

Miami-Dade County
Office of Management and Budget
Citizen Led Initiative and Referendum Procedures in Select Florida Counties

Information on citizen's initiative and referendum procedures are based on the jurisdictions' Charter. Shown below are Florida charter counties with a population greater than 500,000.

County & Link to Charter	Population ¹	Signature Requirements	Petition Approval Process	Required Action After Petition Approval	Restrictions
Miami-Dade Charter	2,700,794	<p><u>Charter</u>: 10% of registered voters</p> <p><u>Ordinances</u>: 4% of registered voters. No more than 25% of signatures from any one Commission District</p> <p>Each person circulating a copy of the petition shall attach a sworn affidavit stating the number of signers and the fact that each signature was made in the presence of the circulator of the petition.</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: 120 days from approval of the form of the petition</p>	<p>The electors of the county shall have the power to propose to the Board of County Commissioners passage or repeal of ordinances and to vote on the question if the Board refuses action. Amendments to this Charter may be proposed by initiatory petitions of electors.</p> <p>Citizen shall submit proposed ballot language to the Clerk of the Circuit Court who shall without delay approve as to form a petition.</p> <p>Signed petitions shall be filed with the Board which shall within 30 days order a canvass of the signatures. If the number of signatures is insufficient or the petition is deficient as to form or compliance with this Section, the Board shall notify that the petition is insufficient and has failed.</p>	<p>A public hearing shall be held on the proposal at the next BCC meeting subsequent to the date the Clerk approves the petition as to form. The Board may within 30 days after the date a sufficient petition is presented adopt or repeal an ordinance as submitted. If the Board does not adopt or repeal the ordinance then the proposal shall be placed on the ballot without further action from the Board. The election shall be held either in the next scheduled countywide election, or (for ordinances only) if the petition contains the valid signatures of at least 8% of registered voters, the first Tuesday after 120 days from certification of the petition. The result shall be determined by majority vote.</p> <p>An ordinance proposed by initiatory petition or the repeal of an ordinance by referendary petition shall be effective on the day after the election, except that:</p> <p>(1) Any reduction or elimination of existing revenue or any increase in expenditures not provided for by the current budget or by existing bond issues shall not take effect until the beginning of the next succeeding fiscal year; and</p> <p>(2) Rights accumulated under an ordinance between the time a certified referendary petition against the ordinance is presented to the Board and the repeal of the ordinance by the voters, shall not be enforced against the county; and</p> <p>(3) Should two or more ordinances adopted at the same election have conflicting provisions, the one receiving the highest number of votes shall prevail as to those provisions.</p>	<p>An ordinance adopted by the electorate through initiatory proceedings shall not be amended or repealed by the Board for one year.</p>

¹ [Finalized Salaries of Elected County Constitutional Officers - FY 2017-18](#); The Florida Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research

