.	California Constitution
CAEC	California Elections Code
CA Gov. Code	California Government Code
CA Admin. Code	California Administrative Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
SFC	San Francisco Charter
SFC&GCC	S.F. Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code
SFMEC	San Francisco Municipal Elections Code
SOS	Secretary of State
FPPC	Fair Political Practices Commission

### III. Important Dates

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CODE PROVISIONS
<b>Deadline to Submit Initiative Measures to Qualify for the Ballot</b>		
11 / 06 / 2023 E-120	Deadline to submit initiative petitions to the Department in order to qualify a Charter Amendment, Ordinance, or Declaration of Policy on the ballot for the March 5, 2024 election. No initiative petition may be withdrawn after submission to the Department.	SFC §14.101; SFMEC §§300(c), 370(c)
<b>Ballot Simplification Committee Digests, Ballot Questions, Financial Analyses</b>		
11 / 27 / 2023 – 12 / 11 / 2023 E-99 – E-85	Timeframe during which the Ballot Simplification Committee may prepare a digest of each local measure to be published in the Voter Information Pamphlet.	SFMEC §§515, 610
12 / 11 / 2023 E-85	Deadline for the Ballot Simplification Committee to submit a digest of each local measure to the Department.	SFMEC §515 (d)
12 / 11 / 2023 E-85	Deadline for the Controller to submit a financial analysis of each local measure to the Department.	SFMEC §520
12 / 11 / 2023 E-85	Deadline for the City Attorney to submit the ballot questions for local measures to the Department.	SFMEC §510(b)
<b>Designation of Letters for Ballot Measures</b>		
12 / 11 / 2023 E-85	The Department designates letters for local ballot measures according to the procedures set forth in the SFMEC.	SFMEC §505
<b>Proponent and Opponent Arguments for the Voter Information Pamphlet</b>		
12 / 14 / 2023 Noon E-82	Deadline to submit official proponent and opponent ballot arguments for local and district ballot measures to the Department; prior to submitting an argument for a local measure, the author must sign and submit a declaration related to support or non-support of the measure. <b>(300-word limit)</b>	CAEC §§9162- 9164, 9281-9283, 9315-9316, 9501- 9509; SFMEC §535(b)
12 / 14 / 2023 2 p.m. E-82	If the Department receives more than one proposed proponent or opponent argument for a measure, the Department will select one official proponent and one opponent argument according to priority levels and, if necessary, by lottery.	CAEC §§9166, 9503; SFMEC §545
12 / 15 / 2023 Noon E-81	Deadline for the authors of official proponent and opponent ballot arguments to correct any, grammatical, spelling, and factual errors in the arguments for or against local measures.	SFMEC §535(f)
12 / 15 / 2023 Noon – 12 / 25 / 2023 Noon E-81 - E-71	Period of public review and possible legal challenge of official proponent and opponent arguments for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet.	CAEC §§9380, 9509; SFMEC §590(b)(4)
<b>Rebuttal Arguments for the Voter Information Pamphlet</b>		
12 / 18 / 2023 Noon E-78	Deadline to submit rebuttal arguments to the Department for official proponent and opponent arguments. <b>(250-word limit)</b>	CAEC §§9167, 9285, 9504; SFMEC§535(c)
12 / 19 / 2023 Noon E-77	Deadline for the authors of rebuttal arguments to correct any, grammatical, spelling, and factual errors.	SFMEC §535(f)
12 / 19 / 2023 Noon – 12/29/2023 Noon E-77 - E-67	Period of public review and possible legal challenge of rebuttal arguments submitted for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet.	CAEC §§9380, 9509; SFMEC §590(b)(5)-(6)

## IV. Summary of Requirements

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### A. Filing Fee and Signatures in Lieu of Filing Fee

SFMEC §§320, 820, 840

A \$200 filing fee, used to defray the costs incurred by the City Attorney to prepare the ballot title and summary, is due when the proponent files the “Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition.” (see Template A.) The fee may be submitted by cashier’s check, money order, credit card, certified or campaign (company) check, or cash. Checks should be made payable to the San Francisco (SF) Department of Elections. In lieu of the filing fee, the proponent may submit a petition containing 400 registered San Francisco voters. Each valid signer reduces the amount of the filing fee by \$0.50. The filing fee is refundable if, within one year of the date of filing the “Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition”, the Director of Elections certifies that the initiative qualifies for the ballot. The proponent must then submit a written refund request to the Department.

