



Easy Read Edition

Sharing Your Story For A Political Purpose

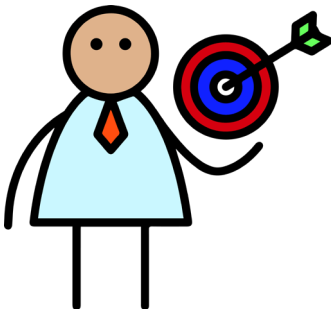
Part 6: Petitions

Words to Know in Part 6



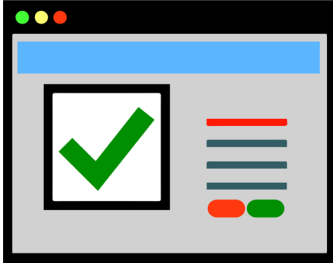
Petition

A written form that people sign. Petitions ask a target to do something.



Target

A person or group with the power to make changes.



Online Petitions

Petitions that get made and sent over the internet.



Paper Petitions

Petitions that get written on a piece of paper.

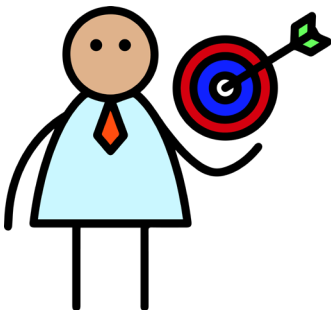
Petitions



A **petition** is a written form that people sign.



Petitions ask a target to do something.



A **target** is a person or group with the power to make changes.



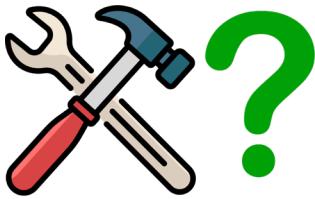
People sign a petition to show that they want a target to make a change.



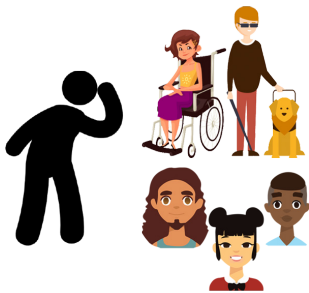
The more names a petition gets, the more powerful it can be.



Elected officials can be a good target for petitions.



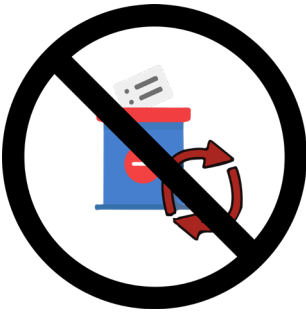
Petitions can ask elected officials to help fix problems.



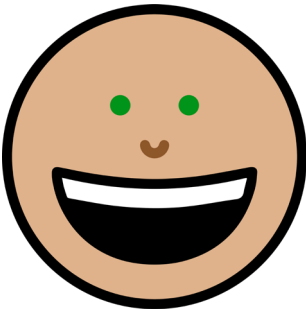
Remember, elected officials need to think about the problems everyday people have.



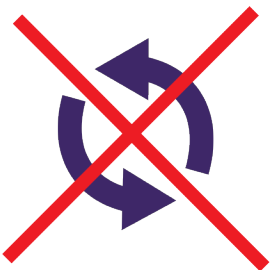
They have to help make policies to fix those problems.



If they don't, they might not get elected again.



Petitions seem like an exciting idea.



But they usually don't get a lot done.



Lots of people try to make petitions.

Names:

1. *Sally J.*
2. *Omar O.*
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Most petitions don't get enough names for elected officials to care.

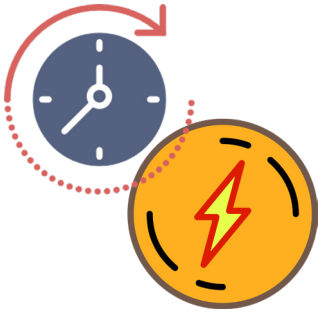
Names:

1. *Sally J.*
2. *Sally J.*
3. *Sally J.*
4. *Sally J.*
5. *Sally J.*
6. *Sally J.*

Or, they might think the names on the petition are fake.