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Broward Charter	1,854,513	<p><u>Charter/Ordinances</u>: 7% of the total number of registered voters. No more than 25% of the valid signatures required shall come from voters registered in any single County Commission District.</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: 180 days from date which the County Administrator notifies the Petitioner that the petition is sufficient as to form</p>	<p>The power to propose amendments to any section of this Charter, or to propose the repeal, amendment or enactment of any County ordinance by initiative is reserved to the people of this County.</p> <p>Promptly after the petition form is filed, the County Administrator, or other individual designated by the County Commission, shall submit the petition and the affidavit to the County Attorney for review (<i>within 10 days</i>) to insure that the petition conforms with the petition form requirements as established in an ordinance adopted by the County Commission.</p> <p>No later than 30 days after the petition is filed, the County Administrator, or other individual designated by the County Commission, shall complete a Certificate of Sufficiency</p> <p>Upon the issuance of the Certificate by the County Administrator, or other individual as designated by the County Commission, it shall be the duty of the Supervisor of Elections to determine the validity of said petition no later than 30 days following receipt of the Certificate from the County Administrator</p>	<p>Should the Supervisor of Elections determine that the petition is valid, it shall be the duty of the County Commission to call a special referendum election in accordance with the petition to be held either:</p> <p>(1) At the next scheduled county-wide election which occurs at least 90 days after the Supervisor of Elections issues a determination as to the validity of the petition, or</p> <p>(2) If the petition contains the valid signatures of voters in the County in numbers at least equal to 10% of the registered voters in the County at the date of the last general election, the election shall take place at least 90 days and no later than 120 days after the date the Supervisor of Elections issues a determination as to the validity of the petition, preferably in an election already scheduled for other purposes, otherwise in a special election.</p>	<p>The initiative power shall not extend to the proposing of any part or all of the annual budget or capital program or fixing ordinance making or repealing any appropriation of money fixing the salaries of County officers or employees or authorizing or repealing the levy of taxes.</p>
Hillsborough Charter	1,352,797	<p><u>Charter</u>: Each petition must be circulated in each Board District and must be signed by a number of electors in each of one-half of Districts 1 through 4 and of the county as a whole equal to 8% of the votes cast in each of such Districts and the county as whole in the last preceding election in which a president or presidential electors were chosen. The address of each signer, and date of each signature, must appear on the petition.</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: A date certain must be designated to and certified by the Supervisor of Elections as the beginning date of any petition drive, and said drive shall terminate six months after that date.</p>	<p>The power to propose amendments to this Charter by initiative is vested in the people.</p> <p>The petition shall be filed with the Supervisor of Elections who shall, within a period of not more than 30 days, determine whether the petition contains the required valid signatures. The Supervisor shall be paid the sum specified by general law by the persons or committee seeking verification. If it is determined that the petition does not contain the required signatures, the Supervisor shall so certify to the Board of County Commissioners and the petition drive shall be at an end.</p>	<p>If it is determined that the petition has the required signatures, the Supervisor shall so certify to the Board of County Commissioners and place the amendment on the ballot. All other procedures shall be as provided by general law for constitutional amendments with the Supervisor of Elections performing the duties of the Secretary of State. Charter review and initiative amendments shall be voted on at the next regular general election. Amendments shall become effective upon approval by a majority vote of the electors voting. The Board of County Commissioners shall require by ordinance that for all County elections, a separate financial impact statement, not exceeding seventy-five words, including a two-year estimate of the increase or decrease in revenues or costs to the county resulting from approval of all proposed county Charter amendments be prepared by the county budget director and placed on the ballot immediately following the ballot question.</p>	<p>Each petition shall embrace but one subject and matter properly connected therewith.</p>

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Orange Charter	1,280,387	<p><u>Charter</u>: 10% of the county electors in a majority of the Commission Districts as of January 1 of the year in which the petition to amend or repeal the Charter is initiated.</p> <p><u>Ordinances</u>: 7% of the county electors in each commission district as of January 1 of the year in which petition seeking to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance is initiated.</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: 180 days from the date of approval by the Supervisor of Elections</p>	<p>The power to propose amendment or repeal of this Charter, or to propose enactment, amendment or repeal of any county ordinance by initiative is reserved to the people of the county.</p> <p>The sponsor of an initiative petition shall, prior to obtaining any signatures, submit the text of the proposed petition to the Supervisor of Elections, with the form on which signatures will be affixed, and shall obtain the approval of the Supervisor of Elections of such form. The style and requirements of such form may be specified by ordinance. The beginning date of any petition drive shall commence upon the date of approval by the Supervisor of Elections of the form on which signatures will be affixed</p> <p>If sufficient signatures are obtained, the sponsor shall submit signed and dated forms to the Supervisor of Elections who shall within 30 days verify the signatures thereon and submit a written report to the Board.</p>	<p><u>Charter</u>: Within 30 days after the requisite number of names have been verified by the Supervisor of Elections and reported to the Board, the Board shall, by resolution, call a referendum on the question of the adoption of the proposed petition to be held at the next primary, general or special election occurring at least 150 days after verification of sufficient signatures by the Supervisor of Elections. If the question of the adoption of the proposed petition is approved by a majority of those registered electors voting on the question, the proposed petition shall be enacted and shall become effective on the date specified in the petition, or, if not so specified, on January 1 of the succeeding year.</p> <p><u>Ordinances</u>. Within 30 days after the requisite number of names have been verified by the Supervisor of Elections and reported to the Board, the Board shall notice and hold a public hearing on the proposed petition according to law and vote on it. If the Board fails to adopt the proposed petition, it shall, by resolution, call a referendum on the question of the adoption of the proposed petition to be held at the next primary, general or special election occurring at least 150 days after verification of sufficient signatures by the Supervisor of Elections. If the question of the adoption of the proposed petition is approved by a majority of those registered electors voting on the question, the proposed petition shall be declared by resolution of the Board to be enacted and shall become effective on the date specified in the petition, or, if not so specified, on January 1, of the succeeding year..</p>	<p>The power to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance by initiative shall not include ordinances relating to administrative or judicial functions of county government, including but not limited to, county budget, debt obligations, capital improvement programs, salaries of county officers and employees and the levy and collection of taxes.</p> <p>The power to amend this charter by initiative, or to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance by initiative, shall not extend to the regulation of employer wages, benefits or hours of work, the encumbrance or allocation of tax revenues for any purpose not then authorized by law, or the encumbrance or allocation of tax revenues conditioned upon a prospective change in Florida law.</p> <p>Notwithstanding any other provision of this charter, the Board is prohibited from calling a referendum on the question of the adoption of any proposed charter amendment or ordinance by initiative which, in the determination of the Board, is wholly or partially violative of the limitations of this section or Florida law.</p> <p>Notwithstanding any other provision of this charter, the Board is prohibited from enacting any ordinance by initiative which, in the determination of the Board, is wholly or partially violative of the limitations of this section or Florida law.</p> <p>The Board shall not amend or repeal an ordinance adopted by initiative for a period of 1 year after the effective date of such ordinance</p>

