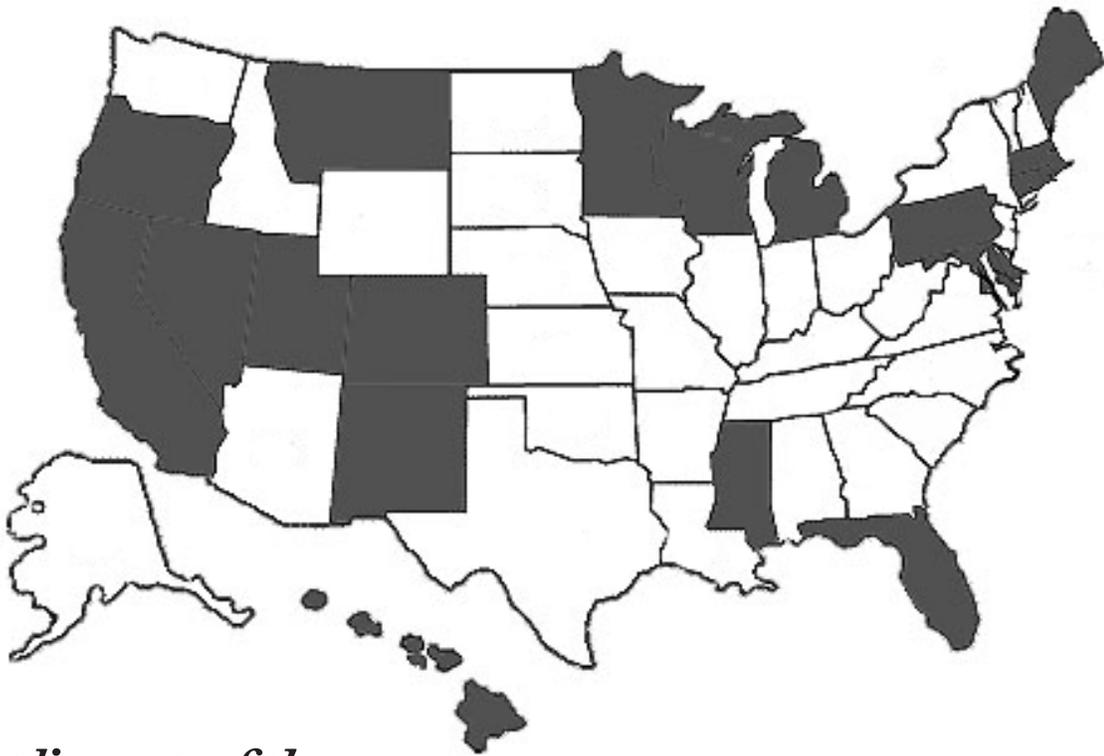


A Green's Guide to Getting on the Ballot



compliments of the

**Green Party of the United States
Ballot Access Working Group**

~ 2004 ~

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Part One: Considering a Ballot Drive

When a political party has ballot status, its candidates' party affiliation is listed on the election ballot with their names. The cover of this handbook shows those states in which the Green Party was not ballot-qualified at the time of publishing (October 2003). The advantage and "lift" having ballot access can bring in terms of vote totals cannot be overstated. Obtaining ballot status is one of the goals of every state Green Party; but there are several considerations to make before undertaking a petition drive to achieve this goal. Balloting laws vary from state to state, with some requirements easier to achieve and others very stringent. In either case, Green Party members should carefully consider the following points and thoughtfully prepare for the drive to ensure a successful outcome.

Research

- Obtain a copy of the state statute that governs political parties, ballot access, and the election process.
- Contact the Secretary of State or State Board of Elections. These offices will be able to provide you with almost any information that you need to obtain ballot access in your state. Ask for the following information:
 1. Can political party ballot access be obtained through the petitioning process? (There are eleven states which only allow for candidate petitioning, not party line petitioning.)
 2. Can ballot access be obtained in individual congressional districts or must it be done on a statewide level?
 3. How many signatures are required?
 4. Is there a set time period in which all of the signatures must be gathered?
 5. Can any resident sign the petition, or must he/she be a registered voter?
 6. Can any resident circulate the petition, or must he/she be a registered voter?
 7. Can non-residents circulate the petition?
 8. Can petition circulators gather signatures in any county in the state or are they restricted to their county of residence?
 9. Do a certain percentage of signatures have to come from each congressional district?
 10. If the signatures must come from registered voters, can they fill out a registration card simultaneously with signing the petition, or must the registration already be on file the date the petition is signed?
 11. What are the requirements for retaining ballot status once it is achieved?
 12. What documents are required by the Secretary of State/Board of Elections at the end of the petition drive in order to make the party legitimate (party bylaws, affidavits, etc.)?
 13. How can you obtain voter lists and registration information by party in your state?

