

§ 82.8

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of the petition, a statement attesting that the signatures were affixed on the dates shown and by the individuals whose names appear thereon, and that to the best of his/her knowledge the signatories are eligible, entitled, or qualified voters.

(b) Only an eligible, entitled, or qualified tribal voter shall be recognized as a valid collector of petition signatures.

§ 82.8 Filing of petitions.

All petitions submitted pursuant to this part must be filed with the local Bureau official having administrative jurisdiction over the tribe. No petitions will be accepted until a spokesman for the petitioners declares that he/she wishes to make an official filing. Once a declaration of the official filing is made and the petition is given to the local Bureau official, that official shall immediately enter on the petition the date of receipt (this date becomes the date of official filing) and shall inform the spokesman for the petitioners that no additional signatures may be added and that no withdrawal of signatures will be permitted. The local Bureau official shall also acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the petition, indicating the exact number of signatures which are attached and the official filing date. Upon this written acknowledgment of the petition, the local Bureau official shall publicly post at the local Bureau unit serving the tribe a statement of the matter proposed in the petition. This statement shall remain posted for a period of 30 days from the official filing date.

§ 82.9 Challenges.

(a) Once an official filing has been made, the local Bureau official shall immediately have copies made of the petition and its signatures. The local Bureau official shall keep these copies at the Agency or field office for 15 days following the date of official filing, during which time they shall be available for examination by authorized voters of the tribe upon request. During this 15-day period, challenges of signatures may be filed with the local Bureau official.

(b) Challenges will be considered on the following grounds:

- (1) Forgery of signatures; and
- (2) Lack of proper qualifications of a signer.

No challenge will be considered which is not accompanied by supporting evidence in writing. In the event that an individual's name appears on a petition more than once, all but one of the names shall be stricken.

§ 82.10 Action on the petition.

(a) Within 30 days after the official filing date, the local Bureau official shall forward to the Area Director, or when the Area Director is the local Bureau official, directly to the Commissioner, the original of the petition and its accompanying signatures, together with recommendations concerning challenges and conclusions concerning:

- (1) The validity of the signatures;
- (2) The adequacy of the number of signatures; and
- (3) The propriety of the petitioning procedure.

(b) The Area Director or the Commissioner, as the case may be, shall within 45 days after the official filing date decide upon each challenge and the sufficiency of the petition and announce whether the petition shall be acted upon. If a decision is reached that the petitioning action is for any reason insufficient, the spokesman for the petitioners and the governing body of the tribe will be so informed and given the reasons for the decision. If a petitioning action warrants action by the Secretary or Commissioner, the spokesman for the petitioners and the governing body of the tribe concerned will be so informed. The decision in such matters shall be final. The procedures for implementing any action initiated by the acceptance of a petition will be determined in accordance with pertinent directives and regulations.

§ 82.11 Duration of petition.

Any petition submitted under this part, shall be considered only for the purpose stated therein. Once a petition has been acted upon, it shall not be used again.