



DR. JAMES VELTMEYER, CHAIRMAN

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In Public (i.e. sidewalks, parks, civic buildings, train stations, or any other "public property")

It is legal to gather petition signatures on any public property, with the caveat that those gathering signatures are not creating a disturbance, inciting violence, etc. Note: if you are using an ironing board or a small table it is important to remember not to block entrances into buildings.

Multi-Use Lots and Storefronts

Multi-use lots and storefronts are strip malls, outdoor malls, or any venue with a lot with more than one business. According to current interpretation of the First Amendment and the California State Constitution wherein it reads:

"Every person may freely speak, write and publish his or her sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of this right. A law may not restrain or abridge liberty of speech or press."

This has been upheld multiple times starting with the *Pruneyard Shopping Center v. Robins* all the way to the recent narrowing of the decision in *Ralphs Grocery Co. v. United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 8*.

What this means is that you have the right to collect petition signatures.

Single Use Lots (Storefronts and lots with only one business) – Must ask for permission

Single use lots are deemed private property according to interpretations of the First Amendment and the freedom of speech clause in the California State Constitution. One must gain permission from the business owner or manager before canvassing or gathering signatures at these locations.

Malls (Westfield or otherwise) – Must ask for permission

Large malls especially during the Christmas season can be a great location, however most of these malls have a strict free speech policy that only allows groups to organize on mall property with written permission, liability insurance, and a small deposit. It is important ask mall management/security about the policy for signature gatherers. Follow their procedure correctly to ensure a positive relationship with these malls.

What To Do In Case Management Asks You to Leave

Sometimes, management will confront those collecting signatures. When they do, make sure you're on public property or in an area of multi-use lots and storefronts. If so, then:

1. Stay calm and polite.
2. State your right to be there, citing the "Pruneyard case."
3. Stand your ground if you wish and continue gathering signatures.

If the manager calls the police, and you wish to stand for your rights and continue gathering signatures, call the local police Watch Commander and ask them to come to your location. Oftentimes, officers don't know the rights given by Pruneyard, but the watch commander should. You can tell the police when they arrive that the watch commander is on his way. Explain your case to the watch commander and do what they say.