

NOTICE REGARDING OBJECTIONS TO NOMINATION PETITIONS or PAPERS

Objections to nomination petitions or papers for statewide office shall proceed in Commonwealth Court as set forth in the order below. Of particular importance, when individual elector signatures are challenged, objectors are required to file a spreadsheet utilizing EXCEL® or a similar spreadsheet format as indicated in the order below. This Order shall remain in effect until subsequently modified or withdrawn by the Court.

IN RE: OBJECTIONS TO NOMINATION PETITIONS :
OR PAPERS FOR STATEWIDE OFFICE : No. 126 Misc. Dkt. No. 3

ORDER

NOW, August 1, 2016, all petitions to set aside nomination petitions or papers (objection petitions) of candidates seeking statewide office shall be filed either in paper format (original and one copy) or via PACFile (the Pennsylvania appellate court electronic filing system). When individual elector signatures are challenged, the objection petition must be accompanied by a spreadsheet as specified below. The objection petition and spreadsheet shall be filed in accordance with the following requirements:

1. The objection petition shall specify objections to individual signature lines in nomination petitions or papers and these shall be set forth in an EXCEL® or other similar spreadsheet format. Objector may use the downloadable spreadsheet provided on the Court's website at: <http://www.pacourts.us/courts/commonwealth-court/>.
2. Spreadsheet columns shall include, for each challenged signature line: page number, line number, county, and the reason or reasons for each challenge. The spreadsheet shall designate the grounds for objection using the following abbreviations:

NR = Not Registered
NRD= Not Registered in District
NRDS = Not Registered on Date Signed
OC = Out of County
Ill = Illegible
LIO = Line Information Omitted
DUP = Duplicate
IHA = Line Information in Hand of Another
N/I = Nickname/Initial
PRI = Printed Signature
DCA = Defective Circulator Affidavit
SAC = Signed After Circulator's Affidavit Dated
Other = Any ground for objection not listed above

3. The objection petition shall clearly state the number of signature lines challenged as well as the total number of completed signature lines on the face of the nomination petitions or papers.
4. Any other objections, e.g., to circulator affidavits, candidate affidavits, etc., must be clearly and separately stated in the objection petition.
5. If filing the objection petition in paper format:
 - a. Objector shall attach to the objection petition as an exhibit a printed copy of the spreadsheet printed on 8 ½ x 14 inch paper, with all grid lines showing and column headings appearing on each printed sheet, and a printed copy of the key for the abbreviations used for each category of objection (challenge codes key).
 - b. In addition, Objector shall file two separate digital media devices (CD or USB flash drive), each containing an electronic version of the spreadsheet and the challenge codes key. The electronic version of the spreadsheet on the digital media devices must be enabled for editing by the Court, and may **not** be read-only or password protected.
6. If filing the objection petition via PACFile:
 - a. Along with the electronically filed objection petition, Objector shall file as an exhibit an electronic (PDF) version of the spreadsheet with all grid lines showing and column headings appearing on each sheet, and an electronic (PDF) version of the key for the abbreviations used for each category of objection (challenge codes key).
 - b. **Within two days** of filing the objection petition and spreadsheet, Objector shall submit to the Court two paper copies of the electronically filed objection petition and spreadsheet **and** two separate digital media devices (CD or USB flash drive), each containing an electronic version of the spreadsheet and the challenge codes key. The electronic version of the spreadsheet on the digital media devices must be enabled for editing by the Court, and may **not** be read-only or password protected.
7. Regardless of the method of filing, in addition to the usual service requirements Objector shall serve upon Candidate one digital media device containing a read-only electronic version of the spreadsheet and the challenge codes key.
8. Upon application of Objector and for good cause shown, the Court may waive the requirement that Objector file the spreadsheet and digital media device.

Upon the filing of an objection petition, the Court will issue a Scheduling and Case Management Order. Counsel should be prepared to review contested signature lines and enter into appropriate stipulations before any court hearing.

The Chief Clerk is directed to send a copy of this order to:

1. The Court Administrator of Pennsylvania who shall post this order, a downloadable version of the election spreadsheet, and a sample election Scheduling and Case Management Order on the Commonwealth Court page of the Pennsylvania Unified Judicial System website (<http://www.pacourts.us/courts/commonwealth-court/>); and
2. The Secretary of the Commonwealth who shall post this order conspicuously in the Bureau of Commissions, Elections and Legislation and in such manner as the Secretary deems appropriate.

/s/ Mary Hannah Leavitt
President Judge