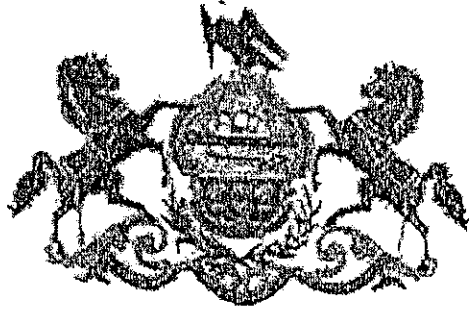



HOW TO FILE A PETITION FOR
NAME CHANGE PURSUANT TO 54
P.S. §701-705.



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
CIVIL DIVISION

Disclaimer by the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
The staff in any Court office or the Department of Court Records will not be able to give you legal advice or help you fill out/complete the forms. The information in this packet is not a substitute for professional legal advice. The Court assumes no responsibility and accepts no liability for actions taken by users of these documents, including reliance on their contents. If you want to obtain the services of an attorney but do not know whom to contact, you may call the Allegheny County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at (412) 261-0518.



Procedures for Filing a Petition for Name Change

Purpose:

The procedures set forth in this packet are provided as a guide to navigate the Judicial Name Change Process provided in 54 Pa.C.S.A. §701-705. This process can take up to 90 days and cost in excess of \$500.00 dollars.

ATTENTION!!!!

IF YOU ARE SIMPLY TRYING TO RESUME YOUR MAIDEN NAME AS A RESULT OF A DIVORCE OR A PENDING DIVORCE ACTION, YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO FILE A NAME CHANGE PETITION IN CIVIL COURT. YOU MAY RESUME YOUR PRIOR NAME BY FILING A PETITION TO RESUME PRIOR NAME. THE NECESSARY PAPERWORK IS AVAILABLE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS, CIVIL/FAMILY DIVISION. THE FILING FEE IS \$20.00. IF YOUR DIVORCE DECREE WAS GRANTED IN A DIFFERENT JURISDICTION, YOU CAN FILE A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE FOREIGN DIVORCE DECREE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS. THE FILING FEE IS \$170.75.

Procedures for Filing a Petition for Name Change

- I. Obtain Fingerprint Card and complete a Petition for Name Change
 - a. When filing the Petition for Name Change, individuals 13 years of age or older must provide their fingerprints for a background check to be conducted by the Pennsylvania State Police. Children 12 or under are **NOT** required to have fingerprint cards.
 - b. There are several ways to obtain a fingerprint card. Whatever option is chosen, you must ensure you receive a physical copy of your fingerprints.

Note: The Court does not recommend any of the below services, nor is this list updated/verified to ensure these services are still available. This information should only be used as a guide. The Petitioner is responsible for obtaining a physical copy of their fingerprints.

- i. The Pennsylvania State Police barracks in Moon Township located at 449 McCormick Road, Moon, PA 15108 provides fingerprinting services. The hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. However, you should contact them directly at (412) 299-1607 to confirm these dates and times and to ensure that someone will be available to take the fingerprints. This fingerprinting service is free.
- ii. The UPS Store in Oakland provides fingerprinting services for \$25.
- iii. John Godlewski. For a quote for services and/or appointment, you can contact him at (412) 337-6004 or visit <http://www.premierfingerprinting.com> for more information regarding his services.
- iv. IdentoGo Monroeville, PA Location and Green Tree, PA Location - <https://www.identogo.com/LOCATIONS/PENNSYLVANIA> - just be sure to confirm they can do fingerprints for a name change. You will need to leave with a paper fingerprint card in your hands. When scheduling online, chose "Fingerprint Card"

II. Filing the Completed Petition and submitting the Fingerprint Card.

- a. The Form Petition for Name Change is attached as Form 1 (Adults) or Form 2 (Minors). Parents seeking to change the name of their minor child are identified as

the Petitioner; e.g. John Doe, Parent and Guardian of Jane Smith minor, to change name to Jane Doe. It is very important to fill in all parts of the Petition form completely. Your Petition coversheet MUST contain your name, address, telephone number, and email address so that the Court can communicate with you.

