



NAME CHANGE: HOW DO I CHANGE A NAME?

Can I change my name?

Yes, as long as it is not for an illegal or fraudulent purpose and does not interfere with the rights of others. You can change your name informally by using it. You can also formally change your name after getting married, after a divorce, or by asking the court for a change of name.

Can I change the name of a minor child?

Yes, if you are a parent, guardian, or custodian. If your child was born in Maryland, is under 12 months old, and both parents agree, the [Maryland Department of Health](#) can change their name. A child's name can also be changed during an adoption. Outside of these situations, you will need a court order changing the minor's name. This process is easier when you have consent from each parent, guardian, and custodian. Legally changing a child's name does not affect child support, paternity, or other rights and obligations.

Where do I apply for a name change order?

If you are an adult changing your own name, go to the [circuit court](#) in the county (or Baltimore City) where you live, carry on a regular business, work, habitually engage in a vocation, or where you were born. To change a minor's name, go to the circuit court in the county where the minor lives or where any parent, guardian, or custodian lives. Do NOT go to a district court.

Is there a fee?

There is a \$165 filing fee. [Learn more about filing fee waivers.](#)

Do I need documents or forms?

To ask the court for a name change, you need to file a petition. You can use the [Petition for Change of Name of an Adult \(CC-DR-60\)](#) or [Petition for Change of Name of a Minor \(CC-DR-062\)](#). Attach documents with your or the minor's current legal name (birth certificate, driver's license, passport, etc.). Sign the petition with your current legal name.

If you are asking to change a minor's name, attach any consents. Minors who are at least 10 years old, can use [Minor's Consent/Objection to Change of Name form \(CC-DR-119\)](#). Parents, guardians, and custodians can use [Parent's/Guardian's/Custodian's Consent/Objection to Change of Name of a Minor \(CC-DR-063\)](#).

(see next page)

What if I don't have consent from a minor's parent, guardian, or custodian?

The clerk will issue a notice. You must serve the notice and copies of your case documents on any parent, guardian, or custodian who has not consented to the name change. [Watch a video on service of process](#). They have 30 days from the time they are served to consent or object to the name change in writing.

What is an objection?

An objection is a statement that says someone opposes a name change.

Anyone can file an objection to the change of name of an adult if they have a valid reason. File the objection with the circuit court within 30 days of the date the petition is filed. You can use [Objection to Petition for Change of Name of an Adult \(CC-DR-115\)](#).

Only parents, guardians, and custodians can object to a change of name of a minor. You can use [Parent's/Guardian's/Custodian's Consent/Objection to Change of Name of a Minor \(CC-DR-063\)](#). Your objection must be filed within 30 days of being served the notice of the petition and the case documents. Failure to file a timely objection will be deemed consent to the change of name.

If you are served with an objection to your name change request, you may file a written response within 15 days.

The court granted a name change order. Now what?

If the court does not mail you a certified copy of the order, ask the clerk's office for copies. You can use the order to change your or your minor child's name in multiple places: on a driver's license, a birth certificate, with the Social Security Administration, banks, creditors, and other institutions. If you were married in Maryland, you can request a new marriage record that reflects your new name by filing a [Request for New Marriage Record \(CC-FM-072\)](#) in the circuit court of the county that issued the record.

Is there is a way to prevent the public from seeing records in my case?

You ask the court to limit who can see records by filing a [Petition to Seal or Otherwise Limit Inspection of a Case Record \(CC-DC-053\)](#). You need to give a special and compelling reason for your request.

What if I need a judicial declaration of gender identity?

There is a separate process to ask the court for a judicial declaration, which is a court order officially stating (affirming) someone's gender (gender identity, gender marker, sex/gender designation). You can ask for name change as part of that process. Learn more about judicial declarations of gender identity at mdcourts.gov/genderidentity.

(see next page)





(Page 3)

Where can I get legal help?

Most circuit courts have walk-in family court help centers where you can get free legal help from lawyers, paralegals, or court staff. Center staff CAN explain the name change court process, answer questions, help with court forms, and help you open, answer, or move forward your name change case. They CAN NOT represent you in court, file paperwork for you, or help you if you have a lawyer. Each center operates independently, and most have a first come/first served sign-up process. Learn more at mdcourts.gov/familyselfhelp. You can also call the Maryland Courts Help Center at 410-260-1392. Lawyers can answer questions most weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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