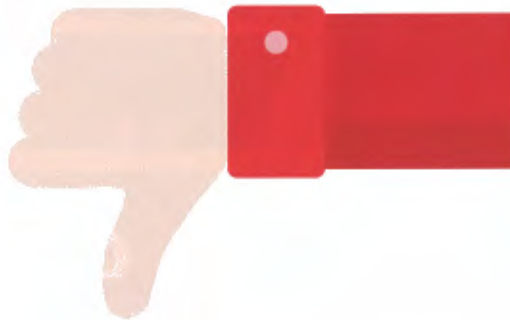




Ask the Experts

Do's and Don'ts for Initiative Campaigns



The California Secretary of State previously published a Statewide Initiative Guide to provide an understanding of the procedures and requirements for preparing and circulating initiatives, filing sections of the petition, and describing the procedure for verifying signatures on the petition. This guide is available online www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/how-qualify-initiative/initiative-guide/.

Based on our understanding of the guide and our experience helping public entities with initiative campaigns, attorneys at Meyers Nave prepared the following list of Do's and Don'ts for special district employees and elected officials who are involved in initiative campaigns.

The Do's

- Do provide objective, factual information about the measure.
- Do make informational presentations to community organizations and stakeholders about the district's needs during any time of the day, using legally approved information, upon request.
- Do answer questions from residents and provide factual information, including directing constituents to official district documents.
- Do refer constituents to the district website as needed for factual information about the measure or the district.
- IF considering participation in partisan activities, do so only during non-working hours (when off-duty) using non-district equipment (personal phones/ personal fax machines/personal computers and email). Make it clear that public resources did not fund any such activities or materials.

The Don'ts

- Do not use district resources of any nature, such as district facilities, district money, time while working in or for the district, district vehicles, district computers or email addresses, district phones, district fax machines, supplies or copies for advocacy efforts (e.g. encouraging others to support or oppose a ballot measure).
- Do not wear district uniforms, equipment, or garb when engaging in partisan activities. Do NOT say that you are "representing" the district in a partisan position.
- Do not require or request that colleagues participate in a partisan campaign during district work time or when representing the district.
- Do not urge passage or defeat of ANY ballot measure during work hours or at the district's expense.

The list is not intended to serve as legal advice or counsel. Please contact Meyers Nave Principal Richard Pio Roda for further assistance at rpioroda@meyersnave.com or 800.464.3559. ■

Do you have a question for any of our CSDA experts?

If so, send your question to Charlotte Lowe, editor, at charlottel@csda.net.