### B. Number of Signers

The number of valid signers required to qualify an initiative measure for the ballot varies, depending upon the type of measure and whether it would be submitted to voters at a regular or special election.

#### 1. Charter Amendment

CAEC §§9255(c)(2)

A Charter Amendment is a change to the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco. The Charter is the Constitution of the City and County of San Francisco, and can only be changed by a majority of the votes cast. The number of valid signers required for a proposed Charter Amendment is based on the total number of registered San Francisco voters at the time the proponent submits the “Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition” (see attached Template A.). The petition must include valid signers in a quantity that equals or exceeds 10% of the total number of voters in the Department’s most recent official report of registration to the Secretary of State. As of this guide’s publication date, April 2023, a petition must include at least **49,819 valid signers** to qualify a Charter Amendment.

#### 2. Ordinance or Declaration of Policy

SFC §§14.101

An Ordinance is a local law passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors or through the initiative process by the voters. A Declaration of Policy is a statement or expression of support or purpose. To qualify a proposed Ordinance or Declaration of Policy, a petition must include at least **10,040 valid signers** as of the publication date of this guide, April 2023. This number represents 2% of the number of registered San Francisco voters in the Department’s most recent official report of registration to the Secretary of State.

#### 3. Special Election

SFC §§14.101, SFMEC §300(c)(2)

For an Ordinance to be presented to voters at a special election; the initiative measure must include an explicit request that the Department call a special election for this purpose. There is also a higher signature requirement to qualify an Ordinance for submission at a special election: the initiative petition must contain at least **17,958 valid signers**. This number equals 10% of the votes cast for all candidates for Mayor at the most recent election for Mayor.

A special municipal election shall not be called with respect to a Declaration of Policy.

### C. Filing Date Requirements

CAEC §§9208, 9265; SFMEC §300(c)

A proponent has a maximum of **180 days** from the date of receipt of the City Attorney's ballot title and summary to obtain all required signers and file the petition with the Department. If the proponent chooses to receive the ballot title and summary by email, the 180 days will begin as of the date that the Department sends the email.

In order to qualify a measure for a **specific** election, a petition must be filed with the Department no later than **120 days prior** to that election. If a petition is filed after the 120-day deadline for a specific election and the petition is successful, the proposed measure shall be placed on the ballot at the next general municipal or statewide election.

## V. Initial Steps to the Initiative Process

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CAEC §§9103, 9202-9206, 9256, 9608; SFMEC §§310, 320

- A. **Write the Charter Amendment, Ordinance, or Declaration of Policy.** The Department strongly advises that the proponent consult an attorney before drafting the text of the proposed ballot measure.
- B. **Submit the required materials to the Department.** The proponent, or an authorized representative, must submit the required materials to the Department (see attached Templates); these materials become public records once filed:
  - 1. The full text of the proposed measure
  - 2. A "Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition" signed by at least one proponent, and not more than three proponents; the notice may, but need not, include a written statement of up to 500 words indicating the reasons for the proposed measure
  - 3. A request that the City Attorney prepare a ballot title and summary of the proposed measure; this request must include the proponent's mailing address
  - 4. A signed statement related to use of petition signatures, executed by the proponent and submitted with the request for title and summary
- C. **Pay the fee or submit signatures in lieu of the fee.** The proponent pays the filing fee, submits signatures in lieu of the filing fee, or both.
- D. **Obtain the City Attorney's ballot title and summary.** Within 15 days after the proposed measure is filed with the Department (or, if signatures are submitted in lieu of the filing fee, within 15 days of the certification of the signatures), the City Attorney provides a ballot title and summary of the proposed measure. The ballot title, which may differ from the title given by the proponent, must provide, in 500 words or less, a true and impartial statement of the purpose of the proposed measure.
- E. **Publish the Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition.** Before circulating the petition, the proponent must publish, at least once, in a newspaper of general circulation, both the "Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition" and the City Attorney's ballot title and summary of the proposed measure. The proponent is not required to publish the text of the proposed measure.
- F. **Submit proof of publication.** Within 10 days after the publication date of the notice, the proponent must submit proof of publication to the Department, which includes a copy of the published material together with an affidavit provided by a representative of the newspaper in which the material was published that certifies the fact of publication. For a Charter Amendment, the proponent must also submit proof of publication to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.