Or, they might not be able to do what the petition asks.



Making petitions can take a lot of time and energy.



And they usually don't help fix a problem.



Only make petitions if you've tried other ways to share your story first.



A petition should be one of the last things you try.

What are good goals for petitions?



There are 3 main goals to making a petition.



All 3 are about getting the attention of a certain person or group.

These goals are:



1. To make the target pay attention to a problem.



Petitions show that lots of people think a problem is important.



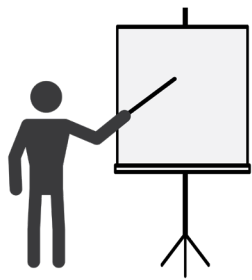
That makes it harder for the target to ignore a problem.



For example, elected officials deal with a lot of problems.



They might not know about a certain problem.



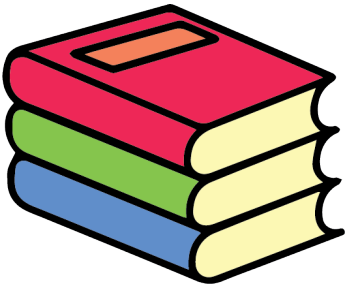
A petition can teach them about a problem.



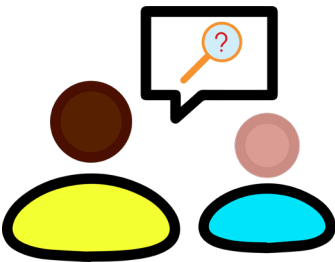
They can see the problem is important because lots of people signed the petition.



2. To make other people pay attention to a problem.



Petitions help everyday people learn more about a problem.



These people can spread the word about the problem.



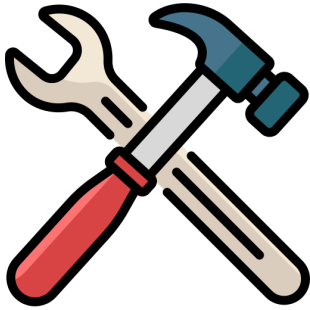
They can get other people to sign the petition.



They, even more people will learn about the problem.



In the end, lots more people will know about the problem.



Lots more people will want to fix the problem.



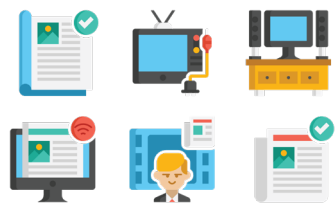
3. To make the news pay attention to a problem.



When a lot of people sign a petition, the news might notice.



They might do a news report about the petition.



Lots of people watch and read the news.



Elected officials read and watch the news!



The news can tell them all about the problem you want to fix.

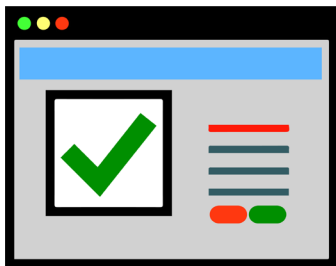
What kinds of petitions are there?



There are 2 main kinds of petitions.



They are called online petitions and paper petitions.



Online petitions get made and sent over the internet.



People can sign their name on them by typing it online.



Paper petitions get written on a piece of paper.



People sign their name on them in person.



There are pros and cons to paper and online petitions.



Here is a chart about each of them:

Paper Petitions

Pros



- It is harder to get people to sign things in person.



Cons

- It is harder to get people to sign things in person.



- So if you get lots of people to sign, it shows people care a lot about a problem!



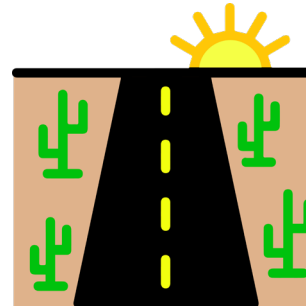
- People are busy. Getting a lot of people in one place is hard.

