

Signature Comparison

Think about signatures at two levels: quick analysis of the general character of the signature, then sharp focus on individual details. No threshold of minor discrepancies should outweigh your judgment that the general character of two signatures is so similar that they must have been written by the same hand.

General Analysis

The Type of Writing

Voter Record Signature



Mail Ballot Signature



Easy difference to notice and a sign the signature should be rejected.

Spacing Between Names

Voter Record Signature



Mail Ballot Signature




If the spacing between first and last name is not consistent, it may be a sign the signature should be rejected.

Slant of Writing

Voter Record Signature



Mail Ballot Signature



Another easy difference to notice. If the slant of writing is different, it is a sign the signature should be rejected.

Speed of Writing

Voter Record Signature



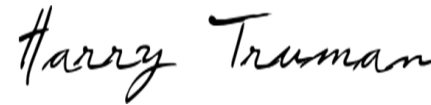
Mail Ballot Signature



A forger will be more deliberate with forging a signature, leading to hesitation marks or a smoother looking signature.

Proportions and Size of Signature

Voter Record Signature



Mail Ballot Signature



A signature should have consistency in terms of the size and proportion. In the example above, the proportions are different between the two signatures.

Incorrect Spelling

Voter Record Signature



Mail Ballot Signature



This is a very straightforward issue. If the name is misspelled, the signature should be rejected.

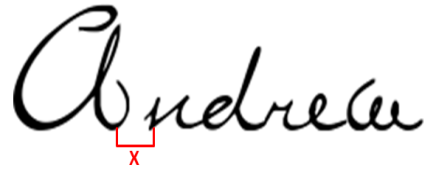
Detailed Analysis

Letter Spacing

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Andrew" in cursive. A red double-headed arrow is placed below the letters "nd" to indicate inconsistent spacing.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Andrew" in cursive. A red 'x' is placed below the letter "d" to indicate inconsistent spacing.

If the spacing between letters is not consistent, it may be a sign the signature should be rejected.

Size of Specific Letters

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Steven" in cursive. The letters are of consistent size.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Steven" in cursive. A red box highlights the letters "te", with a red arrow pointing down on the left and a red arrow pointing up on the right, indicating inconsistent letter size.

If the size of a specific letter is not consistent, it may be a sign the signature should be rejected.

Other Distinguishing Features

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Harold Washington" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Harold Washington" in cursive. Red circles highlight the letters "H", "d", "W", and "n", indicating differences in unique features like curves and loops.

Differences in unique features, such as curves, loops, and cross-points, may be a sign the signature should be rejected.

Pen Lifts

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Cleveland" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Cleveland" in cursive. Red circles highlight the letters "e" and "d", indicating pen lifts not present in a normal signature.

A forger will be more deliberate with forging a signature, leading to pen lifts not present in a normal signature.

Beginning and Ending Strokes

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Harold Washington" in cursive. The beginning and ending strokes are fluid.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Harold Washington" in cursive. Red circles highlight the beginning and ending strokes, indicating changes in these strokes when forging.

Beginning and ending strokes may change as a forger is more deliberate in their writing.

Acceptable Signatures

It can be difficult to know when a signature variation should or should not lead to rejecting a ballot envelope. The presence of a signature variance does not mean a signature should be rejected. The following examples detail common signature variations that should be accepted.

Age / Other Factors

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Theodore Cuyon" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Theodore Cuyon" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Signing With A Nickname

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Isabella Jones" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Bella Jones" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Signing With Initials

Voter Record Signature

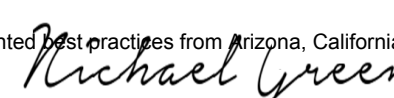
A handwritten signature "Terry Jones Woods" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "TJ Woods" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Electronic Signature

Voter Record Signature

A handwritten signature "Michael Green" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.

Mail Ballot Signature

A handwritten signature "Michael Green" in cursive. The letters are fluid and connected.