## VI. Petition Format

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CAEC §§100, 101, 104, 9020, 9201, 9203, 9207, 9209, 9260-9263; SFMEC §340

The California Elections Code prescribes requirements for formatting initiative petitions. The Department cannot accept a petition that does not conform to these requirements. Please refer to the sample petitions in the Templates section of this guide as you review the following steps:

- A. Insert the required heading, title and summary from the City Attorney, introduction, and text of the proposed measure.** The petition may be circulated in sections. For a Charter Amendment, each section must consist of sheets of white paper, uniform in size, with dimensions no smaller than 8.5" x 11" or not greater than 8.5" x 14". The sheets containing each section must be securely fastened together during circulation and filing.
- B. Insert the Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition.** The "Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition" must be included in each section of the petition. [Template A](#) provides an example of a "Notice of Intent".
- C. Insert the Notice to the Public.** This notice must be printed in 11-point font, and inserted prior to the portion for voter signatures. For any initiative or referendum petition for which the circulation is paid for by a committee formed pursuant to Government Code 82013, an Official Top Funders disclosure shall be included on the petition or in a separate document presented to a prospective signer of the petition.
- D. Create signature box.** The signature box shall substantially follow the sample provided in the Templates section of this guide.
- E. Insert the Declaration of Circulator.** The "Declaration of Circulator" must be included with each section, and, after circulation, completed in the circulator's own handwriting.

## VII. Circulating the Petition

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CAEC §§100-103, 2138, 2158-2159.5, 9264, 9602; SFC §14.104

A summary of regulations related to petition circulation follows. The Department recommends that a proponent consult an attorney throughout the initiative process. Circulation of the petition can begin following the publication of the "Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition". Any person who is 18 years or older may circulate a petition. Any eligible registered voter in San Francisco may sign a petition.

For a signer to be valid, the voter must indicate a residential address on the petition that matches the address in their registration record. A proponent or circulator may obtain voter registration cards for signers to complete. Registration cards must be turned in or mailed to the Department within three days of receipt from a voter, and, for the petition signatures to be valid, the registration cards must be received and processed prior to or upon the submission of the initiative petition. If registration cards are submitted before the petition, please notify the Department that the cards are from voters who have signed a petition so that the registrations can be processed prior to the verification of signatures.

If a voter is unable to personally complete a petition, the voter may request that another person print the voter's name and place of residence on the appropriate spaces of the petition. The voter must then personally mark or sign the petition, witnessed by one person by subscribing his or her name thereon.

Any voter may withdraw their signature by filing a written request with the Department prior to the filing of the petition. However, once the petition is filed with the Department, no signatures may be withdrawn.

## **A. Signature Misuse Statements**

CAEC §9609-10

Prior to circulating or allowing another person to circulate an initiative petition, both the person, company official, or other organizational officer who is in charge of signature gathering and any circulators must execute and submit a signed statement regarding the appropriate use of petition signers' information, see sample C, the "Signed Statement Related to the use of Petition Signatures" in the Templates section of this guide.

