

## Name Change Laws

Current as of February 23, 2017

MAP relies on the research conducted by the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#) for this map and the statutes found below.

### Alabama

- An applicant must submit a petition to the probate court for a name change order. No publication is required. ([Ala. Code §12-13-1](#))

### Alaska

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court for a name change order. Both the verified petition and hearing must be published in a newspaper once a week for four weeks. The publication requirement can be waived with a personal safety court order. ([Alaska R. Civ. P. 84](#))

### Arizona

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court for a name change order. The court may give notice to interested parties if deemed necessary, except in circumstances where there is a protective order in place OR if the applicant is the victim of a stalking offense. ([Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 12-601 & 12-602](#))

### Arkansas

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court for a name change order. The petition may be listed in public court records. ([Ark. Code Ann. §§ 9-2-101 & 9-2-102](#))

### California

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court for a name change order. If the name change is related to gender, the applicant should not have to attend an in-person hearing and does not need to publish notice of their name change in the newspaper. Individuals under the Department of Corrections' jurisdiction cannot file the petition unless a parole or probation officer gives written approval. Registered sex offenders do not need to get prior written approval, but judges have more power to deny these petitions and will only grant if they believe it will not adversely affect public safety. ([Cal. Civ. Proc. Code §§1275-1279.6](#))



#### Colorado

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court for a name change order. The applicant must publish notice of the name change in a newspaper at least three times in 21 days, except with good cause. A name change will not be granted for convicted adult felons or delinquents with the equivalent of an adult felony unless there is good cause. The applicant must be fingerprinted, update their criminal history with the new name, and notify District Attorney offices where convicted. ([Colo. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 13-15-101 & 13-15-102](#))

#### Connecticut

- An applicant must submit a petition to the Superior Court of their judicial district. No publication is required. Registered sex offenders must notify the supervising Commissioner of their intent and update the sex offender registry upon petition approval. ([Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 52-11](#))

#### Delaware

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the name change in a newspaper at least once a week for three weeks before filing the petition, and then include the Affidavit of Publication with their court petition. ([Del. Code Ann. tit. 10, §§ 5901-5905](#))

#### District of Columbia

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court and notify creditors and other interested parties of the upcoming name change via certified mail. No publication is required. ([DC ST §§16-2501 to 16-2503](#))

#### Florida

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. The applicant must be fingerprinted. No name change will be issued if the applicant's civil rights have been suspended. ([Fla. Stat. Ann. § 68.07](#))

#### Georgia

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Within seven days of filing the petition, the applicant must publish notice of the name change in the county's "official legal organ" once a week for four weeks. ([Ga. Code Ann. § 19-12-1](#))



## Hawaii

- Once an online name change application is approved, the applicant must publish notice of the name change once in a general circulation newspaper and submit proof of publication to the Office of the Lt. Governor. The publication requirement can be waived if a prosecutor files an affidavit attesting the need to waive publication for an applicant's safety. Applicants who have sex offender convictions cannot get a name change unless the court finds the name change to be in the best interest of justice and that the name change won't adversely affect public safety. ([Haw. Rev. Stat. §§ 574-1 to 574-6](#))

## Idaho

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the petition hearing in a county newspaper for four weeks OR in three of the most public places in the county for four weeks. Registered sex offenders are permitted to change their name long as the granting court gives notice to the sex offender registry with the identifying information. ([Idaho Code Ann. §§ 7-801 to 7-805](#))

## Illinois

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court and the petition must be verified "by the affidavit of some credible person." The applicant must publish notice of the petition in the newspaper for three consecutive weeks, starting at least six weeks before the hearing. The publication requirement is waived if the name change is for witness protection purposes. Individuals who are not currently incarcerated but have a felony conviction within the last ten years are not permitted to change their name. Registered sex offenders are not permitted to change their name. ([735 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 5/21-101 to 5/21-105](#))

## Indiana

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the petition in the newspaper for three weeks and the last week's publication should be at least 30 days before the hearing. The applicant should file a copy of the published name change notice verified by affidavit of a disinterested person. Individuals who are currently confined in a Department of Corrections facility cannot receive a name change, and individuals who are not currently incarcerated but have a felony conviction within the last ten years have additional notification requirements. ([Ind. Code Ann. §§ 34-28-2-1 to 34-28-2-4](#))

## Iowa

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Subject to the court's discretion, the applicant may need to publish the petition docket information once in a daily newspaper in that county. ([Iowa Code Ann. § 618.13](#) & [§§ 674.1-674.14](#))