- b. Once you have obtained the Fingerprint card and have completed the Petition for Name Change, you are ready to file the Petition with the Department of Court Records, which is located in the City-County Building, First Floor, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.
- c. When filing the Petition, the Petitioner must provide the following:
 - i. A Fingerprint Card (if 13 years of age or older)
 - ii. A Completed Original Petition for Name Change and one copy.
 - iii. Three envelopes completed in the following manner:
 1. One stamped 8 ½" x 11" envelope addressed to:

PA. State Police Central Repository
1800 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110
 2. One stamped letter sized envelope addressed to:

Department of Court Records-Civil Division
ATTN: Kim Zombeck
First Floor City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
 3. One stamped letter sized envelope addressed to the Petitioner, or his/her attorney where applicable.
- d. There is a filing fee of \$160.25 payable to the Department of Court Records for this filing. If you are unable to pay the filing fee, you may qualify to have those fees waived. If you are seeking to have the fee's waived, you must complete a Petition to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis*. This form can be obtained from the Department of Court Records at the time of filing.

- e. The Department of Court Records clerk will assign a General Docket number to the completed Petition. This is an important number, and it will be used to track your case.
- f. When you file the Petition with the Department of Court Records, the fingerprints are submitted to the Pennsylvania State Police to obtain a criminal background check. [This is why you need to provide the large envelope referenced above.] Once the Department of Court Records receives the outcome of the criminal background check, a letter will be issued to either you or your attorney, when applicable.
- g. The letter from the Department of Court Records will instruct you to take the next important steps to have your name change petition heard and ruled upon by the Court. Specifically, you will be advised to:
 - i. Obtain a hearing date by emailing the Petition to civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us; and
 - ii. Legally advertise the date and time of the hearing on your name change Petition.

III. Scheduling the Petition to be heard by the Court

- a. Once you receive the letter from the Department of Court Records, you are responsible for providing the General Motions Scheduling Team with a copy of the completed Petition. Make sure the General Docket number is shown on the Petition. Email your complete Petition exactly as you filed it, in its entirety, to civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us and request that a hearing be scheduled.
- b. In the email accompanying your Petition, you should state that you received a clean criminal background check and now you are asking that the Court enter the Scheduling Order setting a date and time for the hearing on your Petition.
- c. Upon receipt and review of your email, the Court will schedule the hearing by Order and send you a copy of the Order identifying the date and time of the hearing. You should receive the signed order within a week of emailing your Petition for Name Change to civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us requesting a hearing date.
- d. You will need to know the date and time of the hearing on your Petition for Name

Change to proceed with advertising the Petition as required by the statute. You will be required to advertise in the Pittsburgh Legal Journal, the official paper for publication of legal notices for Allegheny County, as well as one other newspaper of general circulation. Examples of newspapers of general circulation include the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Pittsburgh City Paper.

IV. Advertising your Name Change Petition Hearing

- a. When the scheduling Order arrives, you must legally advertise the date and time of the hearing in the Pittsburgh Legal Journal and one other newspaper of general circulation. Examples of a "newspaper of general circulation" are the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Pittsburgh City Paper. Forms for the Pittsburgh Legal Journal and the Pittsburgh City Paper can be found in this packet in Form 5. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette has a webform which can be found at <https://www.post-gazette.com/legaladvertisingdocs>.
- b. After you have completed and submitted the forms, and paid the required fee, the Newspapers will advertise your name change. You will receive Proofs of Publication via regular mail or email, showing the legal advertisements have been done.
- c. Once you receive your proofs of publication, you should promptly file them with the Department of Court Records. These can be filed in person, electronically at dcr.alleghenycounty.us or by regular mail to the address below:

Department of Court Records, Civil/Family,
City-County Building, First Floor.
414 Grant St. Pittsburgh PA 15219,
- d. It is recommended to file these in-person or electronically so there is no delay in processing your name change. If you choose to mail your Proofs of Publication, you must include a note with your General Docket Number so the Department of Court Records can file the proofs appropriately.
- e. For Minor Name Changes: In addition to publishing the name change, the non-petitioning parent or legal guardian MUST receive notice of the date and time of the hearing. The Petitioning party must do one of the following:

- i. The Non-Petitioning Parent/Legal Guardian can complete an Affidavit of Consent (Form 3) consenting to the name change of the minor; or
 - ii. The Petitioning Parent/Legal Guardian must provide notice to the non-petitioning parent/guardian via Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested and file a Certificate of Service (Form 4).
- f. If you know the non-petitioning parent will contest the Petition for Name Change of a Minor, you should immediately email civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us as contested Petitions for Name Change of a Minor **shall** be transferred to the Family Division per Local Rule 505(3)(e) using the included form.

