

SHELLY'S LAW

NORTHBROOK COMMUNITY PETITION DRIVE

FIELD OPERATIONS PACKET

Saturday, August 8, 2026

Rally begins 11:00 a.m.

Check-in: Wescott Park, Northbrook

Look for the Shelly's Law registration table

SHELLY'S LAW
COALITION

Before you go

Reminders

- **Make sure you've checked in! sayvanimals.org/eventresources**
- You should receive:
 - Potentially: a leader role and a bright vest
 - An assignment – you may be a lead (generally accompanied with a bright vest) or a general volunteer
 - A name tag

The 5 bright-vest roles

Event manager(s) — overall command

Volunteer coordinator(s) — manages people and assignments

Petition coordinator(s) — manages the petition process and packets, neighborhood canvassing

Logistics and floating lead(s) — manages physical needs and fills gaps

Assignments

Welcome and check-in

Primary responsibility: Welcome attendees and help direct them to the appropriate part of the event.

Petition table

Primary responsibility: Help attendees understand and complete the petition.

Neighborhood canvassing

Primary responsibility: Leave the park with an assigned team to collect petition signatures in the assigned area.

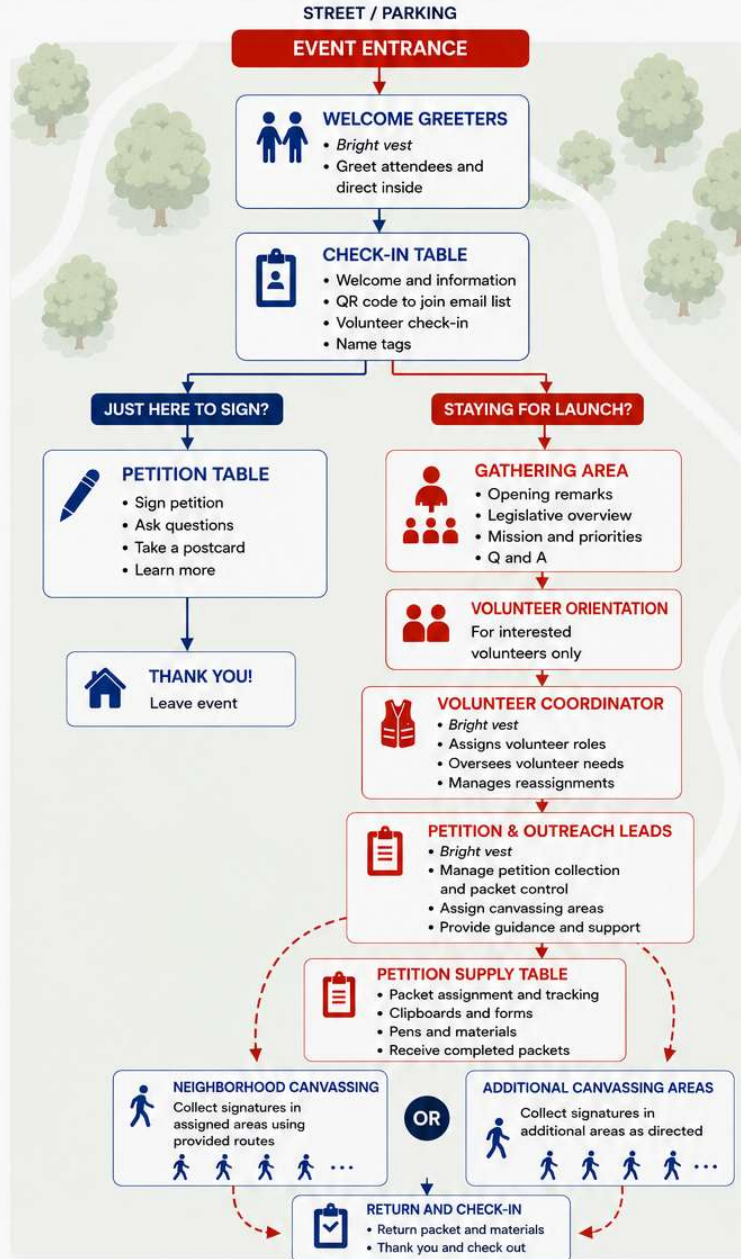
Floater and support

Primary responsibility: Help wherever additional support is needed.

SHELLY'S LAW COALITION

Operations map

use this map to know where to go and who to ask



MAP LEGEND

- Welcome and check-in
- Public engagement
- Program speaking
- Volunteer management
- Supply and operations
- Outreach and canvassing
- Exit

BRIGHT VEST LEADERSHIP ROLES

- Event manager(s)**
Overall event lead and issue resolution
- Volunteer coordinator(s)**
Volunteer check-in, assignments, questions, and reassignments
- Petition and outreach lead(s)**
Manage petition collection, packet control, and assign canvassing areas
- Logistics and floating lead(s)**
Supplies, setup, cleanup, equipment, and fill gaps
- Additional lead(s) as needed**
Roles may be combined based on event size

KEY NOTES

- Look for someone in a bright vest if you need help.
- All petition packets must be checked out and returned.
- Completed petitions go to the Petition Supply Table.
- Be kind, professional, and follow petition guidelines.
- Safety first. Do not enter any private property.

