

You are in the Types of elections section Home Voter Types of elections Your location: Change England Northern Ireland Scotland Wales Overseas We're showing you content for . Select 'change' to choose a different location. On this page How a recall petition is triggered Who can sign the petition Signing the petition Signing the petition What happens after the recall petition closes Challenging the result of a recall petition Challenging the result of a recall petition First published: 20 June 2023 Last updated: 20 June 2023 Summary A recall petition is the process by which an MP can lose their seat in the House of Commons. Voters in the relevant constituency will have six weeks to sign the petition. By signing a recall petition, voters are saying they want their MP to lose their seat. Only those who want to see the MP removed need to sign the petition. If at least 10% of voters in the constituency sign the petition, the MP will lose their seat and it will trigger a by-election. The recalled MP can stand as a candidate at the by-election. If less than 10% of voters in the constituency sign the petition, the MP remains in post. How a recall petition is triggered A recall petition will take place if an MP is: convicted of an offence in the UK and receives a custodial sentence (including a suspended sentence) or is ordered to be detained, other than solely under mental health legislation suspended from the House of Commons for 10 sitting days or 14 calendar days convicted of providing false or misleading information for allowance claims under the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009. In the case of a conviction, the recall petition will only be opened if the conviction, sentence or order has not been overturned during the appeal period and when any appeals have been heard and dismissed. A recall petition will not be opened, if: a UK Parliamentary general election will take place within the next six months a recall petition is already underway in respect of the MP the MP's seat has already been vacated Who can sign the petition You can sign the petition if you are registered to vote at an address in the relevant UK Parliament constituency. You need to have registered to vote before midnight on the day the Speaker of the House of Commons gives notice of the petition. This is usually around ten working days before the petition opens. You must also be: aged 18 or over (or will turn 18 before the end of the six week signing period) a UK, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen Signing the petition You can sign a recall petition in person, by post or by appointing a proxy to sign on your behalf. Sign the petition in person To sign the petition, you need to go to your allocated signing place. The Petition Officer will send you details of the location and opening hours. You can also find details of your allocated signing place by entering your postcode into our search . You will need to bring an accepted form of photo ID with you. When you arrive at a signing place, a member of staff will: Ask for your name and address so they can find you on the electoral register Ask for your photo ID and check if it's accepted and looks like you If your ID is acceptable, they will give you a signing sheet Once you have signed the sheet, you can place it in the ballot box. Sign the petition by post If you want to sign the petition by post, you will need to apply to vote by post. The deadline to apply is 5pm 11 working days before the close of the signing period. If you are already registered as a postal voter, you will receive a signing sheet by post. You need to return your completed signing sheet to your Petitions Officer before the end of the signing period. about postal voting and download an application form . Sign the petition by proxy If you know that you won't be able to get to the signing place to sign the petition, you can ask someone you trust to sign for you. This is called signing by proxy and the person signing the petition is often

referred to as your proxy. To sign by proxy, you need to complete a proxy application form and return it to your local electoral registration office by 5pm six working days before the close of the signing period. Your proxy will need to show their own accepted form of photo ID at the signing place before they can sign.

**about signing by proxy**

**Signing the petition** You can sign a recall petition in person, by post or by appointing a proxy to sign on your behalf. Sign the petition in person To sign the petition, you need to go to your allocated signing place. The Petition Officer will send you details of the location and opening hours. You can also find details of your allocated signing place by entering your postcode into our search . You will need to bring an accepted form of ID to sign the petition at a signing place. When you arrive at a signing place, a member of staff will:

- Ask for your name and address so they can find you on the electoral register
- Ask for your photo ID and check if it's accepted and looks like you
- If your ID is acceptable, they will give you a signing sheet

Once you have signed the sheet, you can place it in the ballot box.

**Sign the petition by post** In Northern Ireland, you can sign the recall petition by post if you can't get to the signing place because of:

- illness
- disability
- holiday work arrangements

The deadline to apply to sign the recall petition is 5pm 11 working days before the close of the signing period. You will need to return your completed signing sheet before the end of the signing period.

**about postal voting and download an application form**

**Sign the petition by proxy** You can ask someone to sign the petition for you, if you know that you won't be able to get to the signing place because of:

- illness
- disability
- holiday work arrangements

This is called signing by proxy and the person signing the petition is often referred to as your proxy. The deadline to apply to sign the recall petition is 5pm 11 working days before the close of the signing period. Your proxy will need to show their own accepted form of ID at the signing place before they can sign.

**What happens after the recall petition closes**

**Counting the signatures** The signatures on the petition must be counted as soon as possible once the signing period ends – it must be done no later than one day after. If at least 10% of eligible voters have signed the petition, the petition is successful. This means the MP will leave their seat once the Petition Officer has let the Speaker of the House of Commons know the outcome of the petition. If less than 10% of eligible voters sign the petition, the petition is unsuccessful and the MP remains in post. The outcome will be announced to the public either way. This will then trigger the start of the by-election process .

**Can a recall petition be closed early?** A petition can only be closed before the end of the six-week signing period, if:

- the MP's seat is made vacant for any other reason (such as resignation)
- the MP's conviction, sentence of imprisonment or detention order is overturned

Parliament calls an early UK Parliamentary general election which will be held within six months of the Speaker's notice.

**Challenging the result of a recall petition** You can challenge the result of a recall petition. To do this, you would need to present a recall petition complaint to the High Court.

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