



## How to Collect Petitions through Crowd Canvassing

### What is it?

Canvassing is an organizing term that means asking many people over the course of a few hours to sign a petition in support of or in opposition to something specific. It is a great way to get a high volume of signatures on a petition and educate the public about an issue. For example, you could circulate petitions to support a pro-choice bill in your state or to oppose a federal court nominee. Always try to partner up with someone else when crowd canvassing. Below, you'll learn where to go, what to bring, what to say, and some other tips.

### Where to Crowd Canvass

The key to canvassing is to choose a busy public area where there are a lot of people. Ideally, go where people are waiting in line. In particular try:

- Entertainment or sports venues where people are waiting in line.
- Big events that draw crowds, like walks or runs, community festivals and fairs, parades, art shows, or block parties.

### What You Need

- Clipboard or something firm for people to write on
- Script (check the NARAL Pro-Choice America website for samples)
- Petitions (check the NARAL Pro-Choice America website for samples)
- Flyers (check the NARAL Pro-Choice America website for samples)
- Pens (bring extras)

### How to Ask Someone to Sign Your Petition

- **Make eye contact.** You need to gain the person's trust, and one of the best ways to do this is through direct eye contact while you're talking to him or her.
- **Get the person's attention by asking a direct question.** For example, say "Hello, would you like to help protect privacy and choice?"
- **Approach groups.** It is entirely possible to collect more than one signature at a time. If there are three people sitting or standing together, hand one of them a clipboard and give your pitch to all three at once. Chances are that if one person signs, the other two will follow.

### What happens with the petitions?

If you use a sample petition from the NARAL Pro-Choice America website, please return it to:

NARAL Pro-Choice America

Attention: Petitions

1156 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20005

Organizers at NARAL Pro-Choice America sort petitions we receive by state and deliver them to the appropriate elected officials so they know how people in their community feel about that particular issue. Also, petition signers who have indicated an interest will receive updates from NARAL Pro-Choice America. This helps to ensure that more pro-choice people stay informed and take action on future issues.

If you create your own petition, deliver all the signed petitions to the appropriate decision-maker, which could include the president of your school board, your state representative, or even a local pharmacy.