#### Kansas

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Subject to the court's discretion, the applicant may need to send notice of the hearing to interested parties by mail or publish in a newspaper once a week for four weeks. ([Kan. Stat. Ann. §§ 60-1401 to 60-1403](#))

#### Kentucky

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required; the court keeps the name change in a book of records. ([Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 401.010-401.040](#))

#### Louisiana

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. Individuals who have a felony conviction may change their name once the sentence has been satisfied, with the exception that individuals who have a felony conviction for a violent crime are not permitted to change their name. ([La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 13:4751 to 13:4755](#))

#### Maine

An applicant must submit a petition to the probate court. There is a publication requirement which can be waived if the applicant is a victim of abuse or is currently in reasonable fear for their safety. ([Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 18-A, § 1-701](#))

#### Maryland

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The court will issue a docket notice and deadline for objections. The applicant must publish notice of the petition once in a county newspaper at least fifteen days before the objections deadline unless the court grants the petitioner's motion to waive the publication requirement. ([MD R SPEC P Rule 15-901](#))

#### Massachusetts

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must give public notice of the petition, however the publication requirement may be waived for a good cause ([Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. ch. 210, §§ 12-14](#)), and is generally waived if an individual is changing their first name only.



## Michigan

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the petition, but the court may waive the publication requirement for a good cause and seal the court proceedings. Applicants over the age of 22 must provide two sets of fingerprints. Applicants with a criminal record have the burden of proof to rebut a presumption of fraudulent intent. ([Mich. Comp. Laws Ann. §§ 711.1-711.3](#))

## Minnesota

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court and bring two witnesses to the court as proof of identity. There is no general publication requirement for adults, but there are publication requirements if the applicant has interest in land or is a minor. The order is filed in a judgment book and auditor's records, however the court records can be sealed if the applicant is in the witness and victim protection program. Applicants with a felony conviction may request a name change only once. Upon petition approval, applicants with a criminal history must report the name change to Bureau of Apprehension within ten days or will be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. ([Minn. Stat. Ann. §§ 259.10-259.13](#))

## Mississippi

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. ([Miss. Code. Ann. §§ 93-17-1 to 93-17-31](#))

## Missouri

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the name change at least once a week for three weeks in a newspaper within 20 days of the court order. The publication requirement may be waived for victims of domestic violence or child abuse. ([Mo. Ann. Stat. § 527.290](#))

## Montana

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the hearing time and place in a county newspaper for four weeks. The applicant may request the petition and hearing to be sealed for their safety. ([Mont. Code Ann. §§ 27-31-101 & 27-31-201 to 27-31-204](#))



#### Nebraska

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court and show reasonable cause for the name change. Applicants over the age of 19 must publish notice once a week for four weeks; applicants under the age of 19 must publish notice once a week for two weeks. ([Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 25-21,271](#) and [25-21,273](#))

#### Nevada

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice in a newspaper once a week for three weeks, however the petition and proceedings may be sealed for the applicant's personal safety. ([Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 41.270-41.290](#))

#### New Hampshire

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Subject to the court's discretion there may be a publication requirement, but generally no publication is required. ([N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 547:3-j](#) & [550:4](#))

#### New Jersey

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court, including information about any convictions or pending charges. The applicant must publish notice of the petition once at least two weeks before the hearing date. After the judgment is issued, notice must be published in the newspaper and a copy of the judgment must be sent to the State Bureau of Identification. ([NJ R SUPER TAX SURR CTS CIV R. 4:72-1 to 4:72-4](#))

#### New Mexico

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Before filing the petition, the applicant must publish notice of the petition at least once a week for two weeks; the publication requirement can be waived for the applicant's safety. ([N.M. Stat. § 40-8-1 to 40-8-3](#))

#### New York

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice at least once in a designated newspaper within 60 days of the court issued name change order. Individuals who have a felony conviction are subject to additional notice requirements. The publication requirement may be waived and the records may be sealed for the applicant's safety, if approved by the court. ([N.Y. Civ. Rights Law § 60-65](#))



### North Carolina

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Before filing the petition, the applicant must publish notice at the courthouse door for ten days, however the publication requirement can be waived with evidence that the applicant is a victim of domestic violence, sexual offense, or stalking. Along with the petition, the applicant must submit proof of the applicant's good character by two county citizens and FBI and State Bureau of Investigations Record Checks. Registered sex offenders are not permitted to obtain a legal name change. ([N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. §§ 101-1 to 101-8](#))

### North Dakota

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. At least 30 days before filing the applicant must publish notice of intended application in a newspaper, however the publication requirement can be waived for victims of domestic violence or individuals only seeking to change their first name. Individuals with a felony conviction must provide additional information with their petition and must notify Bureau of Crime Investigation within ten days of the order granting the name change. ([N.D. Cent. Code Ann. § 32-28-02](#))

