

# CALIFORNIA ELECTIONS CODE SECTIONS 9200 TO 9226

## INITIATIVES

### **§ 9200. Ordinances**

Ordinances may be enacted by and for any incorporated city pursuant to this article.

### **§ 9201. Petition**

Any proposed ordinance may be submitted to the legislative body of the city by a petition filed with the elections official of the legislative body, in the manner hereinafter prescribed, after being signed by not less than the number of voters specified in this article. The petition may be in separate sections, providing that the petition complies with this article. The first page of each section shall contain the title of the petition and the text of the measure. The petition sections shall be designated in the manner set forth in Section 9020.

### **§ 9202. Notice of intent to circulate petition; signatures; publication; form; fee**

(a) Before circulating an initiative petition in any city, the proponents of the matter shall file with the elections official a notice of intention to do so, which shall be accompanied by the written text of the initiative and may be accompanied by a written statement not in excess of 500 words, setting forth the reasons for the proposed petition. The notice shall be signed by at least one, but not more than three, proponents and shall be in substantially the following form:

#### **Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition**

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intention to circulate the petition within the City of \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of \_\_\_\_\_. A statement of the reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows:

(b) Any person filing a notice of intent with the elections official shall pay a fee to be established by the legislative body not to exceed two hundred dollars (\$200) to be refunded to the filer if, within one year of the date of filing the notice of intent, the elections official certifies the sufficiency of the petition.

**§ 9202.5. Initiative petitions; documents kept on file by elections official; public copies**

From the time materials pertaining to an initiative petition are filed pursuant to Section 9202 until the day after the elections official determines that the initiative petition does not contain the minimum number of signatures required, the day after the election at which the initiative measure is put before the voters, or the day after the proposed ordinance is adopted by the legislative body of the city after being submitted to the legislative body of the city pursuant to Section 9201, as applicable, the elections official shall do both of the following:

(a) Keep on file at his or her office the notice of intention, written text of the initiative, and written statement setting forth the reasons for the proposed petition, if any, that the proponents of the initiative measure filed with the elections official pursuant to Section 9202.

(b) Furnish copies of the materials he or she is required to keep on file pursuant to subdivision (a) to any person upon request. The elections official may charge a fee to a person obtaining copies pursuant to this subdivision. The fee may not exceed the actual cost incurred by the elections official in providing the copies.

**§ 9203. Request for ballot title and summary; preparation by city counsel; use of ballot title on petition**

(a) Any person who is interested in any proposed measure shall file a copy of the proposed measure with the elections official with a request that a ballot title and summary be prepared. This request shall be accompanied by the address of the person proposing the measure. The elections official shall immediately transmit a copy of the proposed measure to the city attorney. Within 15 days after the proposed measure is filed, the city attorney shall provide and return to the city elections official a ballot title for and summary of the proposed measure. The ballot title may differ from any other title of the proposed measure and shall express in 500 words or less

the purpose of the proposed measure. In providing the ballot title, the city attorney shall give a true and impartial statement of the purpose of the proposed measure in such language that the ballot title shall neither be an argument, nor be likely to create prejudice, for or against the proposed measure.

(b) The elections official shall furnish a copy of the ballot title and summary to the person filing the proposed measure. The person proposing the measure shall, prior to its circulation, place upon each section of the petition, above the text of the proposed measure and across the top of each page of the petition on which signatures are to appear, in roman type not smaller than 11 point, the ballot title prepared by the city attorney. The text of the measure shall be printed in type not smaller than 8 point. The heading of the proposed measure shall be in a boldface type in substantially the following form:

**INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE DIRECTLY SUBMITTED TO THE VOTERS**

The city attorney has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure:

(Here set forth the title and summary prepared by the city attorney. This title and summary must also be printed across the top of each page of the petition whereon signatures are to appear.)

**§ 9204. Writ of mandate to amend ballot title or summary**

Any elector of the city may seek a writ of mandate requiring the ballot title or summary prepared by the city attorney to be amended. The court shall expedite hearing on the writ. A peremptory writ of mandate shall be issued only upon clear and convincing proof that the ballot title or summary is false, misleading, or inconsistent with the requirements of Section 9203

**§ 9205. Publication; posting**

A notice of intention and the title and summary of the proposed measure shall be published or posted or both as follows:

(a) If there is a newspaper of general circulation, as described in Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 6000) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, adjudicated as such, the notice, title, and summary shall be published therein at least once.