Paper Petitions

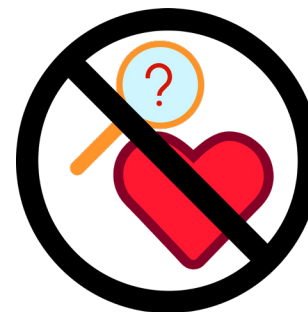
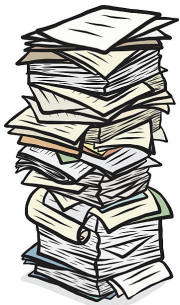
Pros



- Showing a paper petition to a target in person is a big deal.



- Think of slamming a bunch of paper onto a desk!



Cons

A paper petition might not work if:

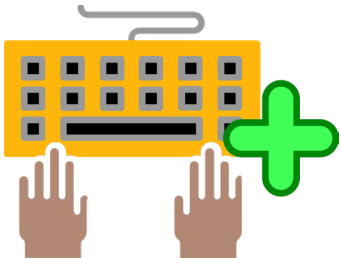
- You live in a place that doesn't have a lot of people
- You live somewhere that people don't know about your problem
- You live somewhere that people don't care about your problem.

Online Petitions

Pros



- You don't have to make people sign in person.



- So you can get more people to sign through the internet.



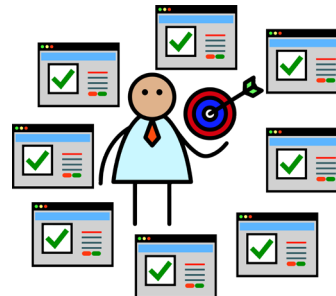
- You'll usually get lots more people to sign than a paper petition.



Cons

- There are lots of petitions on the internet.

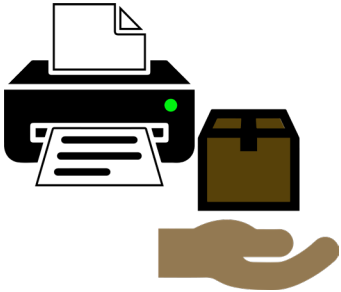
- It can be hard to get people to pay attention to yours.



- Or, your target might get too many online petitions sent to them. They might not even look through each one.

Online Petitions

Pros



- You can print out an online petition and deliver it in person.

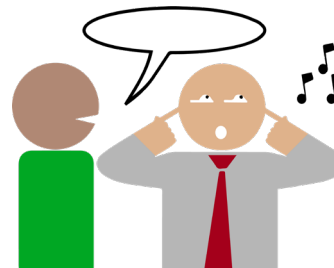


Cons

- You can't always deliver an online petition in person. For example, your target might live far away from you.



- That way, you can still use it like a paper petition.



- Sending a petition in an email makes it easier to ignore.



You can make your own online petition through the website Change.org



Then, you can share your petition link through email or social media.



You can spread the word to get people to sign your petition.



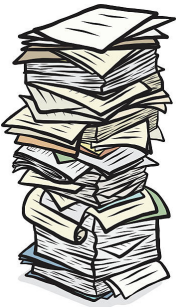
You can print out the list of names on an online petition.



That way, you can deliver it to your target in person.



Delivering a petition in person is better than sending it online.



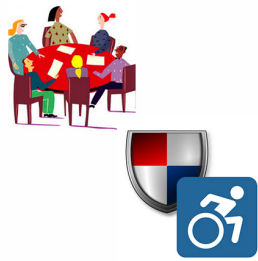
It makes the target deal with a big stack of paper that they need to look through.



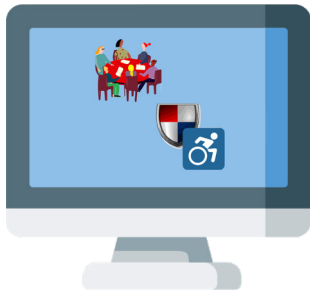
If you can't deliver the petition online, you can send it in an email.