14. What dimensions must the petition have and what information is required on it? Is there a specific form the information has to be in? Are abbreviations allowed? Do electors or candidates have to be listed on the petition form?
15. Can ballot access and presidential candidate petition drives be conducted simultaneously using the same petition form?
 - Obtain petition forms and information about filling them out properly from the Secretary of State/Board of Elections. A few states require each sheet of signatures to have the notarized signature of the petition circulator.
 - If you are one of the 43 states that require voter registration prior to an election, obtain voter registration cards and information about processing them from the Secretary of State, Board of Elections, or your county clerk.

Is your state ready for a ballot access petition drive?

Once you have gathered the information you need to make a decision about seeking ballot access, open a dialogue with all state party members about the possibility of running a ballot access drive. Have more than one statewide meeting where the preliminary information gathered in the research phase can be shared with all members. Discuss whether it is wiser for your state to first build the local chapters and establish a presence, or whether obtaining ballot status and running candidates will be the tool you need in order to build your locals. Discuss and debate pros and cons of running a ballot access petition drive and assess whether your state is ready to undertake a successful petition drive. Answering the questions that follow and thinking about timing may help you make these determinations.

- Do you have local chapters established in most of the dense population centers in your state?
- How many petitioners do you have compared to the number of signatures you must gather?
- How many of your members are willing to commit to regular gathering of signatures?
- How many of your members are willing to be leader/organizers of the petition drive in their local area?
- Do you have one or more members who are willing to coordinate the effort at the statewide level?
- How established is your statewide structure? Are you affiliated with the national party? Do you have elected officers? Have you approved bylaws? Do you have a process for endorsing candidates? (It is not imperative, but helpful to have a statewide structure in place during a petition drive. Many state parties have been very loosely organized and found that running a ballot access petition drive was the catalyst they needed to grow their statewide structure.)

Timing

- What is the political climate surrounding the petition drive?
- Is it an election year? When will you first be required to run a candidate for an election after obtaining ballot status?
- Is it a presidential election year? Would the petition drive in your state be helped or hindered by a presidential campaign?

- Have you chosen a time frame for signature gathering that includes warm weather months and lots of outdoor events?
- Are there particular events in your state with extraordinary numbers of attendees that you should plan the petition drive around (state fairs, festivals, concerts, art fairs, etc.)?

Part Two: Coordinating a Ballot Drive

Setting Up and Multiplying Your Efforts

You have made the decision to go ahead with the petition drive, and have done the necessary initial inquiries discussed in the first section of this handbook. Now the big moment comes: how exactly do you go about collecting this massive number of signatures? What are the next steps?

Set up a regional and statewide leadership structure for the petition drive. What this looks like can vary by stage of development and the needs of your organization. Many states in 2000 used a hub-and-spokes model: a central coordinator or coordinators organized team leaders in the different population centers around the state.

Example: Michigan Green Party of Michigan needed 32,000 signatures within a six month period to get on the ballot. The total amount of signatures was broken down among the existing locals around the state, as well as estimations as to where new locals were possible because of the petition drive and the 2000 campaigns. Organizers estimated that Detroit could pull in 15,000. Ann Arbor, maybe 7,000. Lansing, a few thousand. And so on. A paid organizer was based in Ann Arbor, and was responsible for finding and supporting contacts in those areas. These contacts acted as team captains, getting materials from HQ, reporting regularly on numbers, keeping in touch with volunteers in the area, and organizing events. The state organizer sent out supplies, dealt with media, tracked total numbers, and traveled around to help train, recruit and keep morale high.

Important: While petitioners themselves are the people without whom a ballot drive could not be accomplished, key organizers' time should not be spent petitioning. There are too many other details that need to be taken care of, to keep the whole operation running smoothly. This should include, among other things, updating the calendar of events, calling people, sending emails, counting, making sure there are enough brochures and printed material, motivating event organizers, etc.

The purpose of the ballot is not only to get signatures, but also to create the structure for a viable Green party. If the structure develops well, you automatically also increase the number of signatures because petitioners will remain motivated (people are attracted to healthy organizations).

