

The seal of the State of South Dakota is a circular emblem. It features a central illustration of a landscape with a river, a bridge, and a plow. Above the landscape is a banner with the motto "UNDER GOD THE PEOPLE RULE". The outer ring of the seal contains the text "STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA" at the top and "1889" at the bottom, separated by stars. The seal is rendered in a light gray, semi-transparent style.

2026 Political Party Circulation Guide

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Monae L. Johnson".

Monae L. Johnson

South Dakota Secretary of State

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POLITICAL PARTY ORGANIZATION PETITIONS

Information for Circulating

1. A petition circulator is a person of at least eighteen years of age and a resident of the state of South Dakota ([SDCL 12-1-3 \(12\)](#)). No registered sex offender may circulate a petition except if the sex offender is in the employ of, and under immediate supervision of, another person and where the circumstances preclude any contact with children ([SDCL 12-1-32](#) through [12-1-34](#)).
2. Circulators for the organization of a political party cannot be employed, rewarded or compensated based on the number of registered voters who signed the petitions. This does not prohibit any person from employing a circulator based on one of the following practices: Paying an hourly wage or salary; establishing either express or implied minimum signature requirements for the petition circulator; terminating the petition circulator's employment, if the petition circulator fails to meet certain productivity requirements; and paying discretionary bonuses based on reliability, longevity, and productivity ([SDCL 12-5-1.6](#)).
3. The petition circulator must personally witness each signature on the petition being circulated. The petition's verification must be completed following circulation and must include the circulator's printed name, residence address, city, state, complete date and be signed under oath before a South Dakota notary public or other officer authorized to administer oaths.
4. Each petition signer must be a registered voter in the state of South Dakota. This website is available for circulators to verify voter registration: <https://vip.sdsos.gov/viplogin.aspx>.
5. Signers must sign their names as they are registered to vote or as they usually sign their names.
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7. The signer's printed name must also appear.
8. Each signature line must show the signer's complete voter registration address. This can be the street and house number or rural route and box number (only if a resident of a second- or third-class municipality, which are those with less than 5,000 residents) in addition to the city or town. Zip codes are optional. A signer in a first-class municipality may not use a PO Box. This would include the following which are first class municipalities:

Aberdeen, Belle Fourche, Box Elder, Brandon, Brookings, Harrisburg, Huron, Madison, Mitchell, Pierre, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Spearfish, Sturgis, Tea, Vermillion, Watertown and Yankton.
- If the signer does not have a voter registration address or post office box number, a description of the location at which they are registered to vote must be provided.
9. Each signature line must show the month and day it was signed.
10. Numbers to designate the month are permissible. Abbreviations commonly used are also acceptable.
11. The county of the signer's voter registration must be included.
12. All six boxes of a signature line must be completed. If all the information for those six boxes is included but a signer wrote the information in the wrong box, that is acceptable. **Example:** A signer prints their name in the signature box and signs their name in the printed box.

- 13.** A circulator may assist by filling in the boxes for a voter, except they may not sign for a voter. The date, voter registration address, county of registration, and printed name may be added by the circulator prior to the petition being filed. Ditto marks may **NOT** be used.
- 14.** Each petition sheet must be a self-contained sheet with the heading, instructions to signers, signature lines and circulator's verification on a single sheet. Stapled, taped, or glued together petitions sheets will **NOT** be accepted.
- 15.** Circulators must make a reasonable inquiry of each signer to determine that each signer is a qualified voter of the state and county indicated on the signature line.
- 16.** Circulators must state under oath that no statute regarding petition circulation was knowingly violated. The verification shall be witnessed by a notary public commissioned in South Dakota or other officer authorized to administer oaths pursuant to ([SDCL 18-3-1](#)).
- 17.** State law prohibits a person from conducting petition signature gathering within 100 feet of a polling place ([SDCL 12-18-3](#)).
- 18.** No signatures, for an organization of a political party, may be obtained more than one year prior to filing of the declaration petitions ([SDCL 12-5-1](#)).
- 19.** The **NOTARY PUBLIC MAY NOT** be the **CIRCULATOR** and the **NOTARY**. If this occurs, that would invalidate the entire petition sheet ([SDCL 18-1-12.2](#)).
- 20.** The **NOTARY PUBLIC MAY NOT** be a **SIGNER** on the **PETITION** they **NOTARIZE**. If this occurs, that signature line would be invalid ([SDCL 18-1-12.2](#)).
- 21.** Both Active and Inactive voters may sign the petition.
- 22.** Registered voters of any political party can sign political party organization petitions.