

Adults

- Prepare a “Petition for Change of Name of an Adult,” **Form CC-DR-060 (mdcourts.gov)**.
- The petition includes, among other things, any previous names you have used and the reason for the current name change. You are prohibited from changing your name for any illegal or fraudulent reason and must certify in your petition that you are not doing so.
- Attach documentation of your current name to the petition, e.g. copy of birth certificate, driver's license or other government-issued ID, or passport.
- File the petition and attachments in the Circuit Court of the county where you live, conduct regular business, are employed, or were born. For all Maryland jurisdictions except Baltimore City, you can file online by going to <https://maryland.tylertech.cloud/OfsWeb> and registering for a Self-Represented (Pro Se) Account.
- There is a fee (\$165 as of 2024) to file the petition. The fee can be waived if you meet the income requirements. See <https://mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/filingfeewaivers> for more information on fee waivers. If you are accepted as an MVLS client and represented by an MVLS volunteer attorney, this fee will be waived by the Court.
- The Court is required to wait 30 days to see if anyone opposes your request for a name change. The Court may also schedule a hearing to find out more about your reasons for a name change.
- If the petition has been completed correctly, if you have provided adequate documentation of your current name, and if there are no objections to your name change, the Court will issue a signed order legally changing your name. The Court may send you a certified copy of the order or you may need to pick it up from the Clerk's office. There is a fee for certified copies. Ask for 3-5 certified copies, one for each of the agencies or businesses where you will need proof of name change.
- If you have concerns about your privacy or safety, you can request that the proceedings be sealed and inaccessible by the general public. To do this, include a “Petition to Seal or Otherwise Limit Inspection of a Case Record,” Form **CC-DC-053 (mdcourts.gov)**, with your initial filing of the Name Change Petition.

Children

- A parent or guardian may file a “Petition for Change of Name of a Minor,” **Form CC-DR-062 (mdcourts.gov)**, to change the name of a minor.
- The petition includes, among other things, any previous names the minor child has used, the reason for the name change, whether the child's first language is English, and information about the child's parents, guardians, or custodians. You are prohibited from changing a child's name for any illegal or fraudulent reason and must certify in your petition that you are not doing so.
- Attach documentation of the child's current name to the petition, e.g. copy of birth certificate, driver's license or other government-issued ID, or passport.
- Attach written consent from each parent, guardian, or custodian using **Form CC-DR-063 (mdcourts.gov)**. If the child is at least 10 years old, the child must also provide written consent using Form **CC-DR-119 (mdcourts.gov)**.
- File the petition and attachments in the Circuit Court of the county where the child lives, or where one or more of the parents, guardians, or custodians live. For all Maryland jurisdictions except Baltimore City, you can file online by going to <https://maryland.tylertech.cloud/OfsWeb> and registering for a Self-Represented (Pro Se) Account.
- There is a fee (\$165 as of 2024) to file the petition. The fee can be waived if you meet the income requirements. See <https://mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/filingfeewaivers> for more information on fee waivers. If you are accepted as an MVLS client and represented by an MVLS volunteer attorney, this fee will be waived by the Court.
- If any parent, guardian, or custodian has not consented to the name change, that person must be served with a notice from the Court, a copy of the petition, and copies of the attachments. See <http://mdcourts.gov/ccservice> for more information on process service. The person served has 30 days to file written consent or objection to the name change. If there is an objection to the name change, the Court will hold a hearing. The non-filing parent must have notice of the proceedings; if you show that you have made efforts to locate them and they cannot be found, you may request to give notice by posting at the Courthouse.
- If the petition has been completed correctly, there is adequate documentation of the child's current name, and there are no objections to the name change, the Court will issue a signed order legally changing the child's name. The Court may send a certified copy of the order, or it may need to be picked up from the Clerk's office.

This is not legal advice. Please consult an attorney about your specific situation. To get free legal help visit:

WWW.MVLSLAW.COM/FREE-LEGAL-HELP/

or call intake between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. on Monday through Thursday at 1(800) 510-0050 or (410) 547-65377

Special Circumstances

Marriage

A court order is not required to change your name because of marriage. You can change your name to your spouse's name, to a hyphenated combination of you and your spouse's name, or to any other name, as long as you are consistent with the use of the name. Just provide a certified copy of your marriage certificate to each of the agencies or businesses that need to be notified of your change of name.

Divorce

If you took on a new name due to marriage and are now getting divorced, you can return to your birth name or some other previous name without going through the above procedure. The easiest way is to request it at the time you file for divorce. The judge issuing the decree may also ask the parties if they wish to undertake a name change. If the name change is not done at the time the decree is issued, you can file "Motion for Restoration of Former Name," **Form CC-DR-097 (mdcourts.gov)**, within 18 months after the divorce decree is issued.

Gender Identity

If you are filing a "Petition for Judicial Declaration of Gender Identity of an Adult" (**Form CC-DR-120**) or a "Petition for Judicial Declaration of Gender Identity of a Minor" (**Form CC-DR-121**) and you wish to change your name at the same time, check the "With Name Change" box at the beginning of the form and answer the questions regarding the name change. The name change rules in this context are the same as those given above.

Adoption

If you are in the process of adopting someone and desire to change the given name of the adopted person, just add the desired name to the adoption petition.

Minor Child Under One Year Old

If you have a minor child born in Maryland, you may change their name on their birth certificate on time within the first year without a court order. This can be done by filing a written request with the Maryland Department of Health. For more information and to download the affidavit, please visit <https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Pages/changename.aspx>.

I have my court order. What now?

Use the certified copy of your court order to change your name on documents such as:

- Driver's License
- Passport
- Birth Certificate
- Other identity documents
- Marriage record (file Form CC-FM-072 in the Circuit Court of the county where you were married)

Provide the certified copy of your court order to agencies and business such as:

- Social Security Administration
- Banks
- Credit card companies
- Insurance companies
- Health care providers
- Employer

Some of these can be done online and some will require a personal visit

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