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Palm Beach Charter	1,391,741	<p><u>Charter/Ordinances:</u> 7% of the number of voters qualified to vote in the last general election</p> <p><u>Time frame:</u> <i>No time limit specified</i></p>	The people of Palm Beach County shall have the right to initiate county ordinances by filing with the Board of County Commissioners a copy of the proposed ordinance and a petition containing the signatures and addresses of not less than 7% of the number of voters qualified to vote in the last general election. Within 45 days after the filing of the petition with the Board, the Supervisor of Elections shall verify the signatures on said petition.	<p>Within 45 days after the petition is verified by the Supervisor of Elections, the Board shall hold public hearings on the proposed ordinance, according to law, and vote on it.</p> <p>If the Board of County Commissioners fails to adopt the proposed ordinance, it shall then place the ordinance for a referendum on the ballot at the next general election occurring at least 30 days after the Board's vote for a referendum. If approved by a majority of those who voted, the ordinance shall become effective on the date specified in the ordinance; or if not specified in the ordinance, then it shall become effective January 1 following the election.</p>	None of the above provisions shall be available to the public for initiation, change, or modification of county budgetary provisions.
Pinellas Charter	954,569	<p><u>Charter:</u> 8% of the number of registered electors of the county at the time of the last preceding general election. No more than 40% of those registered electors signing petitions shall reside in any 1 at-large county Commission District and no more than 30% of those registered electors signing petitions shall reside in any 1 single-member county Commission District.</p> <p><u>Time frame:</u> 240 days after the date of approval by the Supervisor of Elections</p>	<p>The sponsor of a petition amendment shall, prior to obtaining any signatures, submit the text of the proposed amendment to the Supervisor of Elections, with the form on which the signatures will be affixed, and shall obtain the approval of the Supervisor of Elections of such form. The style and requirements of such form shall be specified by ordinance.</p> <p>The sponsor shall submit signed and dated forms to the Supervisor of Elections and upon submission pay all fees as required by general law. The Supervisor of Elections shall within 45 days verify the signatures thereon. Notwithstanding the time limits hereinabove signatures on a petition circulated prior to one general election shall not be valid beyond the date of that election.</p> <p>In the event sufficient signatures are not acquired during the 240 day period, the petition initiative shall be rendered null and void and none of the signatures may be carried over onto another identical or similar petition.</p>	Such petition shall be filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court in his capacity as Clerk of the Board, together with an affidavit from the Supervisor of Elections certifying the number of signatures which has been verified as registered electors of Pinellas County at the time the signature was verified. Each charter amendment proposed by petition shall be placed on the ballot by resolution of the Board for the general election occurring in excess of 90 days from the certification by the Supervisor of Elections that the requisite number of signatures has been verified. However, County Commissioners may call a special referendum election for said purpose. Notice of said referendum, together with the exact language of the proposed amendment as submitted on the petition, shall be published by the Board once a week for four consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county, the first such publication being at least 45 days prior to the referendum. Passage of proposed amendments shall require approval of a majority of electors voting in said election on such amendment. If approved by a majority of those electors voting on the amendment at the general election, the amendment shall become effective on the date specified in the amendment, or, if not so specified, on January 1 of the succeeding year.	<p>Each such proposed amendment shall embrace but one subject and matter directly connected therewith.</p> <p>The power to amend, revise, or repeal this Charter by citizens' initiative shall not include amendments relating to the county budget, debt obligations, capital improvement programs, salaries of county officers and employees, the levy or collection of taxes, or the rezoning of less than 5% of the total land area of the county.</p>

