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# Adult Name Change Workshop

LA Law Library  
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# Self-Help Workshop

- Information & Instructions on preparing and filing a Petition for Change of Name
- Self Representation
- No Legal Advice
- No Confidentiality
- No Attorney/Client Relationship



# Other Options for Adult Name Change

- After marriage or domestic partnership: use certificate to change name.
- In a divorce or annulment case: request a name change during the case, at judgment or after judgment entered.
- To correct minor spelling errors on birth certificate: file Form VS-24 with CA Dept. of Public Health, Office of Vital Records.



# Basic Requirements for Adult Name Change Petition

- You must be 18 years or older.
- You must live in Los Angeles County.
- You must provide a LA County address.
- You must disclose whether you are under the jurisdiction of the CA Dept. of Corrections or a registered sex offender under CA Penal Code Section 290.



# Mandatory Criminal Background Check

- The court will receive a criminal history assessment from the LA County Probation Department.
- People under the jurisdiction of the CA Department of Corrections must obtain *prior* written approval from parole agent or probation officer.
- Potential problems include outstanding bench and traffic warrants.



# Overview of the Court Process

- File your forms and get a hearing date.
- Publish your forms in a newspaper.
- Attend your Court hearing, if required.
- Obtain certified copies of your name change court order.
- Change your name in government & business records.





# Step 1: Preparing Your Forms

- Complete the required state & local name change forms.
- You must include the name of the newspaper for publication prior to filing.
- Los Angeles Superior Court filing fee for Name Change Petition is \$435.
- If you want to request a fee waiver, complete the fee waiver forms.



# Step 2: Filing Your Forms

- You have 2 options for filing:
  1. File in downtown Los Angeles
  2. File in your local courthouse  
(determined by your zip code)
- Take the original and 2 copies of each document for filing.
- You must file the request for fee waiver with the other forms.



# What happens when you file your case?

- The clerk will file the original forms, give you a case number, and set a hearing date.
- Request a hearing date at least 6-8 weeks in the future.
- The clerk will review and process your request for fee waiver.
- If your fee waiver is denied, you must pay \$435 to start your case.



# Step 3: Publication

- Take copies of the court-stamped forms to the newspaper for publication.
- Pay the newspaper's private publication fee.
- Publication is once per week for 4 weeks.
- A Proof of Publication should be sent by the newspaper to the Court after the publication is complete.
- If the Proof of Publication is not filed with Court then your Petition will be denied!



# What court form is published?

- Form NC-120 Order to Show Cause for Change of Name.
- Includes hearing date, time, and department.
- Any person objecting to your name change must file a written objection 2 court days before the hearing date.
- Objection must show “good cause” to deny your name change request.



# Step 4: Confirm Proof of Publication filed with the Court

- The newspaper should send the Court an original Proof of Publication.
- Check [www.lacourt.org](http://www.lacourt.org) under “Access Your Case” (list case number to see documents)
- The Proof of Publication should appear on the list of documents filed in your case.



# Step 5: Your Court Hearing

- Bring copies of all documents to your hearing.
- Be prepared to explain why you want to change your name.
- Potential Problems: No Proof of Publication filed with the Court, outstanding bench or traffic warrants, or written objection filed by 3<sup>rd</sup> party.
- You can ask the judge for more time and a new hearing date. (A “continuance”)



# Step 6: Obtaining *Certified* Copies of Name Change Order

- Form NC-130 Decree Changing Name with official Court seal.
- Go to the Court's certification department. Fee charged by the Court unless you have a fee wavier order.
- You will probably need several certified copies in order to change your name in government and business records.





# Step 7: Changing Your Name in Government & Business Records

- You must contact each government agency and business to inform them.
- Requirements vary, many agencies want a *certified* copy of your court order.
- TIP: Start with your Social Security card.
- The California DMV will ask to see your Social Security card with your new name before issuing a new license or renewal.



# Changing Your Birth Certificate

- If you were born in California, you may have an “amendment” listing your new name attached to your birth certificate.
- You are not legally required to amend your birth certificate after a name change.
- To amend your birth certificate you must complete Form VS-23 & submit to the California Dept. of Public Health, Vital Records.



# The Court Forms

- CA State Forms: [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov) CM-010, NC-100, NC-110, NC-120, NC-130
- LASC Local Forms: [www.lacourt.org](http://www.lacourt.org)
- LACIV 109 Civil Case Cover
- LACIV 226 Criminal History
- Fee Waiver Forms: [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov)
- FW-001 Request to Waive Ct Fees
- FW-003 Order o Court Fee Waiver



# Your “Present Name”

- What is your current legal name?
- Check key government-issued documents such as birth certificate, Social Security card, driver’s license, and passport.
- List you full legal name.
- Do not abbreviate with initials.
- Should you include AKAs (“Also Known As”)?



# Reason for Name Change?

- You must explain the reason on your petition
- Current name is confusing (spelling/pronunciation)
- Ancestral (family) name
- Already personal or professional name
- Spouses want the same last name
- Birth or Former Name



# Your “Proposed Name”

- Reasons the Court may *deny* your request:
  1. Fraudulent Purpose
  2. Interfere with Rights of Others
  3. Intentionally Confusing
  4. “Fighting Words”: Racial Slurs or other words likely to incite violence
- Use of famous or fictitious names have the potential risk of lawsuit.