V. Obtain your Judgment Search(s)

- a. The Judge presiding over your name change hearing must receive Judgment Searches from all counties in which you have lived for the past five (5) years no sooner than ten (10) days prior to the hearing.
- b. To obtain a certified copy of the Judgment Search for Allegheny County, you must return to the Department of Court records where you filed your Petition and ask the clerk to provide you with a certified copy of the Judgment search. There is a \$25.00 fee for the judgment search in Allegheny County.
- c. You should contact all other counties in which you have lived within the past five (5) years to obtain Judgment Searches from them immediately, as it can take longer to receive results from other counties.

Note: Some counties will not perform Judgment searches for out-of-county petitioners. In the event they will not perform a Judgment search for you, you should notify the court via email to civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us so the appropriate language can be included in your final order.

- d. Once you have completed all the necessary judgment searches, you must email all the Judgment Search documents to civilnamechanges@alleghenycourts.us for review. Please make sure you reference your GD case number in the email with your Judgment Search documents.

VI. Name-Change Hearing

- a. On the date and time of the hearing set in the scheduling Order you may appear in Courtroom 703, City-County Building, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.
- b. You are **NOT** required to attend the hearing. You may attend and obtain a courtesy copy of the final name change order.
- c. Your Petition for Name Change will be granted so long as you have:
 - i. Performed the required advertising;
 - ii. Filed the Proofs of Publication with the Department of Court Records;
 - iii. Obtained the required Judgment Searches; and
 - iv. For Minor's Name Changes- Filed an Affidavit of Consent, or a Certificate of Service indicating you served the Non-Petitioning Parent.
- d. Once the Final Order granting the Petition for Name Change is signed and Docketed, you will be provided with a copy via email.
- e. Minor's Name Change Hearings
 - i. Petition for Name Changes of a Minor will proceed in the same manner. However, if the non-petitioning parent appears on the date and time of the hearing, a final order will **NOT** be signed, and the matter will be transferred to the Family Division for all future proceedings.

VII. Obtaining Certified Copies

- a. To change all your official documents (birth certificate, social security card, passport etc.) you will need to obtain a certified copy of the Final Order Granting your Petition for Name Change.
- b. You can obtain the certified copy from the Department of Court Records. The fee for a Certified Copy is \$20.00 dollars.

VIII. If you have questions about the procedures outlined in this guide, please email them to civilnamechanges@alleghencourts.us

FORM 1

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

G.D. No. _____

VERIFIED PETITION FOR A NAME
CHANGE

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

Filed on behalf of Petitioner

Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email
Address

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

_____, G.D. No. _____

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

VERIFIED PETITION FOR A NAME CHANGE

AND NOW comes the Petitioner, _____, respectfully represents and shows this Court:

1. That the Petitioner is of full legal age and is a bona fide resident of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Petitioner's residence address is _____ The Petitioner has been a bona fide resident of Allegheny County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for _____ year(s) immediately prior to filing this Petition. The Petitioner was born on _____, in _____ County, _____, United States of America.

2. The Petitioner's present name is _____

3. The Petitioner is/is not married.

4. The Petitioner has resided at the following address(es) over the last five (5) years

(Include address and Months/Year(s) you lived there)

- a. _____, (_____ to _____);
- b. _____, (_____ to _____);
- c. _____, (_____ to _____);
- d. _____, (_____ to _____);
- e. _____, (_____ to _____);

5. The Petitioner requests this change of name because:

6. The proposed change in the Petitioner's name, if granted, will not be detrimental to the interests of any other person and is not against the public interest.

7. This Petition is not filed to defraud creditors.

WHEREFORE, the Petitioner, intending to change Petitioner's name, requests that by an Order of this Court, made and entered herein, the Petitioner's name be changed to and decreed to be _____ (insert new name).

Dated: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

VERIFICATION

I, _____ verify that the statements made in the foregoing
Verified Petition For a Name Change are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or
information and belief.

I understand that this verification is made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904
relating to unsworn fabrication to authorities, which provides that if I knowingly make false
averments, I may be subject to criminal penalties.

Date: _____

Signature _____

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

G.D. No.