But, emails are easy to ignore.

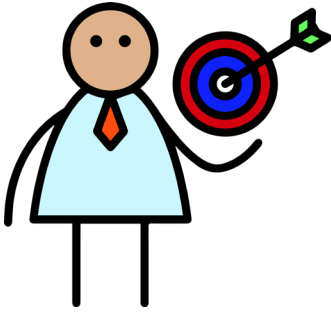


Sometimes, an advocacy group will make their own petition on their website.



You can go to their website to sign their petition.

What are the steps to make a petition?



1. Choose your target.



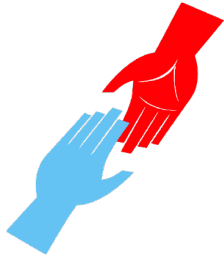
You should make sure your target is specific.



For example, don't send a petition to the whole U.S. government



Send it to one member of government instead.



Make sure your target is someone who can help with your problem.



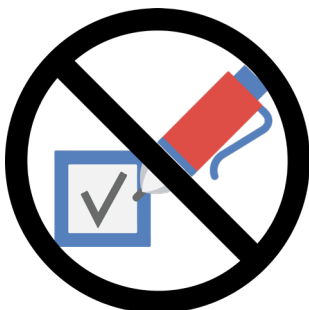
For example, one goal of a petition could be to pass a law.



You should target an elected official who can vote on the law.



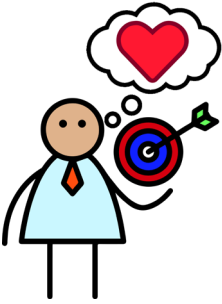
You would not want to petition the President of the United States.



The President cannot vote on laws.



2. Choose who you'll ask to sign your petition.



You should only ask people who the target cares about.

For example:



Representative Smith is an elected official for Normaltown.



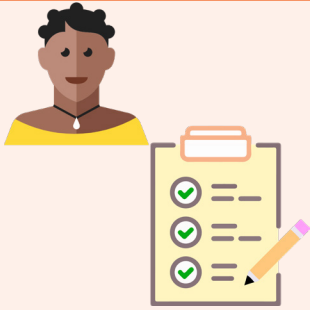
She gets elected by the people who live in Normaltown.



Representative Smith cares about what the people in Normaltown think.



She does not care what people in other towns think. They do not vote to elect her.



Sally makes a petition.
Representative Smith is the target.



Sally only wants people from
Normaltown to sign it.



That way, Representative Smith
knows she needs to pay attention.



She knows this could affect whether
she gets elected again.

3. Choose what you want to ask about.



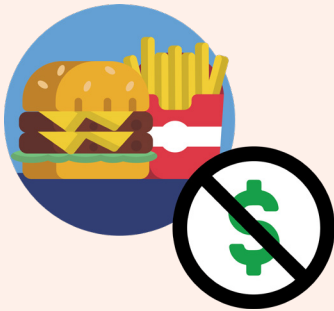
Be specific about what you're asking your target to do.



Otherwise, they might not know what you want them to do.



For example, the people of Normaltown want to make a policy.



They want the policy to give everyone free food.



They told Representative Smith that they wanted free food.



But she thought that they wanted to have a free dinner with her!



What the people of Normaltown asked for wasn't specific enough.



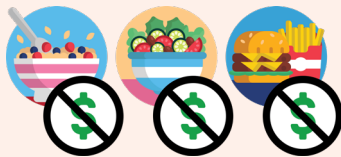
So they asked for something more specific.



They asked for everyone to get 3 free meals every day.



You should only ask your target for things they can actually do.



For example, giving everyone 3 free meals every day would be hard to do.



The government in Normaltown wouldn't be able to pay for it.



The people in Normaltown asked for just free breakfast instead.