1. The statement of a person, company official, or other organizational officer who is responsible for signature gathering must be submitted to the proponent
2. The statement of a circulator must be submitted to the person, company official, or other organizational officer who is responsible for signature gathering

In either instance, the statement must be kept on file by the recipient for at least eight months after the certification of the results of the election for which the petition qualified, or, if the measure, for any reason, is not submitted to the voters, eight months after the deadline for submission of the petition to election officials.

## **B. Official Top Funders Disclosure**

CAEC §§107(a) – (g)

For any initiative or referendum petition for which the circulation is paid for by a committee formed pursuant to Government Code §82013, an Official Top Funders disclosure shall be included on the petition or in a separate document presented to a prospective signer of the petition. Please refer to Sample D in the Templates section of this guide.

County elections officials are not required to verify the accuracy of the information or approve the petition upon any updates.

## **C. Instructions for Signature Gatherers**

CAEC §§9607, 18650

The proponent of an initiative measure must ensure that any person, company, or other organization that is paid or volunteers to solicit signatures to qualify the proposed initiative measure receives instruction on the requirements and prohibitions imposed by state law with respect to the circulation of petitions and the gathering of signatures. These instructions must emphasize the prohibition of the use of signatures on an initiative petition for a purpose other than qualification of the proposed measure for the ballot. Petitions cannot be used to create or add to mailing lists or similar lists for any purpose, including fundraising or requests for support. Any such misuse constitutes a crime.

## **D. Identification Requirements**

SFMEC §335

Any person who controls circulation or signature gathering on a San Francisco initiative petition must request Circulator Identification Badge templates from the Department. The Department will provide one badge template containing the words "VOLUNTEER CIRCULATOR" and a second badge template containing the words "PAID CIRCULATOR." The templates will specify a font and size that will be clearly legible to the intended public.

With the badge templates, the Department will also provide written notice describing the identification requirements and that intentional failure to display the appropriate badge or to disclose the names of the petition proponents upon request is an infraction, punishable by the maximum fine allowed under state law.

## **E. Declaration of Circulator**

CAEC §104

The petition may be circulated by a number of individuals carrying separate, identical parts of the petition called sections. Each section includes the Declaration of Circulator.

Each petition circulator who obtains signatures must complete each declaration by hand, sign the declaration under penalty of perjury, and return the petition to the proponent or the person, company official, or other organizational officer authorized by the proponent to circulate the petition. The circulator may not complete a section of the declaration and then duplicate the petition. When making a copy of a petition form, the proponent or circulator should ensure that no fields have been prefilled. Preprinted dates or generalized dates other than the particular range of dates during which the petition section was actually circulated are not allowed.

## **F. Improper Signature Gathering**

CAEC §§18600-18601, 18603, 18610-18614

State election law specifically prohibits the following activities:

1. Intentionally misrepresenting or intentionally making any false statement concerning the contents, purport, or effect of a petition to any prospective signer
2. Willfully and knowingly circulating, publishing, or exhibiting any false statement or misrepresentation concerning the contents, purport, or effect of a petition for the purpose of influencing any person to sign that petition
3. Intentionally making any false statement in response to any inquiry by any voter as to whether he or she is a paid signature gatherer or a volunteer
4. Refusing to allow a prospective signer to read the measure or petition
5. Offering or giving money or other valuable consideration to another in exchange for his or her signature on a petition
6. Soliciting any circulator to affix a false or forged signature to a petition, or to cause or permit a false or forged signature to be affixed
7. Circulating or causing a petition to be circulated, knowing it to contain false, forged, or fictitious names
8. Knowingly signing one's name more than once to a petition or signing a petition that one is not qualified to sign.
9. Subscribing a fictitious name or the name of another to a petition, or causing another to subscribe such a name
10. Filing a petition with any signature which the person filing the petition knows to be false or fraudulent or not the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be.

For more information about restrictions related to initiative petitions and possible consequences for violation, refer to California Elections Code, Division 18, Chapter 7.