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Polk Charter	646,989	<p><u>Charter</u>: 7% of the qualified electors from each County Commission District</p> <p><u>Ordinances</u>: 6% of qualified electors in the last preceding general election; provided that the number shall contain at least 6% of the qualified electors in each Commission District.</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: Not later than one year after initial receipt of the petition by the Supervisor of Elections</p>	<p>The electors of Polk County shall have the right to initiate county ordinances in order to establish new legislation that is not in conflict with the State Constitution, general law or this Charter, and to amend or repeal existing ordinances when such amendments or repeal are not in conflict with the State Constitution or general law. Amendments to this Charter, not inconsistent with the State Constitution or with general law, may be proposed by a petition.</p> <p>The sponsor of an initiative shall, prior to obtaining any signatures, submit the text of a proposed ordinance to the Supervisor of Elections, with the proposed ballot summary and the form on which signatures will be affixed and obtain a dated receipt therefor. The sponsor shall cause a notice of such submission to be published within 14 days thereof in a newspaper of general circulation in the County. The sponsor shall comply with all requirements of general law for political committees, and shall file quarterly reports with the Supervisor of Elections stating, to the best of the sponsor's information and belief, the number of signatures procured. The time and form of such reports may be prescribed by ordinance. When a sufficient number of signatures is obtained, the sponsor shall thereupon submit signed and dated forms to the Supervisor of Elections and upon submission shall pay all fees required by general law. The Supervisor of Elections shall, within 60 days after submission, verify the signatures thereon, or specify a reason for the invalidity of each rejected signature if the petition is rejected for insufficiency of the number of valid signatures. If the petition is rejected for insufficiency of the number of signatures, the sponsor shall have an additional 30 days within which to submit additional signatures for verification. The Supervisor of Elections shall, within 30 days verify the additional signatures. In the event sufficient signatures are still not acquired, the petition initiative shall be rendered null and void and none of the signatures may be carried over onto another identical or similar petition.</p>	<p><u>Charter</u>: The Board shall cause any Charter amendment proposed to be submitted to the electors for their approval. The question shall be placed on the ballot at the next general election occurring at least 60 days after the Charter amendment is proposed or validated. Notice of said referendum, together with the language of the proposed amendment, shall be published at least twice in a newspaper of general circulation in the county, at intervals of at least seven days, but not less than five nor more than thirty days prior to the referendum.</p> <p><u>Ordinances</u>: Within 60 days after the requisite number of names has been verified by the Supervisor of Elections and reported to the Board of County Commissioners, the Board shall give notice and hold a public hearing on the proposed ordinance according to law and vote on it. If the Board fails to enact the proposed ordinance, it shall, by resolution, call a referendum on the question of the adoption of the proposed ordinance to be held at the next general election occurring at least 45 days after the adoption of such resolution.</p> <p>Passage of proposed ordinances or amendments shall require approval of at least 60% of electors voting.</p>	<p>Any ordinance or Charter amendment shall embrace but one subject and matter directly connected therewith.</p> <p>The Board of County Commissioners shall not amend or repeal an ordinance adopted by initiative prior to the next succeeding general election, without approval of a majority of the electors voting at a referendum called for that purpose.</p> <p>The power to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance or amend this Charter by initiative shall not include ordinances or provisions relating to the county budget, debt obligations, capital improvement programs, salaries of county officers and employees, the assessment or collection of taxes, or the rezoning of land.</p>