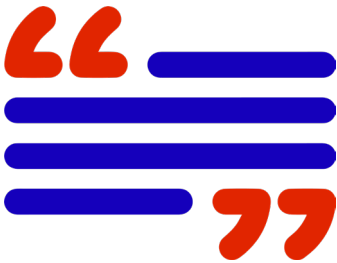
They only asked for cereal, since cereal doesn't cost much money.



They helped make a policy called the Free Cereal for Everyone Act.



4. List your target and what you're asking for at the top of the petition.



Try and write one sentence to make people get interested.



Then, you can write a little more about yourself.



You can write a little more about what you're asking for.



5. It's time to tell your story.



Your story should show your target why they should listen to you.



It should also show the people looking at your petition why they should sign it.



People usually don't have a lot of time to read a petition.



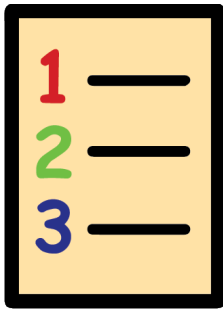
So make sure your story is short and simple.



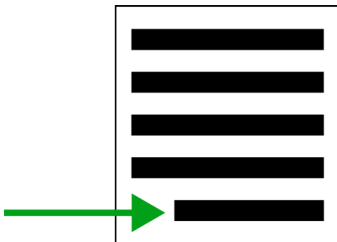
Use your story as a call to action for the people reading it!



People might want to learn more about the problem in your petition.



Put a short list of places to learn more about the problem.



You can put that list at the end of your story.



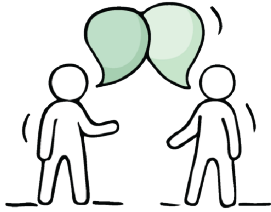
6. Decide whether you will use an online petition or paper petition.



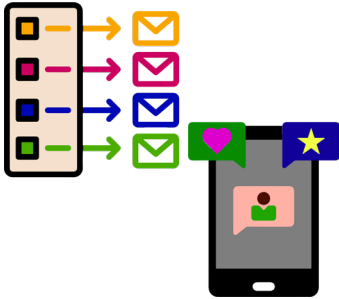
Remember that there are good and bad points to an online or paper petition.



Think about those before you decide which will work best for your petition.



7. Spread the word about your petition!



Use mailing lists and social media.



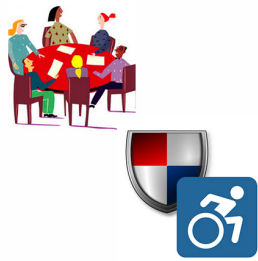
You could also try sending information about your petition to the news.



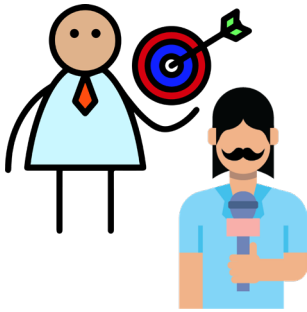
Then, the news might do a report on your petition.



This is a good idea for petitions in a city or town.



For state or U.S. petitions, try working with other advocacy groups.



They might have connections to your target or to news reporters.



They can help spread the word to the people they know.



8. Once you get enough people to sign, deliver the petition to your target!



Remember, delivering the petition in person is usually better.

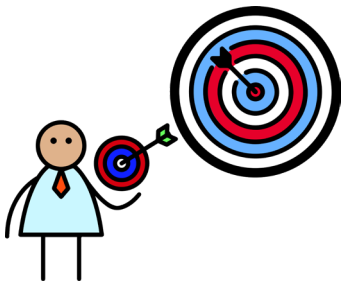


If you can't deliver it in person, you can send it in an email.



There are some questions you can ask to make sure your petition is good.

