



NAME CHANGES IN TEXAS

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CHANGING YOUR NAME IN TEXAS

Changing your legal name in Texas is a fairly straightforward process if you follow the right steps and meet all the requirements. While many name changes happen during a marriage or divorce, this guide focuses on changing your name independently.

When to Change Your Name

- Marriage: Change your name when getting your marriage license.
- Divorce: Include the name change in the Final Decree of Divorce.
- Other situations: You'll need to file a petition with the court.

Steps to Change Your Name

1. File a Petition: Start by filing an Original Petition for Change of Name with the district clerk in your county. This petition must be verified, meaning you sign it in front of a notary to confirm all information is true.

- Information Needed for Adults:
 - Current name and address
 - Sex, race, date of birth, and social security number
 - New name you want
 - Reason for the name change
 - Any final felony convictions
 - Whether you need to register as a sex offender
 - Driver's license number (from the past 10 years)
 - FBI number or other criminal history identifiers, if known
 - Any charges above a Class C misdemeanor, or a statement that there are none
 - Case number and court information if applicable
 - A complete set of your fingerprints
- Information Needed for Children:
 - Current name and address of the child
 - Reason for the name change
 - New name you want for the child
 - Details of any previous court orders regarding the child
 - Whether the child needs to register as a sex offender
 - If the child is 10 or older, their written consent

2. Notify the Right People: For a child's name change, the petition must be served to each parent or guardian who still has parental rights. This is usually done by a constable or process server.

3. Schedule a Court Appearance: Once your petition is filed, you'll need to schedule a time to appear before a judge. Contact the court coordinator to find out when you can appear.

4. Attend the Court Hearing

During the hearing, you'll need to testify that:

- You don't have a final felony conviction (or meet specific conditions if you do)
- You're not required to register as a sex offender
- The name change is in your best interest and the public's interest
- You're not changing your name to avoid debts or liabilities

For a child's name change, you'll also need to show that all required parties agree to the change and that it's in the child's best interest.

After the Name Change

- Once the judge signs the Order for Change of Name, you'll need to update your name with various organizations:
- Government Agencies: Social Security Administration, Texas Department of Public Safety (for a new driver's license)
- Other Organizations: Banks, employers, insurance companies, credit card companies, etc.

Each organization may have different requirements for updating your name, so contact them to find out what they need.

Important Notes

- A court-ordered name change doesn't release you from any liabilities or rights under your old name.
- Make sure you have a legitimate reason for changing your name.
- For checklists and forms, please visit www.texaslawhelp.org.

Other Jurisdictions

Each state has its own specific requirements and procedures for changing your name. Start by researching the name change process for your specific jurisdiction. This information is often available on government websites or through local court offices.

Changing your name can be a smooth process if you follow these steps and meet all the requirements.

NOTE: This guide is intended for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. It is advisable to periodically verify this information and consult with a legal professional for the most current and applicable advice. Due to the limited capacity of JAG attorneys, we can only provide basic guidance on these matters. If you have any questions or need to schedule an appointment with a legal assistance attorney, please call the Legal Office at 325-654-3203