

Guide to Collecting Signatures

Step 1: Get your Materials Together

- Petition forms** – the ones we provide can also be downloaded from the website!
- Clipboards** – You can do with one, but you'll find it faster collecting with multiple clipboards so several people can sign at once.
- Pens** – Bring extras! Attach a pen to each clipboard with string.
- Rubber bands** (optional) – for windy days to keep the petition form flat
- Brochures/flyers** (optional) – are useful for people who want more information about single payer (but don't let this detract from your main mission of collecting signatures)
- A friend!** (optional) – to collect double the signatures and to celebrate with post-organizing!

Step 2: Find a Location

Warm up – asking people you know to sign (family, friends, neighbors) – is an easy first run

Visit busy locations – Public areas like parks, farmers markets, bus and train stations, libraries are heavily trafficked, especially during events like festivals or parades. Other progressive org. gatherings can be good too. Find people who are bored and waiting in line somewhere.

Legal note: Some states (CA, MA) protect the rights of candidates and issue organizations to canvass outside supermarkets, while others do not (WA, many others). Check your state's laws regarding signature collection.

Step 3: Go Get Signatures

Smile, say hello, and ask “Would you sign this petition asking Senators X and/or X to cosponsor Bernie Sanders Medicare for All bill?” Answers to this question and suggested response:

YES – Thank them and hand over the clipboard and pen. They just need to fill out their name, zip code, phone number (so we can tell them when there's a Senator call-in day) and email.

NO – This may be the most common response – and that's ok. Just say “thank you, have a nice day” and move on. You can expect to get between 10-25 signatures per hour, depending on how busy the location is.

Requests info – Plan a brief answer to “What does the bill do?” For example, “Medicare for all would cover every resident of the U.S. with publicly-financed cradle to grave healthcare, saving thousands of lives and billions of dollars a year.” Try to keep each encounter short – if people want to talk politics, tell them “I'm just here to collect signatures today” and hand them a flyer.

Step 4: (IMPORTANT!) Return Petitions in self-addressed envelope!

We'll collect and send to the Senator. Make copies if you'd like to keep them for your own org.

Tips:

- **Be polite**, even when others aren't
- **Wear healthcare-related swag** – “Healthcare is a human right” is hard to disagree with
- **Multi-task** – While you've got someone signing, ask other passerbys if they'd sign too
- **Lead by example** – Fill out the complete first line of each page. Signers are more likely to fill out ALL the info (try not to let people skip the email section, that's how we'll organize them!)