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Supervisor of Elections

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HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CHARTER AMENDMENT BY PETITION

Section 8.03 of the Charter of Hillsborough County provides that the power to propose amendments to the Hillsborough County Charter by initiative is vested in the people. That power may be invoked by filing a petition with the Supervisor of Elections. Following is a summary of requirements set forth in the Charter (sections 8.03 and 8.04), and State Statute (section 101.161).

<u>Getting Started</u>	<u>Beginning/Termination of Petition Drive</u>
Before starting a petition drive, the sponsors involved must become a political committee. Form DS-DE 5 is available at the Supervisor of Elections office and on the Division of Elections website. Next, the format and wording of the petition must be established and a facsimile submitted to the Supervisor of Elections for review and approval of format.	A date certain must be designated as the beginning of any petition drive and certified by the Supervisor of Elections. A petition drive terminates six months after the certified beginning date. In the event sufficient signatures are not acquired during the six month period, the petition drive shall be considered null and void. None of the signatures may be carried over onto another identical or similar petition.

Number of Signatures Required

The petition must be circulated in all the County Commission districts of Hillsborough County. To be accepted, the number of verified signatures of registered electors must be equal to at least 8% of the total votes cast in the county in the preceding presidential election. The signatures collected must also include a number of electors equal to at least 8% of the votes cast in each of two districts. Please refer to the chart on the right for the exact amount of signatures required. The cost of petition verification is 10 cents for each signature checked. The charge can be waived by following procedures in section 99.097, Florida Statutes.	County Commission District	Votes Cast in Last Preceding Presidential Election (2016)	8%
	1	162,523	13,002
	2	168,796	13,504
	3	113,166	9,053
	4	164,825	13,186
	Hillsborough County Total	609,310	48,745
*Petition must contain the signatures of at least 8% of the votes cast in at least two County Commission Districts			

Petition Format

The form must contain the provisions of the Florida Election Laws and the State Administrative Code. The petition should be entitled 'Charter Amendment Petition Form' and contain the full text of the amendment. There must be adequate space for signer's name, street address, city, county, date of signature and signature, and include space for the voter identification number or date of birth. Only one signature is allowed per form. Each petition is a paid political advertisement and must be identified as such. Minimum size 3"x5" and maximum size is 8.5"x11".

Certification

The Supervisor of Elections has up to 30 days to determine whether the petition contains the required signatures and shall certify to the Board of County Commissioners that the petition does or does not contain the required signatures. The final date to submit petitions to the Supervisor of Elections office is 30 days prior to the Primary Election to ensure the measure can be included on the General Election ballot. Amendments become effective upon approval by majority vote in a county-wide election.

The information contained in this fact sheet and other literature is not comprehensive in nature. If you are initiating a charter amendment, it is your responsibility to become acquainted with relevant Florida election laws and local charters that might have a bearing on your initiative.

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