Organizing

After you establish your network of contacts around the state, the next challenge is to keep people motivated, engaged, and *organized*. In a grassroots organization, this can happen by sharing leadership. Here are some suggestions for keeping folks involved:

- Activate a phone tree to call all greens on your list to get them out petitioning, or to help out at the office. Some people prefer to get introduced to the effort doing office work, before venturing into the streets.

- Identify the core group of petitioners early on (this will likely include your regional/town contacts) and meet all together. Ask for input into the drive – how to do it, how to improve it, ideas, places, etc. Consider holding monthly meetings to evaluate the drive, build comradery, and continue building your state party.
- Organize (or delegate the organizing of) petitioning “expeditions” to festivals, the beach, etc. Coordinators can provide the support by booking the booth at festivals, making sure there is enough printed material, arranging the legal stuff, forwarding volunteers who contact the central office, and most of all, emailing a calendar of events every week for the coming weekend (Yahoo! has a calendar function that can be made public and viewed by petitioners everywhere – <http://calendar.yahoo.com>).
- Hold regular telephone conference calls with key petitioners in the state. For a very inexpensive conference call service, use a free conference call line at <http://www.freeconferencecall.com>. It works by having people call in to the same number. Every caller pays her/his own long distance call. For other similar services, do a websearch.

Training Petitioners

Training petitioners is key, particularly for people who are intimidated by petitioning for the first time. This can be done one-on-one or in groups.

- Hold a “Train the Trainers” even before the beginning of your petition drive, to teach a small group how to train petitioners. These people can then go around to locals in your state to train Greens at their meetings, and take materials at the same time. This spreads petitioning skills quickly, creates a feeling of ownership, and eliminates the need for one person to do everything, not to mention, saves on postage!
- Use the buddy system, especially for new petitioners. Not only is petitioning with someone else motivating, it shows new petitioners the ropes and gives confidence to see an experienced petitioner walk right up to a stranger and give the ballot access rap. Arrange this for people, making sure they get feedback and tips, until they feel comfortable doing it themselves. Even then, if a volunteer is bringing in signatures at a below-average rate, suggest that they go out with someone else for a change of pace.

Providing petitioners with knowledge and materials to make them comfortable is important to both volunteer retention and effectiveness.

- Write a **sample “rap”** or speech of what a petitioner could say when approaching someone to sign.
- Keep petitioners supplied with **brochures, pamphlets and trifolds** on the Green Party and candidates. Provide contact information for the local Green Party, so interested people know how to get in touch with you.
- Give volunteers **buttons, hats or t-shirts** that identify them as petitioners for the Green Party.
- In some states, petitioners can also distribute **voter registration cards**, for those that are not registered to vote yet. Petition signers are among those most likely to vote for Green candidates. Look into state laws to find out how much help a petitioner may give in registering to vote.

- Perhaps most important, give petitioners emergency contact information. This should include a cell phone number for an organizer (in case of police interference or other emergency) and names and numbers for appropriate, local legal authorities (see Legal Support below).

If, while petitioning, a signer seems very interested in the Greens, ask if they would like to come to the next local meeting. Or even better, if they would be interested in collecting a few signatures. Give petitioners new petitioner packets to hand out, and instructions to get the new petitioner's contact information. While the rate of attrition is high for petitioners found this way, it has also resulted in some gung-ho, committed volunteers who just did not know about the Greens before.

An experienced petitioner had these tips:

*A good idea is to have *at least* two or three clipboards for each petitioner at a large public event. I would often carry four or five at a time. Also, it's much better to use cut-outs of corrugated cardboard (you can purchase these in large sheets) than wooden clipboards, because they are much lighter to carry. Attach the blank petition sheets to the clipboard with two rubber bands and have a pen for every board. The benefit of having multiple boards is that, when one person is signing, you can hand clipboards to the three or four of his/her friends who are standing around and wondering what is going on.*

One final suggestion is to make sure that there is a space for each petition signer to provide additional contact information, e.g., an email address, and a space for each signer to indicate whether he or she would like to be added to your state Green Party's mailing list. Many people will only sign a petition on the condition that they will not be added to any mailing lists, so there should be an easy method for recording the signer's preference.