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS (NOT BRIGHT VEST ROLES)

These are the jobs volunteers are assigned to do during the event.

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN Greet attendees, answer questions, direct people, and encourage newsletter sign-ups. Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator(s)	PETITION TABLE Explain the petition, verify eligibility, help complete forms, answer questions, and keep petitions organized. Reports to: Petition and Outreach Lead(s)	NEIGHBORHOOD CANVASSING Leave the park to collect signatures in assigned areas using provided routes. Reports to: Petition and Outreach Lead(s)	ADDITIONAL CANVASSING AREAS Collect signatures in additional areas as directed by a lead. Reports to: Petition and Outreach Lead(s)	FLOATER / Go answer questions, relieve volunteers, and help where needed. Reports to: Logistics and Floating Lead(s)
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Working to strengthen accountability in Illinois felony animal torture cases through education, advocacy, and legislative reform.

**THANK YOU FOR
BEING PART OF
THE CHANGE.**

educate. advocate. protect. together.

Zones

Zone	Areas
1	A, B, C
2	A, B, C, D
3	A, B, C
4	A, B, C, D
5	A, B, C
6	No subdivisions
7	A, B, C
8	No subdivisions

See the map on shellyslaw.org/eventresources

Canvassing rules

Do

- Work in pairs at all times. Never split up.
- Stay inside your assigned zone boundaries.
- Stay on sidewalks, driveways, and walkways. Never cross lawns or enter fenced yards.
- Introduce yourselves, be courteous, and thank every resident whether they sign or not.
- Leave immediately and politely if anyone asks you to.
- Return your clipboard and zone sheet to the registration table, finished or not.

Do not

- Do not accept or solicit money or donations at any door, for any reason. If someone offers, thank them and direct them to the coalition contact on the FAQ sheet.
- Do not enter any residence, open any gate, or enter any fenced yard.
- Do not argue with anyone, about anything.
- Do not discuss the underlying court case beyond the Approved Facts Card. Do not name any judge.
- Do not canvass outside your assigned zone.
- Do not block driveways, sidewalks, or mailboxes, and do not place anything in or on a mailbox.
- Do not speak to media on behalf of the coalition. Take their contact information for the captain.

Do not approach or knock at any residence displaying No Soliciting, No Trespassing, Do Not Disturb, Private Property, or any similar notice. Mark the address as skipped on your sheet and move to the next house

What makes a signature count

Since this petition goes to state legislators, the most persuasive signatures are complete and legible. For each signature, make sure the sheet captures:

1. Full printed name
2. Legible signature
3. Home address, city, and ZIP code (so the coalition can route it to the right legislative district)
4. Optional: email or phone, if the signer is willing — for updates on the bill's progress

Quality over speed: an illegible name or missing address is a wasted signature once results are compiled by district. Politely ask people to print *and* sign, and to double-check their ZIP code before handing the clipboard back.

Volunteer script

Introduction (about 30 seconds)

"Hi, my name is ____ and this is _____. We're volunteers with the Shelly's Law Coalition, a nonpartisan effort to strengthen Illinois sentencing laws for aggravated animal cruelty. We're collecting signatures asking state legislators to strengthen accountability for serious animal cruelty offenses. It takes about 30 seconds and we're not asking for donations."

If they say yes

"Thank you. Please print your name, address, and signature here." Confirm the entry is legible before leaving.

If they hesitate

"No problem at all. If you would like to read more first, the petition information is on this sheet, and you can always sign online." Thank them and move on. Never push.

If they say no

"Thank you for your time. Have a good day." That is the only answer. Move to the next house.

REMINDER: Our goal is to have respectful conversations—not to convince everyone. If someone is unsure, answer questions using the approved facts and information provided to you by Shelly's Law Coalition. If they decline to sign, thank them for their time and move on. Never pressure, debate, or argue with a resident.

If you don't know

"I want to make sure I give you accurate information. I'd be happy to have someone from the coalition follow up."

Don't speculate

Facts

Verified court record

The following information is taken from the certified court record in *People v. Thomas Martel*, No. 23 CR 0852301 (Cook County). Volunteers should share only these approved facts when discussing the case.

- The defendant pled guilty to two counts of aggravated cruelty to animals.
- The court imposed a 54-month prison sentence, with the sentences running concurrently.
- The defendant received 1,079 days of sentence credit, including credit for time spent on electronic monitoring.
- The projected discharge date is December 23, 2026.

