

**Policy Title: Petitions and Solicitation**

**Effective Date: 10-1-2009**

**Approved by the LAB: 7-8-2009**

**Revision Date:**

The St. Johns County Public Library as a “limited public forum” has the authority to make reasonable rules that are universally applicable regarding the allowed use of the library buildings and property, including content-neutral restriction of conduct involving passing out literature. The public sidewalk around the library property is a traditional public forum subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on those wishing to use them for purposes protected by the First Amendment. As such, the Library allows people to circulate petitions outside our facilities.

1. Persons circulating petitions for signatures or leafleting may do so on Library property, however, they may not engage in collecting signatures or distributing leaflets inside the Library building.
2. Only one person at a time is permitted to solicit signatures for a single petition or leaflet.
3. Solicitors shall not block, hinder, interfere, approach or otherwise impede patrons and staff wishing to exit or enter the building, nor seek to intimidate patrons or staff into signing a petition or accepting a leaflet.
4. Solicitors must remain a minimum of 15 feet from any library entrance or exit, except during the time that the library is serving as a polling place when section 102.03(4)(a) F.S. states solicitors may not come within 100 feet of the entrance to any polling place. The only exception to this law is persons who are conducting an "exit poll." This is typically media.
5. Persons circulating petitions or leafleting must supply their own tables and chairs and may not store them on Library property.
6. No leafleting or distribution of literature, or solicitation is permitted for the purposes of selling items, merchandise, tickets, or other for-profit activities.
7. No work or petitioning on behalf of candidates for elected office is allowed in the Library building.
8. Fundraising activities are not permitted in the Library building or on the Library property by any person or organization when the purpose is to benefit a group or organization other than the Library or the Friends of the Libraries of St. Johns County.
9. Anyone wishing to solicit signatures for a petition or leaflet shall inform the Library Administration Office or designee during normal business hours of their desire and intent to solicit signatures for a petition.

10. The Library staff, Friends of the Library of St. Johns County and members of the Library Board of Trustees is exempt from the above constraints in so far as promoting Library activities and issues.

11. Any person or group who does not abide by the conditions stated above or creates a nuisance such that the regular business of the Library is disrupted shall be required to immediately cease all activities relating to solicitation for a petition or leafleting and to leave the Library property.