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Duval/City of Jacksonville Charter	923,647	<p><u>Charter:</u> Amendment or non-binding straw ballot referendum may be proposed by ordinance or by a petition signed by qualified voters of Duval County equal in number to at least 5% of the total number of registered voters in the city at the time of the last preceding general consolidated government election; provided, the same or substantially same referendum to amend this charter may not be proposed more than one time in any 12 month period unless any petition subsequent to the first petition shall be signed by qualified voters of Duval County equal in number to at least 10% of the total number of registered voters in the city at the time of the last preceding general consolidated government election.</p> <p><u>Time frame:</u> No later than 180 days prior to the election date requested by the petitioners' committee.</p>	<p>Upon the receipt of 10% of the qualified voter signatures required, the Supervisor of Elections shall submit the proposed petition form to the City's Office of General Counsel for a determination of the legal sufficiency of its form and substance. The Supervisor shall simultaneously make a recommendation to the Office of General Counsel as to the sufficiency of the proposed petition's form. The Office of General Counsel shall preliminarily validate or invalidate the petition within 10 business days of receipt. If the Office of General Counsel determines that the form or substance of the petition is defective, it shall promptly send such determination to the petitioners' committee by registered mail. The determination shall specify the particulars wherein the petition is defective.</p> <p>Within 30 business days from the date of the receipt of the completed petition, the Supervisor of Elections shall validate or invalidate the petition. The Supervisor shall attach to the petition a certificate showing the result of such examination. If the Supervisor of Elections shall find and determine that the requirements have been met with respect to any petition, then the Supervisor of Elections shall validate the petition. If the Supervisor of Elections determines that the requirements have not been met, the Supervisor of Elections shall promptly send a copy of the certificate to the petitioners' committee by registered mail. The certificate shall specify the particulars wherein the petition is defective.</p>	<p>The petition may be amended and filed with the Supervisor of Elections following a certificate or determination of invalidation.</p> <p>The Office of General Counsel's or the Supervisor of Election's validation or invalidation may be challenged in court no sooner than 10 business days after a notice of contest has been filed with the Supervisor of Elections. The notice of contest shall contain the pertinent factual and/or legal basis for the contest.</p> <p>Unless otherwise scheduled by the Council, the referendum shall be held as a part of and at the same time as the next consolidated government, school board, state or federal election in which all qualified voters of Duval County are entitled to participate.</p> <p>At Petitioner's Committee's expense, notice of the referendum shall be published at least twice in a newspaper published in and having a general circulation in Duval County, and the first publication shall be made at least 30 days prior to the date of the referendum. Notice of a referendum shall set forth the date of the election and, where charter amendments are proposed, the exact language of the proposed charter amendment, the ballot title and ballot summary, and the financial impact statement</p>	No amendment of this charter reducing the salary of any elective officer shall become effective until after the expiration of the current term of the incumbent official elected to such office
Lee Charter	680,539	<p><u>Charter:</u> 7% of the electors qualified to vote in the last preceding general election.</p> <p><u>Ordinances:</u> 5% of the electors qualified to vote in the last preceding general election. No more than 30% of the total number of signature required will be allowed in any single Board of County Commission District.</p> <p><u>Time frame:</u> 180 days from the date of approval by the Supervisor of Elections</p>	<p>The electors of Lee County shall have the right to initiate amendments to the charter as well as County ordinances in order to establish new ordinances and to amend or repeal existing ordinances upon petition of qualified electors in the County.</p> <p>The sponsor of an initiative shall, prior to obtaining any signatures, submit the text of the proposed ordinance to the Supervisor of Elections, with the form on which, signatures will be affixed, and shall obtain the approval of the Supervisor of Elections of such form. The style and requirements of such form shall be specified by County ordinance.</p>	<p>Within 45 days after the requisite number of names have been verified by the Supervisor of Elections and reported to the Board of County Commissioners, the Board shall notice and hold according to general law a public hearing on the proposed ordinance and vote on it. If the Board fails to enact the proposed ordinance at the public hearing, it shall, at the public hearing, by resolution, call for a referendum on the question of the adoption of the proposed ordinance to be held at the next general election occurring at least 90 days after the adoption of such resolution. If the question of the adoption of the proposed ordinance is approved by a majority of those registered electors voting on the</p>	<p>The power to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance by initiative shall not include ordinances relating to the County budget, debt obligations, capital improvement programs, salaries of County officers and employees, the levy and collection of taxes, and the rezoning of an individual parcel of land.</p> <p>The Board shall not amend or repeal an ordinance adopted by this initiative procedure for a period of one year after the effective date of such ordinance and thereafter may amend or repeal such ordinance only by an affirmative vote of at least a majority plus one of its membership.</p>