NOTE: Never name any judge. Never speculate about charges, motives, or anything outside the court record. If you are asked something not on this card, say: "I want to give you accurate information, so let me take your contact and someone from the coalition will follow up."

More about Shelly's Law

What is Shelly's Law? Why are we doing this?

Shelly's Law is named in memory of several kittens who were all given the same name — "Shelly" — by the man who allegedly tortured and killed them.

In 2023, Thomas Martel was accused of torturing and killing multiple kittens in his care. Court records point to five known kitten victims, but the case ultimately resulted in a conviction centered on a single kitten.

Martel was sentenced to 4½ years in prison after pleading guilty to felony animal torture and aggravated cruelty to animals. But more than 1,000 days he'd already spent on pretrial home electronic monitoring counted toward that sentence — so he entered and was released from prison the same day, serving no additional time after sentencing.

Shelly's Law Coalition is asking the Illinois General Assembly to introduce and support two targeted reforms:

1. **End prison sentence credit for pretrial home electronic monitoring** in felony animal torture cases, so a custodial sentence imposed by a court is actually served.
2. **Strengthen sentencing for crimes involving multiple animal victims**, by expanding the availability of consecutive sentences so each animal harmed is recognized at sentencing.

This is a legislative advocacy petition addressed to Illinois state legislators, not a ballot initiative. There's no government-mandated certification process, but every signature is a real message from a real constituent, so accuracy and legibility still matter.

Petition link: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/shellyslaw>

Coalition site: <https://www.shellyslaw.org>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is Shelly's Law?

A proposed reform of Illinois sentencing law for aggravated animal cruelty. It grew out of a Cook County case in which concurrent sentencing and sentence credit resulted in minimal additional prison time. The coalition is asking legislators to close those gaps.

Do I have to live in Northbrook to sign?

No. Any Illinois resident's signature helps. This is a petition to state legislators, not a local ballot measure.

Who can sign?

Adults 18 and over. One signature per person.

Is this political or partisan?

No. This is a nonpartisan public safety and animal welfare effort. We are not supporting or opposing any candidate or party.

Are you collecting money?

No. Volunteers never accept donations at the door. Anyone who wants to support the effort can find information through the coalition contact below.

Can I sign online instead?

Yes. An online petition is available. Volunteers can share the link from the coalition materials.

Who is behind this?

The Shelly's Law Coalition, a group of Illinois animal welfare organizations and community volunteers working with state legislators on sentencing reform.

What happens after you collect signatures?

We'll present the petition to legislators while we're advocating for these bills. But we're also using it to build a network of supporters, volunteers, and organizations who want to help pass stronger animal protection laws. It's one step in a much larger legislative effort.

Is this a ballot measure? Does it cost anything?

No — this is a message to our state legislators asking them to introduce and support the bill. There's no cost, and it doesn't put anything on a ballot

They can check out shellyslaw.org for more information

Handling difficult situations

Hostile or angry resident

Stay calm, thank them, and leave immediately. Do not respond to insults and do not argue. Note the address in the Incidents line on your zone sheet and keep moving.

Dogs

If a dog is loose or a yard is fenced with a dog inside, skip the house and mark it. Never open a gate. Never assume a dog is friendly.

Gated or fenced homes

Do not open gates or enter enclosed yards under any circumstances. Skip and mark the address.

Questions you cannot answer

Use approved facts/info provided by Shelly's Law Coalition. If the answer isn't available, take the resident's name and contact information for follow up. Never guess.

Someone asks you to leave

Leave at once, politely. No exceptions and no parting remarks.

Media

Volunteers do not speak for the coalition. Take the reporter's name, outlet, and phone number and give it to the captain at the park.

Police or village staff

Be cooperative and courteous. Explain you are volunteers collecting petition signatures, going door to door on foot. If asked to stop or move, comply and call the captain.

Emergency

For any medical or safety emergency, call 911 first, then the captain.

Weather

If severe weather moves in, stop, take shelter, and return to the park when safe. Signatures are not worth anyone getting hurt.

Handling pushback

If someone says...	You can say...
"Will this actually do anything?"	"Legislators pay attention to constituent volume. A strong petition shows them there's real public support before the bill even gets a hearing."
"I don't want to give my address."	"Completely understandable — your city and ZIP code help show which districts care about this, but I can note just those if you'd rather skip the street address."
"I'm not registered to vote / not from here."	"That's okay — this isn't tied to voter registration. If you live in Illinois, your voice still counts as a constituent."
"I need to think about it / read more first."	"Of course — here's a card with a link to shellyslaw.org so you can read the full proposal and sign online whenever you're ready."
"Petitions don't change legislation"	"You're absolutely right—they don't automatically change laws. This petition isn't a ballot initiative or a legal filing. It's part of an advocacy campaign. We're building a statewide coalition and demonstrating to legislators that thousands of Illinois residents support strengthening animal cruelty laws. Every signature helps us show that this issue matters to voters."