### Ohio

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. At least 30 days before the hearing, the applicant must publish notice of the hearing in a newspaper, though publication requirements can be waived for the applicant's personal safety. Depending on the nature of the offense, applicants with prior criminal convictions may not be eligible for a name change. ([Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2717.01](#))

### Oklahoma

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. At least 10 days before the hearing, the applicant must publish notice of the hearing in a newspaper, however publication requirements can be waived and records can be sealed with good cause. ([12 OK Stat § 12-1631](#) to [12-1637](#))

### Oregon

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must provide public notice before hearing and after judgment, though publication requirements can be waived and records can be sealed for confidentiality and applicant safety. ([Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 33.420](#))



## Pennsylvania

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the hearing in two newspapers, but publication requirements can be waived and records can be sealed for the applicant's safety. Individuals with a felony conviction may change their name if more than two years have passed since the end of the sentence and if not under probation or parole, or if the individual has been pardoned. Individuals who have been convicted of violent crimes are not eligible to change their name. Upon approval of the name change, the court will notify the Attorney General and the State Policy who keep the name change information in a central repository. ([54 Pa. Cons. Stat. Ann. §§ 701-705](#))

## Rhode Island

- An applicant must submit a notarized name change petition to the court. Along with the petition, the applicant must submit a certified copy of their birth certificate and a copy of their Bureau of Criminal Identification records. A waiver can be requested for the publication requirement or to waive the public notice of the hearing in a local newspaper once a week for two weeks. The advertising requirements may differ by county. ([R.I. Gen. Laws Ann. §§ 33-22-11](#) & [33-22-28](#))

## South Carolina

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must be fingerprinted and undergo a background check for criminal convictions or financial obligations. The court may require a hearing. No publication is required. ([S.C. Code Ann. § 15-49-10 to § 15-49-50](#))

## South Dakota

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice of the hearing and petition details in a legal newspaper once a week for four weeks. ([S.D. Codified Laws §§ 21-37-1 to 21-37-10](#))

## Tennessee

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. Individuals who have prior felony convictions must provide additional documentation, and individuals who have been convicted of first-degree murder, second-degree murder, or sex offense are not eligible to change their name. ([Tenn. Code Ann. § 29-8-101 to § 29-8-105](#))





## Texas

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. The applicant must be fingerprinted and submit documentation of their criminal record. Individuals with a felony conviction may change their name if more than two years have passed since the end of the sentence and if not under probation or parole, or if the individual has been pardoned. Registered sex offenders must notify local law enforcement of the proposed name change. ([Tex. Fam. Code Ann. §§45.101 to 45.106](#))

## Utah

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. Subject to the court's discretion, the court may issue notice of the hearing. ([Utah Code Ann. § 42-1](#))

## Vermont

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. Registered sex offenders may not be eligible to change their name unless the court finds a compelling purpose. ([Vt. Stat. Ann. tit. 15, § 811 to § 817](#))

## Virginia

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. The application and public record can be sealed for the health and safety of the applicant and their immediate family. Individuals who are currently incarcerated or are on probation may be eligible for name change at the discretion of the court. ([Va. Code Ann. § 8.01-217](#))

## Washington

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. No publication is required. The court case file can be sealed for the applicant's safety if the individual is a victim of domestic violence. Individuals under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections must give the department a copy of the application at least five days before the order is entered. The court can deny the application except for legitimate religious, cultural, or marital reasons. ([Wash. Rev. Code Ann. § 4.24.130](#))



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## West Virginia

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. At least ten days before the hearing, the applicant must publish notice of the hearing time and place in a Class I legal advertisement. A certified copy of the order will be filed in the county clerk's office. Individuals who are currently incarcerated or registered as sex offenders are not eligible to change their name. Individuals convicted of murder are not eligible to change their name until 10 years after discharge from prison or parole, whichever occurs later. ([W. Va. Code Ann. §§ 48-25-101 to 48-25-107](#))

## Wisconsin

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish a Class 3 notice of the hearing's time and place in a newspaper at least three times. The publication requirement can be waived for the applicant's safety. ([Wis. Stat. Ann. § 786.37](#) & [Wis. Stat. Ann. § 985.07](#))

## Wyoming

- An applicant must submit a petition to the court. The applicant must publish notice in a newspaper once a week for a required period, however the publication can keep an applicant's address confidential if the individual is a victim of domestic violence. ([Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 1-25-101 to 1-25-104](#))