

FAQ – Referendum Petitions

This Document is Intended to be General and Informative in Nature Only and Does not Constitute Legal Advice on Behalf of or by the City of Lakewood. If You Have Specific Legal Questions, You Must Consult with an Attorney.

The City of Lakewood's referendum process is governed by the Lakewood Home Rule Charter, [Chapter 2.52](#) of the Lakewood Municipal Code (the "L.M.C."), and sections 31-11-101 *et seq.* of the Colorado Revised Statutes. Below are some frequently asked questions/answers regarding the referendum process in Lakewood.

1) What is a referendum petition?

A: A referendum petition process allows residents to circulate petitions and gather the signatures of registered electors of the City of Lakewood in an attempt to have a legislative ordinance that was passed by the Lakewood City Council either repealed by City Council action or submitted to a vote of the registered electors of the City of Lakewood.

2) How many signatures are required for a referendum petition?

A: A referendum petition must be signed by registered electors of the City of Lakewood in a number equal to at least 3% of the total number of registered electors of the City of Lakewood on the date of the last regular municipal election. The number of signatures currently required for a referendum petition is 3,376.

(See Lakewood Charter section 13.2(b); L.M.C. section 2.52.130(B)).

3) What is the deadline to file a referendum petition?

A: A referendum petition must be filed before the effective date of the ordinance in question. Most ordinances become effective 30 days after final publication, but certain zoning ordinances become effective 45 days after final publication.

(See Lakewood Charter sections 13.2(b); 7.4(b)–(c) and L.M.C. section 2.52.130(B))

4) What happens after the petition is filed?

A: The City Clerk is required to make an initial determination of sufficiency and report the results thereof to City Council within 20 days of the petition being filed. The City Clerk is further required to make a final determination of sufficiency with a report to City Council at the first regular meeting more than 30 days after the petition is filed.

(See Lakewood Charter section 13.2(c) and L.M.C. sections 2.52.150 and 2.52.170)

5) Can you remove your signature from a referendum petition?

A: Yes, L.M.C. section 2.52.150(B) provides the process for removing a signature from a filed petition and provides in relevant part: "Any request to remove a signature shall be made in writing to the City Clerk. A signature may only be removed between the initial and final sufficiency determination by the City Clerk." Pursuant to L.M.C. 2.52.150(B), requests to remove a signature shall be made in writing to the City Clerk via email to CCO@Lakewood.org.

6) Can a Referendum Petition be Protested?

Yes, any registered elector of the City of Lakewood may file a protest challenging the sufficiency of a referendum petition. The protest must be filed in writing with the City Clerk's Office within 30 days after the petition is filed. Please see L.M.C. section 2.52.150 for more information on the protest process.

7) What Happens After a Petition is Deemed Sufficient by the City Clerk and is Presented to City Council?

A: Upon the City Clerk's presentation of a sufficient petition to City Council, the ordinance that is the subject of the referendum petition will be suspended from operation. The City Council will then reconsider the ordinance. If City Council does not repeal the Ordinance in its entirety upon reconsideration, the ordinance will be submitted, without amendments or alteration, to a vote of the registered electors at a special or regular election held within 30 to 90 days for a referred ordinance that presents a ballot question. A referred ordinance that presents a ballot issue must be submitted at the next ballot issue election not less than 90 days after the petition is presented to City Council

(See Lakewood Charter sections 13.2(d)–(e); L.M.C. section 2.52.170(A))

8) Can the City Council re-adopt a repealed ordinance?

A: If an ordinance is repealed by the voters, the City Council is prohibited from subsequently adopting it during a period of six months after the date of the election on the referred ordinance. (See Lakewood Charter section 13.3(b); L.M.C. section 2.52.180)

9) If I have plans for my property, what version of the zoning code applies / will apply to my property?"

A: Individuals with questions about which version of the Zoning Code applies should contact Development Review at POD@lakewood.org for specific zoning questions or zoning verification letters.