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			The beginning date of any petition drive shall commence upon the date of approval by the Supervisor of Elections of the form on which signatures will be affixed, and said drive shall terminate 180 days after that date. In the event sufficient signatures are not acquired during that 180 day period, the petition initiative shall be rendered null and void and none of the signatures may be carried over into another identical or similar petition. The sponsor shall submit signed and dated forms to the Supervisor of Elections and upon submission shall pay all fees as required by general law. The Supervisor of Elections shall within 45 days verify the signatures thereon.	question, the proposed ordinance shall be declared by resolution of the Board to be enacted and shall become effective on the date specified in the ordinance, or, if not so specified, on January 1 of the succeeding year.	
Brevard Charter	568,919	At least equal to 5% of electors qualified to vote in the last preceding general election; provided that the number shall contain at least 5% of the qualified electors in each of at least three Commission election districts. <u>Time frame:</u> Not later than 9 months after the initial receipt of the petition by the Supervisor of Elections.	The sponsor of an initiative shall, prior to obtaining any signatures, submit the text of a proposed ordinance or Charter amendment to the Supervisor of Elections, with the proposed ballot summary and the form on which signatures will be affixed and obtain a dated receipt therefor. The sponsor shall thereupon submit signed and dated forms to the Supervisor of Elections and upon submission shall pay all fees required by general law. The Supervisor of Elections shall within 60 days verify the signatures thereon, or specify a reason for the invalidity of each rejected signature if the petition is rejected for insufficiency of the number of valid signatures. If the petition is rejected for insufficiency of the number of signatures, the sponsor shall have an additional 30 days within which to submit additional signatures for verification. The Supervisor of Elections shall, within 30 days verify the additional signatures. In the event sufficient signatures are still not acquired, the petition initiative shall be rendered null and void and none of the signatures may be carried over onto another identical or similar petition.	Within 60 days after the requisite number of names has been verified by the Supervisor of Elections and reported to the Board, the Board shall give notice and hold a public hearing on the proposed ordinance according to law and vote on it. If the Board fails to enact the proposed ordinance, it shall by resolution, call a referendum on the question of the adoption of the proposed ordinance to be held at the next general election occurring at least 45 days after the adoption of such resolution. If the question of the adoption of the proposed ordinance is approved by a majority of those registered voters voting on the question, the proposed ordinance shall be declared by resolution of the Board to be enacted and shall become effective on the date specified in the ordinance, or if not so specified, on January 1 of the succeeding year.	The electors of Brevard County shall have the right to initiate County ordinances in order to establish new legislation that is not in conflict with the State Constitution, general law or this Charter, and to amend or repeal existing ordinances when such amendments or repeal are not in conflict with the State Constitution or general law. The power to enact, amend or repeal an ordinance or amend this Charter by initiative shall not include ordinances or provisions relating to the existing County budget, existing debt obligations, existing capital improvement programs, salaries of non-elected County officers and employees, the collection of taxes, or the rezoning of less than 5% of the total land area of the County. The Board shall not amend or repeal an ordinance adopted by initiative, without the approval of a majority of the electors voting at a referendum called for that purpose.

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Volusia AMY Charter <i>*Note: Charter also includes provision regarding Charter repeal by initiative</i>	517,411	Amendments to this charter may be proposed by a petition signed by at least 5% of the electors from each council district of the county. <u>Time frame:</u> <i>No time limit specified</i>	Any such petition shall be filed with the county manager and shall be executed and validated or invalidated by the Supervisor of Elections.	Any such amendment shall be subject to referendum and notice of said referendum, together with the exact language of the proposed amendment, shall be published twice in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least 30 days prior to the referendum at the next general election. Passage of proposed amendments shall require approval of a majority of electors voting in said election.	