(b) If the petition is to be circulated in a city in which there is no adjudicated

newspaper of general circulation, the notice, title, and summary shall be published at least once, in a newspaper circulated within the city and adjudicated as being of general circulation within the county in which the city is located and the notice, title, and summary shall be posted in three (3) public places within the city, which public places shall be those utilized for the purpose of posting ordinances as required in Section 36933 of the Government Code.

(c) If the petition is to be circulated in a city in which there is no adjudicated newspaper of general circulation, and there is no newspaper of general circulation adjudicated as such within the county, circulated within the city, then the notice, title, and summary shall be posted in the manner described in subdivision (b).

This section does not require the publication or posting of the text of the proposed measure.

### **§ 9206. Proof of publication or posting; filing**

Within 10 days after the date of publication or posting, or both, of the notice of intention and title and summary, the proponents shall file a copy of the notice and title and summary as published or posted together with an affidavit made by a representative of the newspaper in which the notice was published or, if the notice was posted, by a voter of the city, certifying to the fact of publication or posting.

If the notice and title and summary are both published and posted pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 9205, the proponents shall file affidavits as required by this section made by a representative of the newspaper in which the notice was published certifying to the fact that the notice was published and by a voter of the city certifying to the fact that the notice was posted.

These affidavits, together with a copy of the notice of intention and title and summary, shall be filed with the elections official of the legislative body of the city in his or her office during normal office hours as posted.

### **§ 9207. Circulation of petition; petition contents**

The proponents may commence to circulate the petitions among the voters of the city for signatures by any registered voter of the city after publication or posting, or both, as required by Section 9205, of the title and summary prepared by the city attorney. Each section of the petition shall bear a copy of the notice of intention and the title and summary prepared by the city attorney.

### **§ 9208. Time limit; validity**

Signatures upon petitions and sections of petitions shall be secured, and the petition, together with all sections of the petition, shall be filed within 180 days from the date of receipt of the title and summary, or after termination of any action for a writ of mandate pursuant to Section 9204, and, if applicable, after receipt of an amended title or summary or both, whichever occurs later. Petitions and sections thereof shall be filed in the office of the elections official during normal office hours as posted. If the petitions are not filed within the time permitted by this section, the petitions shall be void for all purposes.

### **§ 9209. Declaration**

Each section shall have attached thereto the declaration of the person soliciting the signatures. This declaration shall be substantially in the same form as set forth in Section 9022.

### **§ 9210. Filing; amendment; examination**

The petition shall be filed by the proponents or by a person or persons authorized in writing by the proponents. All sections of the petition shall be filed at one time. Once filed, a petition section shall not be amended except by order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

When the petition is presented for filing, the elections official shall do all of the following:

(a) Ascertain the number of registered voters of the city last reported by the county elections official to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 2187 effective at the time the notice specified in Section 9202 was published.

(b) Determine the total number of signatures affixed to the petition. If, from this examination, the elections official determines that the number of signatures, prima facie, equals or is in excess of the minimum number of signatures required, he or she shall accept the petition for filing. The petition shall be deemed as filed on that date. If, from this examination, the elections official determines that the number of signatures, prima facie, does not equal or exceed the minimum number of signatures required, the official shall not take further action.

## **§ 9211. Examination of petition; signatures**

After the petition has been filed, as herein provided, the elections official shall examine the petition in the same manner as are county petitions in accordance with [Sections 9114](#) and [9115](#), except that for the purposes of this section, references to the board of supervisors shall be treated as references to the legislative body of the city.

## **§ 9212. Report from city agencies on effect of proposed initiative measure**

(a) During the circulation of the petition, or before taking either action described in subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 9215, the legislative body may refer the proposed initiative measure to a city agency or agencies for a report on any or all of the following:

(1) Its fiscal impact.

(2) Its effect on the internal consistency of the city's general and specific plans, including the housing element, the consistency between planning and zoning, and the limitations on city actions under Section 65008 of the Government Code and Chapters 4.2 (commencing with Section 65913) and 4.3 (commencing with Section 65915) of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code.

(3) Its effect on the use of land, the impact on the availability and location of housing, and the ability of the city to meet its regional housing needs.

(4) Its impact on funding for infrastructure of all types, including, but not limited to, transportation, schools, parks, and open space. The report may also discuss whether the measure would be likely to result in increased infrastructure costs or savings, including the costs of infrastructure maintenance, to current residents and businesses.

(5) Its impact on the community's ability to attract and retain business and employment.