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

DECREE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, upon hearing of the within petition, with proof that there are no judgments or decrees of record or any other matter of like effect against Petitioner, and it appearing that there are no legal objections to the granting of the prayer of the Petition, it is ORDERED and DECREED that the name of the Petitioner is, from and after this date, changed to _____

BY THE COURT,

_____, J.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Attorney No. _____

FORM

g Minor

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

GD. No. _____

_____,
parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

VERIFIED PETITION FOR A NAME
CHANGE

_____, a
minor

Filed on behalf of Petitioner

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email
Address

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

_____,
parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

G.D. No. _____

_____, a
minor

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

VERIFIED PETITION FOR A NAME CHANGE

AND NOW come the Petitioner(s), _____

parent(s) and guardian(s) of _____, a minor (the "Minor
Petitioner"), and the Minor Petitioner, and upon being duly sworn, respectfully represent and
show this Court:

1. Petitioner(s) _____ is/are the legal
guardian(s) of Minor Petitioner. Petitioner(s) is/are each of full legal age and are bona fide
residents of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, who reside with the
Minor Petitioner at _____.
Petitioner(s) has/have been a bona fide resident of Allegheny County, Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania for ____ year(s) immediately prior to filing this Petition.

2. Minor Petitioner was born on _____, in
_____ County, _____, United States of America and has
resided in Allegheny County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for ____ year(s) immediately
prior to filing this Petition.

3. The Minor Petitioner's present name is _____

4. The Petitioner(s) and Minor Petitioner have resided at the following address(es) over the last five (5) years:

- a. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- b. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- c. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- d. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- e. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- f. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]);
- g. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]); and
- h. _____ ([Month Year] – [Month Year]).

5. The Petitioner(s) request this change of name because: (explain why the name change is being requested)

6. The proposed change in the Minor Petitioner's name, if granted, will not be detrimental to the interests of any other person and is not against the public interest.

7. This Petition is not filed to defraud creditors.

WHEREFORE, the Petitioners, intending to change Minor Petitioner's name, request that by an Order of this Court, made and entered herein, the Minor Petitioner's name be changed to and decreed to be _____.

Respectfully submitted,

Name of Petitioner

VERIFICATION

I, _____ verify that the statements made in the foregoing Verified Petition For a Name Change are true and correct to the best of my knowledge or information and belief.

I understand that this verification is made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S.A. § 4904 relating to unsworn fabrication to authorities, which provides that if I knowingly make false averments, I may be subject to criminal penalties.

Date: _____

[First Middle Last of Parent 1]

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

G.D. No. _____

_____,
parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

_____, a
minor

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

DECREE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, upon hearing
of the within motion of the Petitioner(s), it appearing that there are no legal objections to the
granting of the prayer of the Petition, it is ORDERED and DECREED that the name of the minor
Petitioner is, from and after this date, changed to

_____.

BY THE COURT,

_____, J

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Attorney No. _____

FORM 3

Affidavit of Consent

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

G.D. No. _____

AFFIDAVIT OF CONSENT

_____, a
minor

Filed on behalf of Petitioner

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email
Address

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA, CIVIL DIVISION

IN RE: PETITION OF

_____, parent

CIVIL DIVISION

and natural guardian of:

GD No. _____

_____, a minor

to change name to

Petitioner(s)

AFFIDAVIT OF CONSENT FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF MINOR CHILD(REN)

I, *(full legal name)* _____ being sworn,

certify that the following information is true:

I am the birth or legal ☐ father ☐ mother of the minor child(ren) named in this case, and I give consent for the name change of the minor child(ren):

I verify that the statements made in this Affidavit of Consent for name change of minor child(ren) are true and correct. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. §4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Date: _____

Signature of Consenting Parent

Print name: _____

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Attorney No. _____

FORM 4

Certificate of Service

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

_____,
parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

G.D. No.

CERTIFICATE OF
SERVICE

_____, a
minor

Filed on behalf of Petitioner

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email
Address

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE THE PETITION OF:

CIVIL DIVISION

parent(s) and natural guardian(s) of

G.D. No. _____

_____, a
minor

FOR A NAME CHANGE TO:

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the Petition for Name Change and Scheduling
Order for the name change hearing was served this _____ day of _____,
20____, in the following manner: *(Check the appropriate appropriate box.) If the opposing
side is represented by an attorney, the attorney should be served.*

- ☐ U.S. First Class Mail
☐ Facsimile #: _____
☐ Hand Delivery
☐ Email Address

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

*You must include phone number and, if known,
email address for served party.*

Date

Signature

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Submitted by: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Attorney No. _____