One more petitioner tip: In some states, if a person puts down the wrong address, the signature is worthless. One organizer had this input from 2002:

I can't say these statistics will hold up elsewhere, but in Philadelphia, about 70% of contacts who are visited in the door-to-door effort signed the petition. Of these signatures between 60-70% were valid. Our experience is many people who are not registered at their current address THINK they are, especially in urban areas. Other people probably signed just to be obliging.

You can teach petitioners to minimize this danger by asking during the signing that the signer use the address where they lived when they were registered to vote.

Pick-up Lines

As in the rest of life, there is no guaranteed method of getting a perfect stranger to sign your petition. Encourage petitioners to be creative and flexible. No single line will work in every situation.

Despite the lack of a formula for success, there is one golden rule: **start it out with something short and snappy and aimed at getting people's attention**. Include a soundbyte about the Green Party that petitioners can use. Keep it all short and pithy, because attention spans are brief.

Some of the contributors to this handbook felt that asking "Are you a registered voter?" is good to get people's attention in states where only registered voters can sign. This also screens out those who are not eligible (or to find out who needs to be registered). Keep in mind, that psychologically it is more difficult for people to turn you down (i.e. not sign) if they have already said yes (i.e. that they are registered to vote).

One experienced Kansan Green had the following insight on how to solicit signatures:

I know that a lot of people use the "Are you a registered voter?" line as an opening while petitioning, but I have not had good luck with it. It seems some people figure you need registered voters for some reason and think if they say "no" it gives them an out to pass you by without stopping.

I have found that one line that works well is asking, "Would you like to sign my petition?". I have found that when most people see you with a clip board, they automatically start thinking of ways to avoid you (thinking you are a marketing surveyor) and when you ask if they would like to sign your petition, they almost always stop, knowing that it will just take a minute of their time. It's also a good way to trick them into stopping, because they don't want to tell you "no, I don't want to sign your petition", when they don't even know what it's for. So most people stop and ask, what's it for?

A Texas veteran petitioner suggested this:

From my experience the best opening line we have ever come up with is: "Hi. We need your signature." It catches people's attention and is a neutral statement, so that people become curious and do not blow you off right away. This gives the petitioner a chance to establish rapport with the potential signer by making eye contact and speaking in a friendly but not overly solicitous tone.

Come up with your own pick-up lines and share what you find works.

Location, Location, Location

As with buying real estate and dancing in mosh pits, location is (almost) everything when it comes to petitioning. Obviously, you want your time to be well used. That can be maximized by picking high-traffic places and times and events that are likely to draw Green, or independent-friendly groups.

Here are some tried and true ideas for good petitioning spots:

- Libraries
- Post offices (especially at lunch and before closing)
- Door-to-door (depending on the neighborhood and how many volunteers you have, this may not be the overall best use of time)
- Events, including outside concerts, state and county fairs, tabling at street fairs, etc. Contact event organizers in advance to see if the Greens can have a table *inside* the event or even a speaker. If a Green speaker is allowed, be sure he or she mentions the ballot drive and directs the audience to tables or petitioners.
- Raves, friendly clubs, outside public hospitals, public parks, outside governmental buildings, outside conferences, etc.
- Outside cafeterias, factories between shifts, etc.
- Self-organized events, aimed at attracting people who may not have already signed.
- Universities!! Check the academic calendar to make sure that it's not semester break.

Petitioning outside places such as Wal-Mart, the mall, or the local grocery store can be very productive. These places, however, are owned privately, and as such, the owners have the ability to kick petitioners off the property or call the police.

The best thing to do is to provide petitioners with photocopies of any local ordinances that allow petitioning on public sidewalks, to show business owners in case there is a confrontation. Sometimes, if petitioners stay on public property, this will cause the (probably still upset) business owner to leave. Instruct petitioners on what to do if the police are called. The thing to remember is that, no matter if a petitioner is legally on public property, their right to be there may still be violated.

Caution: There have been several instances around the country where Green petitioners have been harassed (and arrested) for petitioning in public spaces (ironically, not as often for being outside a big box store). It is imperative that petitioners are aware of their rights, but also are informed enough to make the decision for themselves whether they will be arrested or are better off leaving immediately to petition elsewhere. The advantage to the former is that an arrest may draw media attention.

If you have additional concerns on this topic, talk to a Green attorney. If you don't know any, contact the National Office.