Here is a list of them:



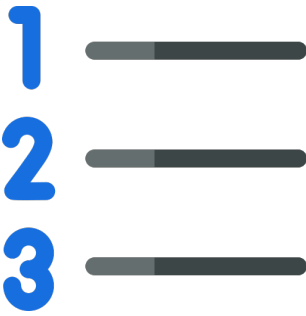
- Does my target make sense? Is it specific?



- Who am I asking to sign the petition?
Are they people my target cares about?



- Does what I'm asking for make sense? Is it specific? Is it something my target can do?



- Is my story short and simple?



- Does my story show why the problem in my petition is important?



- Does the type of my petition (online or paper) make sense?



- Do I have a plan for how I will spread the word about my petition?



- How many people do I want to sign my petition?



- Do I think I can get that many people to sign? How will I do that?

Scenario Script



This scenario takes place before the Beekeeping Act got passed.



Sally wanted Representative Smith to sign the Beekeeping Act.



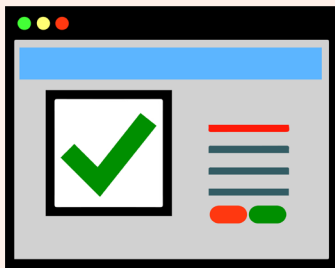
So Sally made a petition.



It was hard for people to sign a petition in person.



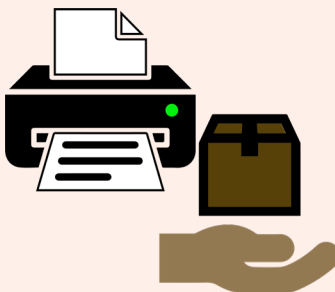
They couldn't go outside because of the bees.



So Sally decided to do an online petition.



She wanted to get 500 people to sign her petition.



Then, she printed out the petition. She delivered it to Representative Smith's office.

Here is what Sally's petition looked like:



Representative Smith: Vote "YES" on the Beekeeping Act!



My name is Sally Jones, and I'm from Normaltown, California.



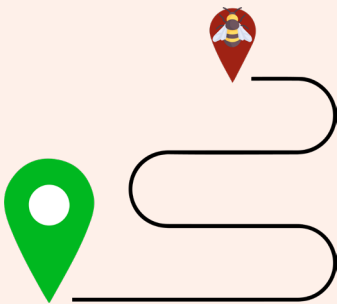
My family is not safe because of the bees.



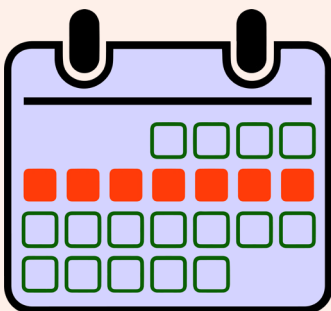
Many other families in the U.S. are not safe either.



The Beekeeping Act would save these families.



It would build new bee colonies away from our cities.



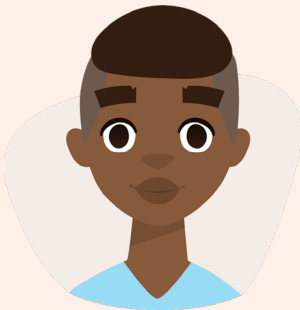
It's been a week since I last left my house.



I can't go outside or else I'll be attacked by bees.



Lots of my friends and neighbors have already been attacked.



My nephew was attacked by bees last week.



He is still in the hospital.



We shouldn't have to live like this!



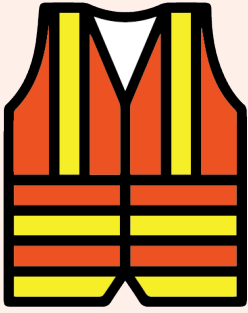
Representative Smith, please vote Yes on the Beekeeping Act.



Help us get the bees out of Normaltown.



Help us get the bees out of cities across the U.S.A.



We need our safety back!



You can learn more about the angry bees and the Beekeeping Act.



Please go to stopthebees.com to learn more.



Thank you!

Signed:



Sally Jones



Omar Owens



Sruti Patel

...