



Amending the Michigan Constitution The Process:

Constitution States:

Pathway 1: (Legislature)

“Amendments to this constitution may be proposed in the senate or house of representatives. Proposed amendments agreed to by two-thirds of the members elected to and serving in each house on a vote with the names and vote of those voting entered in the respective journals shall be submitted, not less than 60 days thereafter, to the electors at the next general election or special election as the legislature shall direct. If a majority of electors voting on a proposed amendment approve the same, it shall become part of the constitution and shall abrogate or amend existing provisions of the constitution at the end of 45 days after the date of the election at which it was approved.”

Pathway 2: (Initiative)

“Amendments may be proposed to this constitution by petition of the registered electors of this state. Every petition shall include the full text of the proposed amendment, and be signed by registered electors of the state equal in number to at least 10 percent of the total vote cast for all candidates for governor at the last preceding general election at which a governor was elected. Such petitions shall be filed with the person authorized by law to receive the same at least 120 days before the election at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon. Any such petition shall be in the form, and shall be signed and circulated in such manner, as prescribed by law. The person authorized by law to receive such petition shall upon its receipt determine, as provided by law, the validity and sufficiency of the signatures on the petition, and make an official announcement thereof at least 60 days prior to the election at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon.

Any amendment proposed by such petition shall be submitted, not less than 120 days after it was filed, to the electors at the next general election. Such proposed amendment, existing provisions of the constitution which would be altered or abrogated thereby, and the question as it shall appear on the ballot shall be published in full as provided by law. Copies of such publication shall be posted in each polling place and furnished to news media as provided by law.

The ballot to be used in such election shall contain a statement of the purpose of the proposed amendment, expressed in not more than 100 words, exclusive of caption. Such statement of purpose and caption shall be prepared by the person authorized by law, and shall consist of a true and impartial statement of the purpose of the amendment in such language as shall create no prejudice for or against the proposed amendment.

If the proposed amendment is approved by a majority of the electors voting on the question, it shall become part of the constitution, and shall abrogate or amend existing provisions of the constitution at the end of 45 days after the date of the election at which it was approved. If two or more amendments approved by the electors at the same election conflict, that amendment receiving the highest affirmative vote shall prevail."

Pathway 3: (Convention)

"At the general election to be held in the year 1978, and in each 16th year thereafter and at such times as may be provided by law, the question of a general revision of the constitution shall be submitted to the electors of the state. If a majority of the electors voting on the question decide in favor of a convention for such purpose, at an election to be held not later than six months after the proposal was certified as approved, the electors of each representative district as then organized shall elect one delegate and the electors of each senatorial district as then organized shall elect one delegate at a partisan election. The delegates so elected shall convene at the seat of government on the first Tuesday in October next succeeding such election or at an earlier date if provided by law.

The convention shall choose its own officers, determine the rules of its proceedings and judge the qualifications, elections and returns of its members. To fill a vacancy in the office of any delegate, the governor shall appoint a qualified resident of the same district who shall be a member of the same party as the delegate vacating the office. The convention shall have power to appoint such officers, employees and assistants as it deems necessary and to fix their compensation; to provide for the printing and distribution of its documents, journals and proceedings; to explain and disseminate information about the proposed constitution and to complete the business of the convention in an orderly manner. Each delegate shall receive for his services compensation provided by law.

No proposed constitution or amendment adopted by such convention shall be submitted to the electors for approval as hereinafter provided unless by the assent of a majority of all the delegates elected to and serving in the convention, with the names and vote of those voting entered in the journal. Any proposed constitution or amendments adopted by such convention shall be submitted to the qualified electors in the manner and at the time provided by such convention not less than 90 days after final adjournment of the convention. Upon the approval of such constitution or amendments by a majority of the qualified electors voting thereon the constitution or amendments shall take effect as provided by the convention."

What this means in practice:

Pathway 1: (Legislature)

- Step 1: Amendment may be proposed in the senate or house of representatives and needs to be agreed upon by two-thirds of the members elected to and serving in each house (110 House, 38 Senate, total).
- Step 2: Amendment is submitted to the electors, not less than 60 days from vote of each house, at the next general election (November 3, 2020) or special election as the legislature shall direct.
- Step 3: An amendment becomes part of the constitution at the end of 45 days after the date of the election in which a majority of electors approve.

Pathway 2: (Initiative)

- Step 1: Amendment may be proposed by petition of the registered electors of the state. Petition shall include a full text of the proposed amendment and may be signed by registered electors of the state equal in number to at least 10 percent of the total votes cast for all candidates for governor (425,555) at the last preceding election at which the governor was elected. Petition shall be in the form and signed and circulated in the manner prescribed by law.
- Step 2: Petition shall be filed with the person authorized by law at least 120 days before the election at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon. After said person determines the validity and sufficiency of the signatures on the petition, an official announcement is made at least 60 days prior to the election at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon.
- Step 3: Amendment, including existing provisions of the constitution which would be altered or abrogated thereby, and the question as it shall appear on the ballot, shall be published in full as provided by law. Copies of such publication shall be posted in each polling place as furnished to news media as provided by law. For laws pertaining to the ballot, see above.
- Step 4: Amendment is submitted, not less than 120 days after it was filed, to the electors at the next general election. An amendment becomes part of the constitution at the end of 45 days after the date of the election if it is approved by a majority of the electors voting on the question.

Pathway 3: (Convention)

- Step 1: Every 16th year, thereafter, from the general election held in the year 1978 (next at 2026), the question of a general revision of the constitution shall be submitted to the electors of the state at the time provided by law.
- Step 2: If a majority of the electors voting on the question decide in favor of a convention (which shall be held not later than six months after the proposal was certified as approved) the electors of each representative district, as then organized, shall elect one delegate and the electors of each senatorial district, as then organized, shall elect one delegate at a partisan election. The delegates so elected shall convene at the seat of government on the first Tuesday in October next succeeding such election or at an earlier date if provided by law. For the laws pertaining to conventions, please see above.
- Step 3: Upon the agreement by a majority of the delegates serving in the convention, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to the electors for approval. The amendment is submitted to the qualified electors in the manner and at the time provided by such convention not less than 90 days after final adjournment of the convention. The amendment shall take effect, as provided by the constitution, once agreed upon by a majority of the qualified electors voting thereon.

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