(6) Its impact on the uses of vacant parcels of land.

(7) Its impact on agricultural lands, open space, traffic congestion, existing business districts, and developed areas designated for revitalization.

(8) Any other matters the legislative body requests to be in the report.

(b) The report shall be presented to the legislative body within the time prescribed by the legislative body, but no later than 30 days after the elections official certifies to the legislative body the sufficiency of the petition.

### **§ 9213. Report on number of proposed initiatives**

On or before April 1 of each odd-numbered year, the elections official of each legislative body shall file a report with the Secretary of State containing the following information:

(a) The number of municipal initiative petitions circulated during the preceding two calendar years which did not qualify for the ballot, and the number of these proposed initiatives for which reports were prepared pursuant to Section 9212.

(b) With respect to municipal initiative measures that qualified for the ballot in the preceding two calendar years, the number that were approved by the voters, and the number of these ballot measures for which reports were prepared pursuant to Section 9212.

(c) With respect to municipal initiative measures that qualified for the ballot in the preceding two calendar years, the number that were not approved by the voters, and the number of these ballot measures for which reports were prepared pursuant to Section 9212.

### **§ 9215. Petition signatures equal to 10 percent of vote; adoption of ordinance; submission to voters**

If the initiative petition is signed by not less than 10 percent of the voters of the city, according to the last report of registration by the county elections official to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 2187, effective at the time the notice specified in Section 9202 was published, or, in a city with 1,000 or less registered voters, by 25 percent of the voters or 100 voters of the city, whichever is the lesser number, the legislative body shall do one of the following:

(a) Adopt the ordinance, without alteration, at the regular meeting at which the certification of the petition is presented, or within 10 days after it is presented.

(b) Submit the ordinance, without alteration, to the voters pursuant to Section 1405.

(c) Order a report pursuant to Section 9212 at the regular meeting at which the certification of the petition is presented. When the report is presented to the legislative body, the legislative body shall either adopt the ordinance within 10 days or order an election pursuant to subdivision (b).

### **§ 9215.5. Withdrawal of initiative**

The proponent of an initiative may withdraw the initiative at any time before the 88th day before the election, whether or not the petition has already been found sufficient by the elections official.

### **§ 9216. Veto**

In cities having a mayor, or like officer, with the veto power, when the passage of an ordinance petitioned for by the voters is vetoed, the failure of the legislative body to pass the ordinance over the veto shall be deemed a refusal of the legislative body to pass the ordinance within the meaning of this article.

### **§ 9217. Adoption of ordinance; effective date, repeal and amendment**

If a majority of the voters voting on a proposed ordinance vote in its favor, the ordinance shall become a valid and binding ordinance of the city. The ordinance shall be considered as adopted upon the date that the vote is declared by the legislative body, and shall go into effect 10 days after that date. No ordinance that is either proposed by initiative petition and adopted by the vote of the legislative body of the city without submission to the voters, or adopted by the voters, shall be repealed or amended except by a vote of the people, unless provision is otherwise made in the original ordinance.

### **§ 9218. Number of ordinances; special elections**

Any number of proposed ordinances may be voted upon at the same election, but the same subject matter shall not be voted upon twice within any 12-month period at a special election under the provisions of this article.

### **§ 9221. Conflicting ordinances adopted at same election**

If the provisions of two or more ordinances adopted at the same election conflict, the ordinance receiving the highest number of affirmative votes shall control.



### **§ 9222. Submission of proposition without petition**

The legislative body of the city may submit to the voters, without a petition therefor, a proposition for the repeal, amendment, or enactment of any ordinance, to be voted upon at any succeeding regular or special city election, and if the proposition submitted receives a majority of the votes cast on it at the election, the ordinance shall be repealed, amended, or enacted accordingly. A proposition may be submitted, or a special election may be called for the purpose of voting on a proposition, by ordinance or resolution. The election shall be held not less than 88 days after the date of the order of election.

### **§ 9223. Proposed ordinance or measure; printing; availability of copies on request**

Whenever any ordinance or measure is required by this article to be submitted to the voters of a city at any election, the elections official of the legislative body shall cause the ordinance or measure to be printed. A copy of the ordinance or measure shall be made available to any voter upon request.

### **§ 9224. Enacting clause**

The enacting clause of an ordinance submitted to the voters of a city shall be substantially in the following form:

“The people of the City of \_\_\_\_\_ do ordain as follows:”.

### **§ 9226. Statewide initiative measures**

This article does not apply to any statewide initiative measure.