Keeping Volunteers Motivated

One of the most critical factors in a successful ballot drive is having motivated volunteers. There is simply no way around it: petitioning is hard work. Here are a few ideas from past petition drives aimed at keeping volunteers enthusiastic:

- Keep cold juice, water, beer, etc. in the office for when volunteers return after petitioning.
- Have parties! Especially as the deadline approaches. This can also provide good opportunities for collecting petitions for notarizing and validation.
- Petition in large groups. This is especially good for large events.

For a more in-depth, general guide to motivating volunteers, please consult the Coordinated Campaign Committee's 2003 Campaign Manual, available on the web at <http://www.gp.org/committees/campaign/index.html>, or for those without internet access, can be ordered from the National Office at 1-866-41-GREEN.

Paying Petitioners

The reviews on paying professional petitioners are mixed. Some states have had excellent experiences paying professional outfits to bring in signatures, while others have wasted money. When making the decision whether or not to use paid petitioners, consider the benefits and the drawbacks:

Benefits:

- A steady stream of incoming signatures. This can not only boost your numbers, but also be incredibly motivating to your volunteer petitioners.
- Increasing your numbers.

Drawbacks:

- Expense: signatures can cost anywhere from \$1 to \$3, depending on the season and how many other petition drives are underway.
- Public appearance: professional petitioners do not have loyalty to the Greens, usually, and do not do the public education about the Green Party while petitioning.
- Accountability: Michigan lost thousands of signatures, because the paid petitioner who had supposedly collected them had actually "sub-contracted", meaning that he had not actually witnessed the signing, as was required by law.

One viable option is to pay Greens to collect signatures. This can be done by offering, for example, \$1 per signature or an hourly wage. It enables people who want to be petitioning more to take time off or (just the opposite) be gainfully employed.

Another consideration when making the decision is how many signatures you expect your volunteers to bring in. Because the curve of signature return (discussed later) slopes up sharply in the last month, there is an almost inevitable moment of panic, where it appears that you won't reach your goal in time. This is usually when professional petitioners are hired. It may not be in vain, however, even if you end up getting considerably more than you needed.

Updates, Updates, Updates

Critical to keeping morale and momentum up in a petition drive are the tracking numbers of already-gathered signatures and getting that information out to your petitioners:

- Send updates via email throughout the state on a weekly basis. Every update can be accompanied by the accomplishments of the week, encouragement, petitioning tips and locations, and local contacts.
- Send out the calendar of upcoming events for the next two weeks with petitioning contact name and telephone number for the key events.

- Send snail mail updates every 2-3 weeks for those without email, except at the end, when there is no more time.
- Set up a graph of the petitioning effort. The bar chart can include the number of signatures required, the running/cumulative goal for the time of the update, and the numbers gathered. It can be very useful and provide a quick look at how the different parts of the state are doing. This is especially important at the end, when numbers start spiking. This also trains petitioners to turn in their signatures regularly, rather than all at once at the end.

Here is a suggested way to track signatures:

- When a petitioner turns in a bundle, clip the bundle together and stack all petitions received.
- Once or twice a week, go over the stack of petition forms and verify that they are filled out properly (some validation could start here, see the later section on Validation). Count the number of signatures in each bundle and tag each with a small piece of paper with the total # of signatures.
- Depending on your state law, it may make sense to file petitions by petitioner or by county/district. Keep a manila folder for each petitioner/county. On the tab of each folder, write the name of the petitioner, and the cumulative total for that petitioner. On the folder itself, track the bundle totals. Insert petitions in the manila folders in bundles as they are turned in. This allows organizers to keep track of progress for each petitioner/county. The folders can be ordered alphabetically, or however else makes sense.

Maximizing Exposure

Jump at using media whenever you get the chance – even for corporate media, the idea of organizing to get on the ballot can be very newsworthy. You may not get much media coverage, but what you get will be extremely useful. For more ideas on using the media, see the 2003 Campaign Manual.

Fundraising

Needless to say, a ballot drive will cost money. You need to make copies of the petitions, buy the voter database, send petitions to volunteers, rent tables at events, feed petitioners, maybe pay for an out-of-state Green to come petition. In addition to asking petition signers to make donations and putting out a special mailing to your membership to fund the petition drive, see additional suggestions in the 2003 Campaign Manual or call the National Office for advice.