## VIII. Filing the Petition

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CAEC §9113, 9210; SFMEC §310, 370(c)

Within 180 days from the date of receipt of the City Attorney's ballot title and summary, the proponent, or a person with written authorization from the proponent, may file the petition with the Department. All sections of the petition must be filed at one time, and will not be accepted on a rolling basis. Once filed, no initiative petition section may be withdrawn.

## IX. Signature Verification

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CAEC §§9114, 9211, 9266; SFMEC §300(c)

The Director of Elections shall certify the sufficiency of the petition signatures, or determine the insufficiency of the signatures, no later than 30 days after the date the petition is received. The Department will complete the signature verification process and notify the proponent whether the proposed measure qualifies for the ballot. If the proposed measure qualifies for the ballot, the Department will certify the results of the examination to the Board of Supervisors.

### A. Raw Count

CAEC §9113

When a petition is filed, the Department determines the total number of unverified signatures affixed to the petition. If, from this *prima facie* examination, the Department determines that the number of signatures:

1. Equals or exceeds the minimum number of signatures required, the Department shall examine the petition
2. Does *not* equal or exceed the minimum number of signatures required, no further action shall be taken

### B. Random Sample

CAEC §9115

If more than 500 petition signatures have been submitted, the Department may use a random sampling technique for verification of signatures. The sample of signatures to be verified shall be drawn so that every signature is given equal opportunity for inclusion in the sample. The random sampling shall include an examination of at least 500 signatures, or three percent of the signatures, whichever is greater.

If the statistical sampling shows that the number of valid signatures is greater than 110 percent of the required number, the initiative measure is considered qualified, with no further verification needed. The Department shall certify the results of the examination to the Board of Supervisors and notify the proponent via certified mail.

If the statistical sampling shows that the number of valid signatures is within 95 to 110 percent of the required number, the Department will verify each signature on the petition. If, prior to reviewing each signature, the Department determines that the petition has the required number of valid signatures, it may stop the verification process.

If the statistical sampling shows that the number of valid signatures is insufficient, the Department will notify the proponent, and no further action will be taken on the petition.

## **X. Submission of a Proposed Ballot Measure to the Voters**

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SFC §14.101; SFMEC §300(c)

If an initiative petition meets all legal requirements, contains a sufficient number of valid signers, and is submitted to the Department within 180 days from the date of receipt of ballot title and summary and at least 120 days prior to an election, the measure will qualify for the ballot at that election. However, if the proponent submits the petition within the 180-day period for gathering signatures but less than 120 days prior to an election, the measure will be submitted to the voters at a future election.

## **XI. No Withdrawal of Submitted Initiative Petitions**

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SFMEC §370(c)

Once submitted to the Department, measures proposed by initiative petition may not be withdrawn.

## **XII. The Voter Information Pamphlet**

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CAEC §§9295, 13314; SFMEC §§500(c), 505, 590(b)

The Department publishes a Voter Information Pamphlet to provide voters with information about candidates and ballot measures before each election. The Department mails this Voter Information Pamphlet to voters approximately one month before each election. The Voter Information Pamphlet includes the following information related to local ballot measures:

- A. The sample ballot
- B. The identification of each local measure by letter and title
- C. The digest of each measure, prepared by the Ballot Simplification Committee
- D. The City Attorney's statement or question for each measure
- E. The Controller's financial analysis of each measure
- F. An explanation of how each measure qualified for submission to the voters
- G. The full text of each measure
- H. Proponent, opponent, rebuttal, and paid arguments, if any are submitted, in favor of or against each measure

Materials submitted for publication in the Voter Information Pamphlet are available for public examination at the Department's office for 10 calendar days immediately following the filing deadline. During this 10-day period, any San Francisco voter may seek a writ of mandate or an injunction to amend or delete the material on the grounds that the material is false, misleading, or inconsistent with the purposes of the Voter Information Pamphlet.

**A. Title and Letter Designation**

SFMEC §505

The Director of Elections determines the title and letter designation of each measure, and assigns letter designations according to the procedures set forth in the San Francisco Municipal Elections Code. In general, letters are assigned in alphabetical order to bond measures, followed by Charter Amendments, Ordinances, and Declarations of Policy respectively.

