

# Why sign a petition?

**MANY VOTERS WONDER WHY WE GO THROUGH THE PETITION PROCESS EVERY TIME AN ELECTION IS COMING UP.**

Under New York law, candidates for public office are nominated by the political parties. The nominations are made in the party primary elections, which are open to all registered voters who are enrolled in the applicable party. In order to be a candidate for party nomination, a person must file a certain number of petition signatures by voters of his or her party in the particular district. The number of signatures required depends on the size of the district.

The petition signatures are required even if the candidate has no opponent for nomination. In that case, the candidate will receive the nomination by filing the necessary number of valid signatures.

Petitioning is a lot of work for your neighbors who are committed to making our democratic process succeed. YOU can help by signing a petition so that candidates can be nominated.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORT.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted Weiss".

**TED WEISS**  
Member of Congress  
17th C.D.

VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS  
PRIMARY ELECTION, 1987  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR OBTAINING SIGNATURES

Thank you for volunteering to petition for VID and its candidates. Petitioning is a hard but important part of the campaign process. In order for a candidate to be able to run for office, he or she must get people to sign a petition on his or her behalf. Please read this instruction sheet before you begin obtaining signatures and feel free to ask questions about any part of the petitioning process.

1. **SCHEDULE** - Petitioning for candidates who will run in the September 15, 1987 Democratic Primary begins on June 9th and all petitions must be filed with the New York City Board of Elections no later than July 16th. However, there will be many candidates seeking signatures this year so you should get your signatures as quickly as possible. This is particularly important for VID's District Leader and County Committee races. Remember, if a person signs two different petitions only the candidate whose petition is signed first may count the signature on his or her behalf.

**LAST DAY TO RETURN PETITIONS TO VID IS JULY 13TH!!!**

2. **WHO MAY WITNESS** - In order for signatures for District Leader to be valid, the witness (you) must be an enrolled Democrat who is registered to vote in Part A of the 61st Assembly District. If you are not sure whether you are registered in the correct district, check with the Campaign, Law or Petitioning Chairs before you witness a VID petition.

If you have already signed a petition for a candidate who is not on VID's petition, you might not be able to be a valid witness for VID. Make sure that you tell the Law Chairs or Petitioning Chairs of this fact before you witness a VID petition.

A notary public or a Commissioner of Deeds who is registered in New York City may witness a signatures for any candidate anywhere in New York City.

3. **WHO MAAAY SIGN** - Any Democratic voter who is registered to vote in Part A of the 61st Assembly District may sign the petition. Check with the Campaign, Petitioning and/or Law Chairs to see what are the boundaries of the Part. Do not rely on your own knowledge.

You will be carrying petitions for different County Committee Election Districts. In order for a Democratic voter to be able to sign your petition, the voter must be registered to vote in the Election District that you are carrying. Again, check the boundaries of the Election District before you begin to petition.

4. EQUIPMENT - Petitions, Facsimile Sheets, Election District voter lists, Pen (preferably blue or black and not a felt tip marker), Literature and Voter Registration forms.

5. PROCEDURE -- When you approach a person, ask him or her if he or she is an enrolled Democrat registered to vote in the neighborhood. (Be more careful if you are petitioning on the borders of the district ). If the person says yes, ask him or her to sign the VID petition. Explain who the candidates are and why you are supporting them. If the person is still uncertain, explain that signing the petition merely enables the candidates to appear on the September 15th Primary ballot.

A signer must sign his or her full name in ink as it appears on the voter registration card. Nicknames and titles (Ms., Dr.) should not be used nor should the signer sign on behalf of anyone other than himself or herself, including spouse and/or lover. The signer should then print his or her full address on the space on the petition for addresses. If possible, have the signer print his or her address on the facsimile sheet (as well as his or her name) instead of on the petition. You will be able to copy the address from the facsimile sheet onto the petition when you return to VID. This will be helpful with regard to the legibility of addresses.

The signer should not fill in any information on the petition other than his or her signature and possibly address. You may fill in the date, the address of the signer and the Election District/Address District. The columns for political districts (ED/AD) will be filled in by you at VID with the aid of a Street Finder. Do not let the signer fill in these columns even if he or she says that he or she knows the district numbers.

Do not fill in the page numbers. These will be filled in at VID at the end of the petitioning process.

Do not fill in, sign or date the Statement of Witness at the bottom of the petition until the petition has been checked by a member of the Law Committee.

It is mandatory that the signer sign his or her full name on the petition in your presence. If you or the signer makes a mistake, draw a line in ink all across the line of the petition on which the mistake occurs and then you initial the line on each side. The signer should then sign on the next line.

Do not sign any petition that you are witnessing. Your signature will not be counted.

If a person tells you that he or she is not registered to vote, register the person. However, that person may not sign the petition until the Board of Elections has clocked in the registration form.

When you have finished your petitions, return them immediately to VID. You will then fill in the ED/AD columns, check the information against the Assembly District voter list and complete the facsimile sheets. After you have completed these steps, you will then complete the Witness Statement with the help of a representative of the Law Committee.

If you have any questions, ask the Campaign, Law or Petitioning Chairs. Do no guess at or assume anything. A mistake, especially in the Witness Statement, may invalidate your entire petition and turn your hard work into nothing.

Carol Feinman and Geoffrey Smith  
VID Law Chairs.