Legal Support

As previously discussed, petitioners may experience interference from police. To counter police harassment, and other forms of harassment short of them, here are some suggested measures:

- Identify a lawyer friendly to the cause, or research the law yourself. Approach coalitions in your area, or look up members of the National Lawyers Guild (<http://www.nlg.org>).
- After an incident, contact the city attorney, the legal department of the police department, and every single relevant government agency you can think of (like the sheriff's office, if they were involved). Fax them information on the petition drive (remember, you are trying to comply with the legal requirements, which makes our case more sympathetic, plus political speech enjoys a very high level of protection – supposedly. Remember, too, that many

- government officials do not know this sort of law off the top of their heads.)
- Follow up the fax with phone calls. They sometimes understand the situation very well. Request that police be trained about petitioners.
- MOST IMPORTANT: collect the names of all these persons and their titles. Include that with the cheat sheet given to your petitioners.
- It is REALLY IMPORTANT that all petitioners be trained to take the name and badge number of the officer doing the harassment – request to speak with their superior. It is often a matter of ignorance, power/ego issues and poor training.

Validating Signatures

As mentioned earlier, when estimating how many signatures need to be collected, organizers should anticipate that a certain percentage of signatures gathered will be invalid. What is considered an invalid signature varies by state law, so it is important to consult with the State Bureau of Elections (or whatever the equivalent is in your state) to determine what is required in your ballot drive. For example, in some states, petition signers may use abbreviations for street names. Under some states' laws, that invalidates the signature.

Depending on what the Bureau of Elections tells you, there are several ways to increase the overall validity rate of the signatures that you collect.

No matter what the laws in your state require, it is always good to train your signature collectors to watch when people sign the petition, and to coach them as to how to do it properly. “Please use your full name”, “Could you spell out ‘avenue’?”, “Use the address where you are registered to vote” are examples. In addition to lessening work later, it also educates petition signers on just how stringent ballot access laws are.

If your state laws allow the “cleaning up” of signatures by petitioners, you have several options. “Cleaning up” signatures can involve both fixing errors such as abbreviations or wrong dates, and verifying that the petition signer is registered at the address he or she listed. Check with your Bureau of Elections to see what is allowed in your state.

For verifying voter information, many states offer an official list of registered voters. There is usually a charge, which can vary from hefty to incidental.

- Tip: If the fee for obtaining the registered voter list is large, look into getting it by Congressional district or county. That can be cheaper.
- Tip: In anticipation of buying the voter list, while collecting signatures, ask petition signers if they would be willing to donate a dollar for the effort.
- Tip: Because voter lists are continually updated in most states, it is best in most cases to not buy the list too early. If you do buy it early, there is a larger chance that petition signers will have moved and reregistered (changes that you will not catch). Don't wait too long, though. Check with the state to find out how often it is updated.

You may be allowed to write in the correct address for a petition signer, if he or she put down the wrong one. This will turn an invalid signature into a valid one. Even if you are unable to do this by

law, you can at least get a good estimate of what percent of your signatures are valid, and therefore, how many over the required number you need to collect.

- Tip: If you do acquire a voter file, have a computer savvy volunteer put it into a database (like Microsoft Access). This makes it searchable and much more accessible for other volunteers to use.
- Tip: For making a voter file more available to volunteers verifying signatures, put the database on a secured website.

Aside from buying the state's registered voter listing, there are cheaper ways to fix mistakes and fill in missing information. There are a number of useful resources on-line that can be put together on a webpage for volunteers to access. For example, if a signer omitted her zip code, that can be found easily by plugging the rest of the address into the US Postal Service's zip code finder at http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookup_zip+4.html. A good example of a website set up for verifying signatures is from the Harris County Green Party of Texas at <http://www.harriscountygreenparty.org/verification.htm>.

Start the verification process early, especially if you have thousands of signatures to verify. Figure out how much time you will need to validate all the signatures, and figure out a process for getting them done efficiently.

Nathalie Paravicini, Nader 2000 coordinator in Texas, gave this example:

- Validation went through 3 stages:
 - ✓ Visual check (manual check for missing city, and things that could be remedied easily)
The sheets with errors or missing info were flagged with cut-up Post-it notes.
 - ✓ Database check: check signatures against Secretary of State database. At this stage we checked only those sheets with flags. We would complete the info missing and took the flags off for those signatures we could verify and leave the other flags on.
 - ✓ Internet check: We would check on the internet for information missing for the remaining signatures. Please remember that the SOS database was incomplete, since they only included some counties, and also did not include recently registered voters. Furthermore, the SOS does not go through every single signature. They also do sampling to determine whether you collected enough signatures. Therefore, the more signatures that look good and complete, the better.
- It is important to keep a good flow of paper. We kept the different validation steps somewhat physically separated from each other, with plenty of bankers boxes and folders to keep things really neat and organized and signs so everyone knew what was what.
 - ✓ Petitions would come to my living room for visual check, volunteers were on the couches.
 - ✓ From there, the forms were placed in two boxes in my dining room, where I had rigged two computers with the secretary of state databases.
 - ✓ Then petitions went to the make-shift offices we have at home. We had two computers, so we connected them to the internet using the two lines we had installed at home. Here you also need a box for the petitions that still have flags, and another box for the petitions that are completely finished.

- Finished petitions need to go in a separate box. Once a box was full, we sent a team of 2-3 people to the copy center to copy every single sheet. The boxes with originals were placed in one room, the boxes with our copies in another room (to avoid mix-ups)

Security Concerns

Think about all the effort and resources you have put into collecting these signatures! Be sure they are secure at all times. Here are some ideas of things to keep in mind:

- Collect the filled petitions in a central place, in the charge of persons who are well-known to and trusted by others in the organization.
- At the risk of being overly cautious, don't broadcast the location of the finished petitions and keep close track of those that are being verified.
- If possible, when setting up the system for verifying signatures, have the volunteers come to the petitions, rather than sending collected signatures out to the volunteers.
- Make photocopies of all petitions. Yes, this may be a large number. They will be necessary, however, if petitions turn up missing or if the state loses them.

Part Three: Completing a Successful Ballot Drive

The intense work of petitioning is done. You are on track to meeting the deadline for turning all your signatures in, and want to make the most of it. Here are some things to keep in mind as you dash toward the finish line:

- As discussed in the prior section, before you even *think* about turning in your signatures or having them notarized, have a lawyer familiar with your state's election laws go over them. Many of your signatures will not be valid; that simply can't be avoided.
- In most states, there will be a period of time (usually a week to ten days) during which your petitions are open for public examination. Expect lawyers from the Democrats and Republicans to be in the Department of State bright and early on the first day (Green Party of Indiana's signatures were challenged by the Indiana Libertarians, despite pressure from their national party). This is what they will most likely do, as always, depending on your state's ballot laws: First, they may take a random sampling of your signatures and check them against the state's registry of registered voters/residents. They may come up with a percentage of signatures that can be legally challenged. If that percentage is large enough to put your effort in jeopardy, they might pursue it further and you may well end up in court.
- Be proud about your achievements! Hold a press conference, have copies of the signatures and have your speaker wave it around, spouting random numbers, like "265 from East Jesus, Missouri support the Green Party!!" If you have really significant numbers – e.g. 25% from high profile areas, flout them. If local celebrities or well known folk have signed, release this also.
- Make up a small press kit describing your state party, included with a few appealing photos of canvassers at doors, etc. Many smaller circulation papers will print you word for word.

The Green Party: Best Used on Ballot Lines!

The petition drive was just the beginning . . . now the fun begins. Now you have a ballot line. Now you need to use it!

- Make sure people are recognized for their efforts. Burn-out of good people who poured themselves in the drive and were not adequately acknowledged happens too frequently. These are the people we need to build the Green Party.
- Even during the petition drive, always work in the sub-text that “this is the beginning” rather than “the job is over.” Spread the word and the vision of what Greens are striving for.
- Make sure that your candidates have been actively part of the campaign. If you do not yet have candidates, start looking around at each other and thinking about what races you want to enter.
- With momentum high after the ballot drive, this is the perfect time to woo volunteers. Woo your weary army into campaign staff, and prepare for the next election.
- Having gone from nothingness to an august legal political party, your Green Party will have new legal privileges and tools to use in political organizing. Study up and learn to work from your hard-won new playing field.

The Coordinated Campaign Committee and Ballot Access Working Group of the Green Party of the United States are standing by, willing to work with you as your state party goes through the process of gaining ballot access and running in elections. For additional tools, materials and resources, please go to the CCC’s website at <http://www.gp.org/committees/campaign/index.html> or call 1-866-41-GREEN.

Congratulations and thanks for all your hard work! Green and growing!

Many thanks to the following people for contributing to this handbook: Steve Agan, Adrienne Boer, Dan Kinney, Nathalie Paravicini, Juscha Robinson, and Rhoda Vanderhart.