**B. Ballot Question**

SFMEC §510

The City Attorney prepares an impartial question or general statement that will be printed on the ballot and in the Voter Information Pamphlet. The City Attorney must submit ballot questions or statements to the Department no fewer than 85 days prior to the election.

**C. Financial Analysis**

SFMEC §§520-521

The Controller prepares an impartial financial analysis of each measure that includes the amount of any increase or decrease in the cost of City and County government and the effect of the measure on the tax rate. The Controller must submit financial analyses to the Department no fewer than 85 days prior to the election.

**D. Ballot Simplification Committee Digest**

SFMEC §§515, 600-620

The Ballot Simplification Committee prepares a fair and impartial summary of each local ballot measure in simple language. Each summary, or “digest,” explains the main purposes and points of the measure, and includes four sections:

1. The Way It Is Now
2. The Proposal
3. A “Yes” Vote Means
4. A “No” Vote Means

In general, digests must be written as close as possible to an eighth-grade reading level and have 300 or fewer words. If the Committee determines that the complexity or scope of a measure requires a longer digest, the digest may exceed the 300-word limit.

The BSC conducts its work in public meetings. Committee members volunteer their time to prepare these summaries, and welcome input from the public. Official proponents of initiative measures, along with the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, anyone who has notified the Department of interest in a measure, and the public, are provided at least one week’s advance notice of meetings. Meeting agendas and related information are posted at [sfelections.org/bsc](https://sfelections.org/bsc) and available at the Department’s office.

The BSC must submit digests to the Department no fewer than 85 days before the election.

**E. Submission and Publication of Arguments In Favor of or Against Proposed Ballot Measures; Rebuttals**

SFMEC §§525-585

The Voter Information Pamphlet includes arguments in favor of and against local ballot measures. The proponent of an initiative measure has the opportunity to publish an argument in support of the initiative measure free of charge in the Voter Information Pamphlet. If an opponent's argument against the measure is submitted and selected for publication, the proponent also has the opportunity to submit a rebuttal argument in response to the opponent's argument. For more information about ballot arguments, including paid ballot arguments, please refer to the Department's Guide to Submitting Ballot Arguments.

### **XIII. Post-Election**

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CA Const., Art. 11, §3; CA Gov. Code §§34459-34460; CAEC §9217; SFMEC §§360, 380

In general, a simple majority, or 50% of the total number of votes cast on the measure plus one, is required to adopt a Charter Amendment, Ordinance, or Declaration of Policy. Once adopted by the voters, when a measure will go into effect depends on the type of measure. Unless otherwise provided in the text of the measure, a Charter Amendment will go into effect when the Amendment is filed by the California Secretary of State, and an Ordinance or Declaration of Policy will go into effect 10 days after the Board of Supervisors declares the results of the election.

If two or more ballot measures that concern the same subject matter are adopted by the voters at the same election, and if there is a conflict between provisions of these measures, then the provisions of the measure receiving the greatest number of votes would go into effect. In case two or more measures adopted at the same election have conflicting provisions and are tied for the highest vote, they shall be resubmitted at the next general election.

## XIV. Templates

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### A. **SAMPLE: Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition**

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition within the City and County of San Francisco for the purpose of

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A statement of the reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows (*optional, maximum of 500 words*):

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's name (*print*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's name (*print*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's name (*print*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proponent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**B. SAMPLE: Request for City Attorney's Ballot Title and Summary**

(DATE)

John Arntz  
Director of Elections  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 48  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Arntz:

Enclosed is the text of a proposed (*Charter Amendment / Ordinance / Declaration of Policy*) to be submitted to the voters of the City and County of San Francisco. We request that a copy be forwarded to the City Attorney so that a ballot title and summary may be prepared.

