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Petition Filing Instructions (Magisterial District Judge)

- The first legal date to obtain signatures on *Nomination Petitions* is **Tuesday, February 18**. Candidates may only circulate and file *Nomination Petitions* dated with the current year on the bottom; petitions from previous years cannot be used and will be rejected.
- *Nomination Petitions* and all other required documents must be filed with Voter Services by **Tuesday, March 11 at 5:00 PM**. Voter Services is located at 33 West 3rd Street in downtown Williamsport. Candidates should file early in order to avoid lines during the final days.
- Candidates for Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) must be a U.S. citizen and a registered voter of the Magisterial District. There is no minimum age specified. Candidates must have resided in the Magisterial District for at least one year before their election. Candidates must be a member of the bar of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania or complete a training course and pass an examination prior to assuming office.
- **Candidates for Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) may cross-file.** Candidates for MDJ may circulate and file separate petitions to run on both the Democratic and Republican primary ballots. The candidate may circulate both petitions regardless of their party affiliation on their voter registration record.
- **A current MDJ may file a *Certificate of Nomination for Re-Election* instead of *Nomination Petitions*.** A MDJ who files the *Certificate of Nomination* may not challenge the petitions of another candidate.
- *Nomination Petitions* must be printed two-sided (front and back) on plain white, 8.5" x 11" letter-sized paper. Voter Services cannot accept *Nomination Petitions* that have been re-sized or modified, or that have been improperly printed or reproduced. Candidates or circulators who cannot correctly print and/or reproduce the *Nomination Petition* must visit Voter Services to obtain copies.
- **The top portion of the petition, including the Term of Office, must be fully completed prior to obtaining signatures.** The Electoral District for a MDJ office is Magisterial District 29-1-01, 29-1-02, etc.
- The **circulator** of a petition (the person who carries the petition door-to-door and obtains signatures) must be a registered voter of the Commonwealth; there is no party affiliation requirement.
- A **signer** of a petition must be a registered voter of the Magisterial District and be affiliated with the correct political party. Voter Services can provide a list of eligible petition signers upon request. Because Magisterial District Judge is a "Vote for ONE" contest, a petition signer may only sign ONE candidate's petition. **Prior to obtaining a signature, the petition circulator should verify that a signer is a registered voter of the Magisterial District, is affiliated with the correct political party, and has not already signed another candidate's petition.**
- **The signature requirement for Magisterial District Judge is one hundred (100) signatures.** Candidates who cross-file must obtain one hundred (100) signatures on both sets of petitions. Candidates for MDJ offices are strongly advised to gather DOUBLE the required number of signatures to ensure the petitions contain a sufficient number of valid signatures to survive a challenge.

- Each petition signer must complete all fields in the signature line. The signer must record the address where they are duly registered and enrolled to vote and their municipality (City, Borough, or Township), NOT the post office in their mailing address. **Do not permit a petition signer to use ditto marks.**
- The *Statement of Circulator* on the back of the petition must be signed by the circulator after all signatures have been obtained. The *Statement of Circulator* does not need to be notarized.
- The *Candidate's Affidavit* must be completed and signed in the presence of a Notary Public and filed with the *Nomination Petition(s)*. **Candidates who cross-file must complete two (2) original Affidavits (NOT photocopies) to file with their petitions.** The Election District for a MDJ office is District 29-1-01, 29-1-02, etc.
- If you do not intend to form a political committee or receive contributions or make expenditures in excess of \$250.00 during the course of the campaign, you should complete and sign the *Waiver of Expense Account Reporting Affidavit* on the back of the *Candidate's Affidavit* in the presence of a Notary Public. Candidates who complete the *Waiver* are exempt from filing campaign finance reports as long as they do not receive or spend in excess of \$250.00. Contact Voter Services immediately if you have completed the *Waiver*, but your contributions or expenditures exceed \$250.00 at a later date.
- If you expect to spend more than \$250.00 during your campaign, you may wish to create a candidate-authorized campaign committee to handle campaign contributions and expenditures. The forms that must be completed to register a committee and authorize it to receive contributions and make expenditures on your behalf are available at Voter Services. The completed forms must be filed with Voter Services before the committee can receive contributions or make expenditures.
- Detailed information about campaign finance reporting requirements, including reporting forms, is available at Voter Services and also on Voter Services website at www.lyco.org/vote.
- A completed *Statement of Financial Interests* must be filed with the *Nomination Petition(s)*. **Candidates who cross-file must complete two (2) original Statements (NOT photocopies) and attach one original to each set of petitions.**
- A filing fee of **\$50.00** is required when filing petitions for Magisterial District Judge (**\$100.00 if cross-filing**). Filing fees must be paid by cash or by a certified check or money order made payable to Lycoming County. **The PA Election Code does not allow personal checks as a form of payment.**
- **Candidates for MDJ are responsible to read and familiarize themselves with the PA Judicial Code, which imposes additional campaigning and finance requirements on candidates for judicial offices. Voter Services is not responsible for monitoring or ascertaining a candidate's compliance with the requirements of the Judicial Code.**
- **These instructions are strictly introductory in scope and should not be construed as legal advice. Filers are responsible for ensuring the correctness and completeness of all documents; Voter Services is not responsible for errors and omissions in filings.**
- **Voter Services cannot provide legal, tax, or accounting advice. Candidates should solicit advice from a licensed professional in the appropriate field in advance of statutory deadlines and before filing documents with Voter Services.**

Filing Checklist for Magisterial District Judge:

- Nomination Petition(s)* (must be printed front and back) OR *Certificate of Nomination* in lieu of petitions
- Candidate's Affidavit* (two originals if cross-filing)
- Waiver of Expense Account Reporting Affidavit* (optional)
- Statement of Financial Interests* (two originals if cross-filing)
- \$50.00 filing fee (\$100.00 if cross-filing)