Please send the title and summary to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions, please contact me at:

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

(NAME / SIGNATURE)

**C. SAMPLE: Signed Statement Related to the use of Petition Signatures**

Proponent's title of measure: \_\_\_\_\_

City Attorney ballot title of measure (if available): \_\_\_\_\_

With regard to the above initiative measure, I am (*check one*):

- A proponent (*submit this completed form to the Department of Elections*)
- A person, company official, or other organizational officer who is in charge of signature gathering (*submit this completed form to the proponent*)
- A paid circulator (*submit this completed form to the person, company official, or other organizational officer who is in charge of signature gathering*)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that it is a misdemeanor under state law  
(*Print Name*)

(California Elections Code Section 18650) to knowingly or willfully allow the signatures on an initiative petition to be used for any purpose other than qualification of the proposed measure for the ballot.

I certify that I will not knowingly or willfully allow the signatures for this initiative to be used for any purpose other than qualification of the measure for the ballot.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**D. SAMPLE: Official Top Funders Disclosure Sheet**

(Provided as separate sheet or included with Notice to Public on Petition)

**OFFICIAL TOP FUNDERS. Valid only for [Month, Year]<sup>1</sup>**

[CAEC § 107(a)(2)]

[TITLE OF INITIATIVE OR REFERENDUM  
AS IT APPEARS ON THE PETITION] [CAEC § 107(a)(1)]

**Petition circulation paid for by [14-point font § 107(a)(1)]**

[Name of the committee as it appears on the most recent Statement of Organization filed  
pursuant to

Gov. Code §84501]

Committee major funding from:

[Largest contributor]

[Second largest contributor]

[Third largest contributor]

[OPTIONAL] Endorsed by:

[First endorser]

[Second endorser]

[Third endorser]

Latest Official Top Funders: [link to Secretary of State Top Funders website or committee website]

<sup>1</sup> 1 The month and year must start at least seven days after the date the top contributors as defined in Government Code section 84501 were last confirmed.

**E. SAMPLE: Initiative Petition for a CHARTER AMENDMENT**

**Step 1:** *(this step is different for a Charter Amendment than an Ordinance or Declaration of Policy; differences are highlighted)*

**Petition for Submission to Voters of Proposed Amendment to the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco**

The City Attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure:

*(Insert the title and summary prepared by the City Attorney. Note: this title and summary must also be printed in 11-point or larger roman boldface type across the top of each petition page on which signatures are to appear.)*

To the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco:

We, the undersigned, registered and qualified voters of the State of California, residents of the City and County of San Francisco, pursuant to Section 3 of Article XI of the California Constitution and Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 34450) of Part 1 of Division 2 of Title 4 of the Government Code, present to the Board of Supervisors of the City and County, this petition and request that the following proposed amendment to the Charter of the City and County be submitted to the registered and qualified voters of the City and County for their adoption or rejection at the next statewide general, statewide primary, or regularly scheduled municipal election pursuant to Section 1200, 1201, or 1301.

The proposed Charter Amendment reads as follows:

First.

*(Insert full text of the amendment in 8-point type or larger)*

**Step 2:**

**Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition:**

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition within the City and County of San Francisco for the purpose of *(insert purpose of measure)*. A statement of reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows: *(insert optional 500-word statement of reasons, if submitted with the notice.)*

*(Note: the above notice must be included in each section of the petition)*

**Step 3:**

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE AN “OFFICIAL TOP FUNDERS” SHEET.**

**THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.**

*(Note: the above notice must be printed in 11-point type, prior to the portion for voter signatures)*

**Step 4:**

**Use Pen Only — Please print all information except the signature.**

For office use only:

1.	Print Name	Residence Address ONLY	
	Sign as registered to vote	City ZIP Code	

2.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
3.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
4.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
5.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	

**Petition for Submission to Voters of Proposed Amendment to  
the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco**

The City Attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure:

*(Insert the title and summary prepared by the City Attorney. Note: this title and summary must also be printed in 11-point or larger roman boldface type across the top of each petition page on which signatures are to appear.)*

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE AN “OFFICIAL TOP FUNDERS” SHEET.**

**THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.**

*(Note: the above notice must be printed in 11-point type, prior to the portion for voter signatures)*

**Use Pen Only — Please print all information except the signature.**

For office use only:

6.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
7.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
8.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	

9.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
10.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
11.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	
12.	_____ Print Name _____ Sign as registered to vote	_____ Residence Address ONLY _____ City ZIP Code	

**Step 5:**

**Declaration of Circulator**

*(To be completed after above signatures have been obtained. Dates of circulation, printed name, and residence address must be in circulator's own handwriting.)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am 18 years of age or older. My residence address is  
*(print name)*

\_\_\_\_\_. I circulated this section of the petition and witnessed each of the appended  
*(address, city, state, zip)*

signatures being written. Each signature on this petition is, to the best of my information and belief, the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be. Each signer has been shown a valid and unfalsified "Official Top Funders" sheet. All signatures on this document were obtained between the dates of \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_.  
*(month, day, year)* *(month, day, year)*

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, at  
*(month and day)* *(year)* *(place of signing)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(complete signature, indicating full name of circulator)*

**To be entered by Department of Elections, after validation:**

Date:	# Valid in this section:	By Deputy:

**F. SAMPLE: Initiative Petition for an ORDINANCE and a DECLARATION OF POLICY**

**Step 1:** *(this step is different for a Charter Amendment than an Ordinance and a Declaration of Policy; differences are highlighted)*

**Initiative Measure to be Submitted Directly to the Voters**

The City Attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure:

*(Insert the title and summary prepared by the City Attorney. Note: this title and summary must also be printed in 11-point or larger roman boldface type across the top of each petition page on which signatures are to appear.)*

Be it ordained by the people of the City and County of San Francisco: *(for Ordinances only)*

*(Insert full text of the amendment in 8-point type or larger)*

**Step 2:**

**Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition:**

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition within the City and County of San Francisco for the purpose of *(insert purpose of measure)*. A statement of reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows: *(insert optional 500-word statement of reasons, if submitted with the notice.)*

*(Note: the above notice must be included in each section of the petition)*

**Step 3:**

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE AN “OFFICIAL TOP FUNDERS” SHEET.**

THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.

*(Note: the above notice must be printed in 11-point type, prior to the portion for voter signatures)*

**Step 4:**

**Use Pen Only — Please print all information except the signature.**

For office use

only:

1.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
2.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
3.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	

4.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
5.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
6.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
7.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	

**Initiative Measure to be Submitted Directly to the Voters**

The City Attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure:

*(Insert the title and summary prepared by the City Attorney. Note: this title and summary must also be printed in 11-point or larger roman boldface type across the top of each petition page on which signatures are to appear.)*

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC**

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEE AN “OFFICIAL TOP FUNDERS” SHEET.**

**THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.**

*(Note: the above notice must be printed in 11-point type, prior to the portion for voter signatures)*

**Use Pen Only — Please print all information except the signature.**

For office use

only:

8.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
9.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	
10.	<hr/> Print Name <hr/> Sign as registered to vote	<hr/> Residence Address ONLY <hr/> City ZIP Code	



11.	_____	_____	
	Print Name	Residence Address ONLY	
12.	_____	_____	
	Print Name	Residence Address ONLY	
	Sign as registered to vote	City ZIP Code	
	Sign as registered to vote	City ZIP Code	

**Step 5:**

**Declaration of Circulator**

*(To be completed after above signatures have been obtained. Dates of circulation, printed name, and residence address must be in circulator's own handwriting.)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am 18 years of age or older. My residence address is \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_. I circulated this section of the petition and witnessed each of the appended \_\_\_\_\_ signatures being written. Each signature on this petition is, to the best of my information and belief, the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be. Each signer has been shown a valid and unfalsified "Official Top Funders" sheet. All signatures on this document were obtained between the dates of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(complete signature, indicating full name of circulator)*

**To be entered by Department of Elections, after validation:**

Date:	# Valid in this section:	By Deputy: