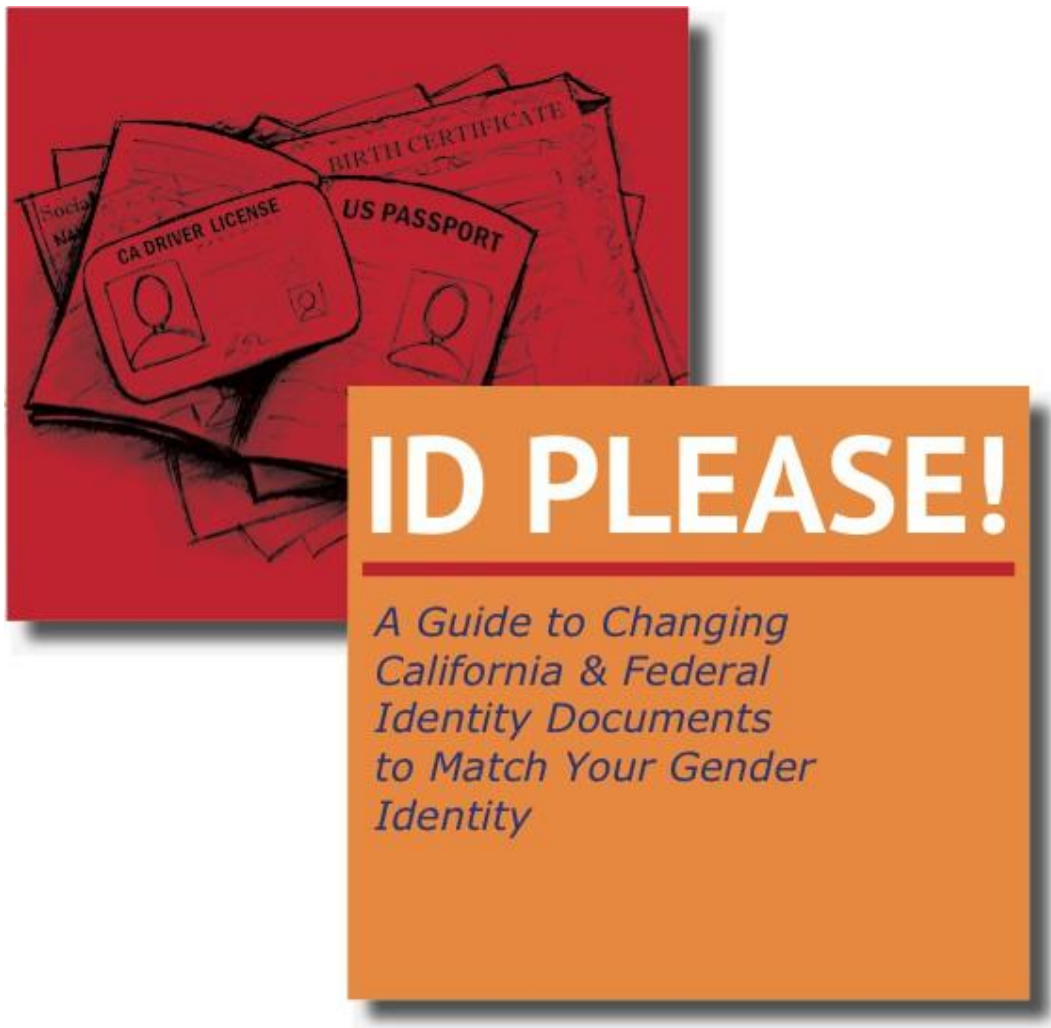




Acknowledgements

This guide was originally written by Stephen Chong with assistance from Meredith Wallis while they were law clerks at Transgender Law Center (TLC) during the summer of 2006. The content is built on the work of individual activists and advocates, including Roslyn Manley, Shannon Minter, Martha Matthews, Sister Mary Elizabeth, Dylan Vade, Mara Keisling, Spencer Bergstedt, Phyllis Randolph Frye, Victoria Neilson, and Shirley Bushnell among others. It is patterned after similar guides from Pennsylvania and Florida created by Pennsylvania Equality Advocates (originally written by Tiffany Palmer) and the National Center for Lesbian Rights (originally written by Karen Doering), respectively. The guide is a living document and the following current and former staff members and law clerks have updated and contributed to its content: Sasha Buchert, Sara Carian, Shane Caya, Chris Daley, Aimee Durfee, Joseph Frislid, Danny Kirchoff, Ben Lunine, Madelein McCormick, Shawn Thomas Meerkamper, Erika Schmidt, Kristina Wertz, Ilona Turner and Matt Wood. Significant edits and updates were contributed between September 2018 and August 2023 by Ian Anderson. Transgender Law Center takes sole responsibility for any and all errors.

Transgender Law Center, “ID Please: A Guide to Changing California & Federal Identity Documents to Match Your Gender Identity” (2023).

Illustrations by Mila Pavlin

Copyright © 2025, Transgender Law Center

This guide may be used and reproduced without permission of Transgender Law Center so long as it is properly cited. Excerpts may be taken if (a) they are properly cited AND (b) they are used within their proper context AND (c) a note is included that the excerpt is not legal advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	4
II. Getting Started – Common Questions	5
III. Court Orders	9
IV. Social Security Administration	22
V. California Department of Motor Vehicles	26
VI. California Vital Records (Birth and Marriage Certificates)	30
VII. Consular Reports of Birth Abroad	41
VIII. United States Passports	42
IX. Immigration Documents	46
X. Selective Service and Military Records	50
XI. Financial Institution Records	52
XII. School Records	54
XIII. Health and Public Benefit Records	55
XIV. Privacy and Disclosure	56
XV. Conclusion	58
Appendix I: County-Specific Information for Name/Gender Change Court Order Petitioners	5
9	
Appendix II: Sample Health Provider’s Letter for Gender Marker Change on Immigration Documents	6
6	

I. INTRODUCTION

This guide was created to help you navigate the often confusing process of obtaining California and federal identification documents that reflect your gender and identity. It is designed to be used without the assistance of an attorney. However, in some cases it may be quickest or easiest to work with one.

The information in this guide should not be considered legal advice. This guide provides you with legal information but does not seek to apply that information to your specific situation. We've tried very hard to make sure that this resource is accurate and up-to-date. Still, the changing nature of laws and policies concerning identity documents makes 100% accuracy nearly impossible. It's also important to note that this is a guide to policy, and how things are supposed to work. Unfortunately, not all judges and other government employees always implement these policies by the book.

If you have a question about your specific legal situation, feel free to contact Transgender Law Center's Legal Information Helpdesk at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/get-help/> and we'll do our best to answer your question or point you to resources that may be helpful.

II. GETTING STARTED – COMMON QUESTIONS

WHY IS THIS PROCESS SUCH A PAIN?

Many people are surprised to discover that there is no “one-stop” process for legally changing their name and/or gender marker to match their gender identity. This is because the agencies that issue identity documents or keep records of your identity have separate (but increasingly networked) systems and there is no central government agency which coordinates all of these databases. For each of these agencies, there is a different process and set of required documents a person needs to gather in order to update their name and gender information on record.

The inclusion of policies in this guide in no way means that Transgender Law Center approves of or supports them. We must continue to work to ensure people can have their identities recognized without so many hurdles. But, until those efforts are successful, we hope this guide will help you navigate the policies that are in place.

CAN I CHANGE MY NAME AND GENDER MARKER IF I HAVEN'T HAD SURGERY? WHAT IF I'M NOT ON HORMONES?

Yes. Although some states still require proof of surgery to update the gender marker on identity documents that they issue, neither surgery nor hormones are required to change identity documents issued by California or the federal government. Also, note that even in cases where a doctor's letter is required to update a document issued by another state, there is often not a strict standard for what medical treatment that involves.

IF I AM FROM OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA, CAN I STILL USE THIS GUIDE?

At least some parts may be useful. It's important to understand that some identity documents, including driver's licenses, state IDs, and birth certificates, are issued by individual states, and so those states determine the process of updating them. Other identity documents, including passports, Social Security cards, and immigration documents, are issued by the federal government, so decisions about the process of updating them fall to the federal government. This guide covers both processes specific to California and shared by anyone looking to update US federal documents.

To help you identify the sections of the guide that are relevant to you, here is a summary of which sections apply to which people:

- **Name and/or Gender Change Court Orders** (Section III) – People who currently live in California (regardless of where they were born) OR people who were born in, married in, or had a child in California (regardless of where they are currently living)
- **Social Security Administration** (Section IV) – People who have (or are applying for) a Social Security card
- **California Department of Motor Vehicles** (Section V) - People who have (or are applying for) a CA driver's license or ID card (that is, people who live in California)
- **California Birth Certificate** (Section VI) - People who were born in California (regardless of where they live now) who want to update their own birth certificate, OR people who had a child in California and want to update how their information appears on their child's birth certificate
- **California Marriage License and Certificate** (Section VI) - People who were married in California (regardless of where they live now)
- **US Passport** (Section VIII) - People who have (or are applying for) a U.S. passport
- **Immigration Documents** (Section IX) - People who have immigration documents issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

If you would like information about obtaining a name and/or gender change court order in another state, or updating the information on identity documents issued by other states, please contact our Legal Information Helpdesk at www.transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo, or visit the ID Change Library maintained by Trans Lifeline at <https://translifeline.org/resource/id-change-library/> and/or the Identity Documents Center maintained by the National Center for Transgender Equality at <https://transequality.org/documents>.

IF I AM UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, CAN I STILL USE THIS GUIDE?

You absolutely can, although most of the policies and laws around ID changes require that a person be age 18 or older, or an emancipated minor, in order to change their documents on their own. If you are under 18 and not emancipated,¹ you'll need to have the approval of your parent(s)

¹ Legal emancipation is a process that sets a person free from the legal restrictions of being a minor. This is also a process that grants and requires them to take on the legal responsibilities of a legal adult. If you would like more information about this process, contact our Helpdesk at www.transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo.

or guardian(s) throughout the process. We do our best to note when different steps must be taken if the person whose legal name or gender is being changed is a minor.

IF I AM CHANGING MY MINOR CHILD'S DOCUMENTS, CAN I USE THIS GUIDE?

Absolutely. Though the guide is addressed to someone changing their own documents, every one of the documents discussed in this guide may be changed by a parent or guardian on behalf of their minor child. We do our best to note when different steps must be taken when the person whose legal name or gender is being changed is a minor.

IN WHAT ORDER SHOULD I CHANGE MY DOCUMENTS?

There is no one correct process for changing your documents to reflect your gender identity, in part because some people may not want to change all their documents, and in part because not all documents may be able to be changed. With a few exceptions, which we've noted, you can generally update your documents in any order, according to your own priorities and needs. We have developed the outline below to illustrate one possible path you may take. (Please note that this outline is most applicable to people changing both their legal name and gender as a part of their transition. If you aren't changing your name, you will probably be able to skip step 1.)

1. **Go to court** to get your name and/or gender change court order. You need a court order to change the name on your documents.
2. **Go to the Social Security Administration (SSA)** to update information in your SSA records and on your Social Security card. (If you are changing your legal name, you must change your name on record with SSA before going to the DMV.)
3. **Go to the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)** to change your name and/or gender on your driver's license or state ID.
4. **Update birth certificate, passport, and non-governmental records.** The order in which you change information on your passport, your birth certificate, and your non-governmental records depends largely on your own needs and priorities.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: SCHOOL RECORDS

If you are currently enrolled in a K-12 school, vocational program, college, or university, you may want to request that your school records be updated as soon as you have your court order. In some circumstances, you can request that some of your school records be changed prior to getting a court order. With a few exceptions, it is generally possible to update diplomas or other records from schools you used to attend (see Section XII for more information).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: IMMIGRATION RECORDS

If you have immigration documents, it may make changing your Social Security Administration records easier if you change your immigration documents between Steps 1 and 2 above. As always, please consult with an experienced immigration attorney before making contact with the government. There are situations where applying for updated immigration documents can lead to a person being placed into removal proceedings.

IF I FOLLOW THESE STEPS, WILL MY OLD IDENTITY BE A COMPLETE SECRET?

While it has generally become easier over the past decade to update name and gender information with the state and federal agencies that issue identity documents and keep records of your identity, the technology of data management has also improved. This has reduced people's ability to remain in control of information about their identity. For instance, a person's previous legal name may be revealed through a background check or a credit report, or they may be required to disclose it in court proceedings or certain kinds of applications.

The bottom line is that it is unfortunately difficult to ensure that your old legal name or gender will never be known to someone without your consent, but it's also possible that it will never come up; it depends largely on individual circumstances. Please see Section XIV for a fuller discussion of privacy and disclosure.

III. COURT ORDERS

WHAT IS A COURT ORDER?

A court order means that a California judge has officially legally recognized your change of name and/or recognition of change of gender.² While it is possible to change the gender marker on most forms of ID without a gender change court order, changing your name on nearly any form of ID requires a name change court order. You can seek a change of name and recognition of change of gender using a single set of forms.

In California, people generally have the right to change their name for any legal reason (illegal reasons would include intending to commit fraud or impersonate someone else). But it is worth noting that if the reason you are changing your name is to better match your gender identity, you are entitled to certain protections designed to protect your safety and privacy: in particular, you do not have to attend an in-person hearing unless someone files an objection to your petition, and you do not have to publish the name change in a newspaper.³

Where can I get a court order?

Prior to January 1, 2023, it was generally only possible for a person to obtain a name/gender change order from a California court if they were currently living in that court's county. But now, thanks to the passage of [Assembly Bill 218](#), you can petition for a court order in California, even if you don't currently live in the state, as long as you were 1) born in California, 2) married in California, or 3) had a child in California. If any of those situations apply to you, you can petition for a court order in the county where that event happened.⁴ The process is essentially the same as it is for current residents. If you currently live in California, you will almost always petition for a court order in the county where you currently live, regardless of where you were born.

How can I get a court order?

To obtain a court order, you will fill out a set of forms, file them with the appropriate branch of the Superior Court in the county where you live, where you were born, where you were married, or where your child was born, and either pay the filing fee or be approved for a fee waiver.

² The courts use the phrase "recognition of change of gender." We know this phrase does not accurately reflect the process of transitioning for many transgender people.

³ Note that these protections apply even if you're not seeking a gender change court order also; you just have to be sure to indicate that you're changing your name to better match your gender on the forms.

⁴ To be precise, you would petition in the county that issued your birth certificate, your marriage certificate, or your child's birth certificate.

The Court will review your forms. If all the paperwork is complete and you have met all the legal requirements, the Court will issue an order changing your name and/or gender. (The Court will let you know when and where you can pick up the order, or they may mail it to you; the process varies by county.) Being issued this order will not automatically update the name or gender on any of your identity documents, but you can use certified copies of this order to change your name on most identity documents. The order will also act as a “link” between your current and former identities, in case you have any records or documents on which you cannot update your name but need to demonstrate that those documents refer to you.

In California, as of September 2018, it is not necessary to provide any medical documentation in order to obtain a court order recognizing a change of gender. Instead, you only need to sign a personal affidavit (which is built into the court forms) stating that your request for such a court order is to conform your legal gender to your gender identity and not for any fraudulent purpose.

It is also possible, as of September 2018, to request a court order recognizing a change of gender to nonbinary. Obtaining an official notice that the courts recognize one’s nonbinary identity can be personally validating, and some agencies and institutions that issue documents or maintain records of a person’s gender may update those documents or records if you present them with such a court order. However, please note that different agencies have different processes; in many cases, simply having a gender change court order is not enough in itself to update the gender marker on one’s documents or records, and many agencies can only issue documents with male or female gender markers. We will do our best to note in each section what documentation, if any, is required to update the gender marker with specific agencies and whether gender markers other than male or female are available.

There are three sets of forms that someone can use to petition for a change of name and/or recognition of change of gender court order in California: change of name only for an adult or minor (NC-100 series); change of gender (with or without change of name) for an adult (NC-300 series); and change of gender (with or without change of name) for a minor (NC-500 series).

DO I NEED A GENDER CHANGE ORDER TO CHANGE THE GENDER MARKERS ON MY ID?

Most likely you do not, but it depends on a number of individual circumstances.

You do *not* need a gender change court order to update the gender marker on any forms of ID issued by California or the federal government. The main case in which gender change court order is necessary is for people who were born in a state that requires a gender change court order to update the gender marker on a birth certificate. You can check the National Center for Transgender Equality’s ID Documents Center (<https://transequality.org/documents>) to see if this is true for your birth state, and contact TLC’s Legal Information Helpdesk

(<https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo>) for further information about the process of updating your birth certificate.

On the other hand, though it may not be necessary to obtain a gender change court order, note that petitioning for a joint name and gender change court order isn't any more expensive or lengthy a process than petitioning for a name change court order only. So, if you've already decided to pursue a name change court order, you may decide it's worth obtaining a joint name and gender change court order as long as you are already going to court and paying the fee.

However, if you are only looking to update the gender marker - not the name - on your documents, and you were born in a state that does not require a gender change court order to update your birth certificate, it may not be worth the expense and delay to seek a court order. However, some people still choose to, because they appreciate having the extra documentation for security. In any event, it is fundamentally up to you.

CAN I GET A CONFIDENTIAL COURT ORDER?

Yes! SB 59 was signed into law on October 13, 2025. Adult name changes and/or gender marker corrections filed on or after July 1st, 2026, are confidential, including name changes to conform with gender identity. If you filed before July 1st, 2026, you may still request to make your records confidential and under SB 59; ***the court cannot charge a fee for this request, and the court must approve it.***

For a detailed overview on SB 59 please visit California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)'s [SB 59 Confidentiality Request Toolkit](#). If you need help submitting to make court records confidential the [Trans Rights Project at Bet Tzedek Legal Services](#) may be able to help.

HOW MUCH DOES A COURT ORDER COST? WHAT ABOUT A FEE WAIVER?

Unless you qualify for a fee waiver, the county courthouse will charge you a fee for filing your petition for a court order. As of August 2023, the fee in almost every California county is \$435 (see the chart available at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/StatewideCivilFeeSchedule-01012022.pdf> for a list of fees). Notable exceptions include San Francisco and Riverside counties, where the fee is \$450. Most counties have a website for their local Superior Court where you can double-check the current fee in your county. A list of all the Superior Courts with links to their contact information can be found here: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm>.

Also, note that certified copies of court orders cost about \$45 each; most people need to obtain at least three certified copies, depending on how many documents they are looking to update.

The courts do offer a **fee waiver** for those who can't afford to pay the filing fee. If the court approves your request for a fee waiver, you do not have to pay the filing fee and should also be able to obtain up to three certified copies of your court order for free. There are three ways to qualify for a fee waiver:

1. **If you currently receive certain means-tested public benefits** such as food stamps, SSI cash assistance, or Medi-Cal, you are automatically eligible for a fee waiver. A complete list is available on the form <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/fw001.pdf>, question 5.
2. **If your income falls under a certain limit** based on the number of people in your household, you are also automatically eligible. A chart is available on the form <http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/fw001.pdf>, question 5.
3. **If you do not receive any of these public benefits and your income falls over the limit, you may still qualify**, but you must provide the Court with information about all of your income and expenses, and they will determine whether you are eligible. Some courts are very open to waiving fees; others are less so.

Fee waiver petitions are submitted together with the rest of your forms. If your fee waiver petition is granted, you don't need to do anything else. If it is denied, the Court will let you know how they want you to pay the filing fee. If the Court needs more information to make a judgment on the filing fee petition, they may schedule a hearing. If they do this, they will let you know when and where this will take place.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE UNDER 18:

If you are under the age of 18 and are not an emancipated minor, you cannot petition for a name and/or gender change court order by yourself. For a name change only petition, your parent(s) or guardian(s) must file the petition on your behalf. For a gender change only or joint name and gender change petition, you are listed along with your parent(s) or guardian(s) as a petitioner, but at least one parent or guardian must petition.

If you have more than one parent who is alive, it is best if your parents are willing to file the petition jointly. If they are not, the parent filing the petition will have to ensure the other parent is notified of the proposed name and/or gender change, even if the signing parent has full custody. The only exceptions to notifying the other parent are when that parent has had their parental rights terminated, or if the other parent cannot be located. While the other parent can object, we are not aware of any cases where a judge has denied a change of name petition simply because one parent objects. However, if this happens to you, please contact our [Helpdesk](#).

The process of filing a minor's petition is also slightly different when the person filing the petition is the minor's guardian rather than their parent. The courts clearly recognize a parent's right to file these petitions, but a guardian must make their relationship to the minor clear to the judge. For that reason, a guardian has to submit additional forms (see below).

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR NON-CITIZENS:

You do not need to be a U.S. citizen or permanent U.S. resident to get a California name change court order. The courts are not allowed to deny access to any state resident, regardless of their immigration status. However, if you do face barriers because of your immigration status, please contact us for more information or assistance. Due to increases in immigration law enforcement, there may be some risk involved in using the court system in some areas. Non-citizens should speak with experienced local immigration attorneys before going to court.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ALREADY HAVE A COURT ORDER AND WANT TO UPDATE A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OR THEIR CHILD'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE :

If you already have a name change court order and you would like to update the name and/or gender designations on your marriage certificate or child's birth certificate issued in California, you *do not need to go back to court* for an additional order. You can update these records through a purely administrative process: see Section VI, California Vital Records, for details.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE INCARCERATED, ON PAROLE, OR ON THE STATE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY:

As of September 2018, if you are in prison or jail or are on parole in California, you have the right to petition for a name and/or gender change court order without first obtaining permission from your warden, parole officer, or the Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

However, at the time you file your petition, you must provide a copy of the petition to the relevant department: the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), if you are in state prison or on parole; or the sheriff's department, if you are in jail. CDCR or the sheriff's department determine how you ought to submit this notice; please ask officials at your institution about their specific process. CDCR or the sheriff are allowed to file objections to the petition; if this happens, the court would schedule a hearing and make a determination.

If you obtain a name change court order, all your departmental records will be updated; prior names may only be listed as aliases.

Transgender Law Center has collaborated with [TGI Justice Project](#) and the ACLU to create a more in-depth guide to name/gender changes for incarcerated people. You can view and download the guide from <https://tlcenter.box.com/s/bjn2bhy9q43gd93ebbb0l03nixr70ppzt>, or obtain a copy by writing us at Transgender Law Center, PO Box 70976, Oakland, CA 94612, or by contacting our Helpdesk (<https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo>).

State law also has special rules for people who are on the state sex offender registry. In this case, the court will change your name *only* if it determines that granting your petition “is in the best interest of justice” and will not “adversely affect public safety.” While you do not need to get permission from the police or a parole officer in order to change their name, a judge has more power to deny a petition if the judge thinks that you are requesting the change of name specifically because of the registry. If you are in this situation, it may be a good idea to get a letter from the police station where you have to register supporting your request for a name change. This letter does not need to be anything more formal than the police officer's recognition of your request and lack of opposition to your name change. This letter is not required, but it may be persuasive for the judge. You may want to consider submitting letters testifying to your character, personal development, and unlikelihood of committing future crimes, and the importance of legal name changes for transgender people's safety and wellbeing generally.

If you are required to register, and your name change petition is granted, you must notify the chief of police of the city where you live, or the county sheriff if you live in an unincorporated area, and also the chief of police of a campus of a University of California or California State University if you live on the campus or in any of its facilities, within five working days.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE BORN IN THE STATE OF TEXAS:

Generally speaking, states are required to honor court orders issued by other states, so if a person was born in a state where a court order is required to update the sex marker on a birth certificate, and later moved to another state, they could use a court order from their current state to do so. However, a few states have very specific requirements. Texas, in particular, insists that the linguistic distinction between "sex" and "gender" exempts them from this requirement and won't accept a "change of gender" court order; it must say "change of sex."

As of August 30, 2024, Texas Vital Statistics has removed the option to correct the gender marker on a birth certificate from its forms. Additionally, there is evidence that Vital Statistics will no longer accept any court order containing a gender change. This means that a court order that contains both a gender marker and name change will not be accepted for either. See the Transgender Education Network of Texas' [write-up on this matter](#) for detailed, up-to-date information.

As a result of this change, it is recommended that people born in Texas either petition only for a name change or request that the name and gender marker changes be granted on separate orders. Keep this in mind as you review the instructions below.

We generally recommend that Texas-born Californians who are petitioning for a gender change court order edit the forms before they file by crossing out the words "gender and" and "identifier" on their court order forms (NC-330 or NC-530) so the order reads "change of... sex." This edited document is still legally binding as long as the judge signs it. If you have any questions about this, please contact our Helpdesk at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo>.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE CHANGED THEIR NAME PREVIOUSLY:

In California, there is no limit on the number of times you can change your name, and in general, the process of changing your name for the second, third, or fourth time is no different from the process of changing your name for the first time.

However, if you have already changed your name (due to marriage or any other reason) and are now intending to change your name via court order, you should strongly consider listing any previous name(s) as FKAs ("Formerly Known As") in your name change petition whenever the form asks for your current legal name. This is especially relevant if you would like to update your birth certificate and it lists your name from before your previous legal name change. You may also want to add an FKA if you have ever used other names for official purposes and want to

update all of your information to match your new name—for example, if you used a different name earlier in your transition, and that name is on a lease.

Vital records agencies in many states, including California, are very particular about the way names are listed on court orders and will not update a birth certificate unless the name on the birth certificate is mirrored exactly by the “previous” name on a court order.

If you have already obtained a court order where your former name does not match the name on your birth certificate (for instance, if you obtained a court order changing your name from "OldFirstName MarriedLastName" to "NewFirstName MarriedLastName"), you will need to either amend your court order OR have the court order set aside and obtain a new court order with the correct information. Contact the court that issued your order to see how that works.

Many trans people who have changed their last names due to marriage and then changed their first names as part of a gender transition understandably want their birth certificates to reflect their pre-marriage last names but their post-transition first names. Unfortunately, California Vital Records is also quite particular about only issuing amended birth certificates so that the new full name on the birth certificate matches the new full name on the court order.

The only way we are aware of for an individual in this situation to update their CA birth certificate to reflect a pre-marriage last name and a post-transition first name is to go through the court process twice. In other words, they would follow the following four steps:

1. Obtain a court order changing their name from "OldFirstName MarriedLastName (FKA OldFirstName PreMarriageLastName)" to "NewFirstName PreMarriageLastName"
2. Update their birth certificate from "OldFirstName PreMarriageLastName" to "NewFirstName PreMarriageLastName"
3. Obtain a court order changing their name from "NewFirstName PreMarriageLastName" to "NewFirstName MarriedLastName"
4. Update their other documents using the two court forms in conjunction.

WHAT STEPS DO I HAVE TO TAKE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A COURT ORDER?

STEP 1: FIND THE APPROPRIATE FORMS FOR YOUR SITUATION

In order to get any court order, you must first complete the basic paperwork. The forms you need to fill out depend on whether the name/gender change is for an adult or a minor, and whether you are seeking a just a name change, just a gender change, or a joint name and gender change.

You can get blank copies of all these forms from your local county courthouse, or directly from the California courts' website. The California court system offers guides containing links to name change forms and processes and gender change forms and processes, respectively, at <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/form/name-change> and <https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/gender-recognition> and offers an index of all available forms at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/forms.htm>.

TLC has developed a series of tools to help people living in California fill out the forms they need to request a name and/or gender change court order. There are versions for adults and for minors, and all versions contain fee waiver forms. The tools ask a few questions and automatically fill out the forms you need to get the right court order. You can find a flowchart to help you identify the version you need [here](#).

Below are lists of the standard forms you will need, depending on which category you fall into. **Important note:** some counties have additional county-specific forms that must be submitted with the standard forms. These are usually extra cover sheets or background check forms. See if your county requires extra forms by contacting the court or consulting the chart in Appendix I. **Also note** that the lists below assume that your name change is related to your gender identity; if you are seeking a name change for some other reason, slightly different forms are required.

ADULTS

- **Adult seeking legal name change only:**
[NC-100](#), [NC-110](#), [NC-125](#), [NC-130](#), [CM-010](#)
- **Adult seeking legal name and gender change:**
[NC-300](#), [NC-110](#), [NC-125](#), [NC-330](#), [CM-010](#)
- **Adult seeking legal gender change only:**
[NC-300](#), [NC-330](#), [CM-010](#) (and a certified copy of any previous name change court orders, if you have changed your name by court order in the past)

Note for adults seeking gender change (with or without name change):

- If you were married in CA and want to amend your marriage license and certificate, add [NC-312](#). If your spouse did not sign NC-312, add [NC-325](#).⁵
- If you had one or more child(ren) in CA and want to amend your information on their birth certificate(s), add one [NC-311](#) for each child. Any adult child(ren) must sign their form NC-311.⁵

MINORS

- **Minor seeking legal name change only:**
[NC-100](#), [NC-110](#), [NC-125](#), [NC-130](#), [CM-010](#)
 - If the person filing is a guardian, add [NC-110G](#) & replace NC-130 with [NC-130G](#)
 - If not all legal parents sign the petition, add [NC-121](#)
- **Minor seeking legal name and gender change:**
[NC-500](#), [NC-110](#), [NC-520](#), [NC-530](#), [CM-010](#)
 - If the person filing the petition is a guardian, add [NC-110G](#)
 - If not all legal parents sign the petition, add [NC-121](#)
- **Minor seeking legal gender change only:**
[NC-500](#), [NC-530](#), [CM-010](#) (and a certified copy of any previous name change court orders, if the minor's name has been changed by court order in the past)
 - If not all legal parents sign the petition, add [NC-520](#) and [NC-121](#)

FORMS FOR FEE WAIVERS AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

If you want to request a fee waiver for the filing fee (\$435-450):

- Add [FW-001](#) and [FW-003](#)

If you want to request accommodations for a disability:

- Add [MC-410](#)

⁵ Although the court is able to include an order to amend a marriage certificate or a parent's information on a child's birth certificate as part of a gender change court order, the petitioner still needs to contact CA Vital Records to actually complete these updates. Also, Vital Records doesn't require such a court order to amend these records; the records can be updated with or without such an order. The only court order Vital Records requires is a name change order (for people wanting to update their name). See Section VI, Vital Records, for more information.

STEP 2: FILL OUT THE FORMS

TLC has developed a series of tools to help people living in California fill out the forms they need to request a name and/or gender change court order. There are versions for adults and for minors, and all versions contain fee waiver forms. The tools ask a few questions and automatically fill out the forms you need to get the right court order. You can find a flowchart to help you identify the version you need [here](#). If you'd prefer to fill out your forms by hand, you can find blank packets, directions, and sample filled-out forms by following the links provided [here](#).

Keep in mind that when you are asked to list your “current” name, that generally means the name you were given at birth. If you have legally taken on a new name through a court order, marriage, or adoption, you should list that name as your “current” name, but also include your name at birth as an FKA (“Formerly Known As”). List this name wherever it asks for “petitioner” even if you’ve been using your chosen name for many years and have identification in that name. You should put your chosen name wherever the form asks for “proposed name” or “new name.”

STEP 3: FILE THE FORMS AT THE COURTHOUSE

After completing your forms, you should make two copies of all forms. You may not need this many, but it is good to have multiple copies just in case. Your paperwork must be filed in the Superior Court in the county where you live (or, if you don’t live in California but were born, married in, or had a child in the state, in the county where that event occurred). Generally, you can file at any location that handles “unlimited civil” cases. We have provided the locations of the courthouses where name/gender change petitions may be filed in the chart in Appendix I. You can also call a courthouse’s civil clerk’s office and confirm that they process name changes.

An appointment is generally not required to file the paperwork. A few counties (including San Francisco) require you to show proof of residency when you file, so it may be advisable to call ahead to ask whether there are documentation requirements before you go in to file.

It is also generally possible for you to file your petition for a name and/or gender change by mail. To do this, you would need to fill out the necessary forms, include a check for the fee amount (or your request for a fee waiver), and include two additional copies of all the forms and a self-addressed return envelope with the return postage paid. Some courts also allow filing via a drop box at the courthouse location (the requirements to file by mail above also apply to drop box filing), and a growing number of counties’ Superior Courts allow electronic filing. More information about these different options for filing is available in the chart in Appendix I, but we recommend double-checking the website for your county’s Superior Court or calling the court clerk to confirm which options are available, as these are subject to change.

Unless you are submitting a request for a fee waiver, you should expect to pay your filing fee when you submit your paperwork. If you are submitting a request for a fee waiver, you will either

be told on the spot if your fee is waived or informed by mail. If the fee is not waived and you disagree with the decision, you can ask to speak to the judge and explain why you need a waiver.

When you file your forms, ask the clerk for the date when you can expect to have a ruling on the petition, how you will be notified of the ruling, and where you will be able to pick up the signed order and obtain certified copies (in some cases, a signed order may be mailed to you). Depending on the courthouse's current workload, you should expect that the court will rule on the petition, and that you will be able to obtain signed copies of the order, between six and twelve weeks from the day you file, but occasionally court backlogs delay this timeline further.

Clerks are generally helpful and informed, but occasionally they will misunderstand the law or not be up to date on it. If you encounter a clerk who tries to tell you that you need to publish notice of your name change in a newspaper, wants to schedule you a hearing, or insists that you need a doctor's letter to file your paperwork, you may want to share the text of the laws that removed these requirements, [AB 1121](#) and [SB 179](#). If you continue to have issues, please consider contacting our Helpdesk at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo>.

Note about petitions for minors with one or more living parent(s) not signing the petition:

If you are filing for a name and/or gender change for a minor and only one parent is signing, you must find another individual who is 18 years or older to formally present, or "serve," the court documents to the other parent. If the non-signing parent lives in California, the documents must be served in person; if they live out of state, the documents can be served by mail.

The service deadline varies depending on the type of petition being filed. Specifically, the non-signing parent must be served the documents (or receive them, if they are notified by mail):

- No more than 30 days after the petition is filed (for a name change)
- No more than 4 weeks after the petition is filed (for a gender change or a joint name and gender change)

The person responsible for the service will fill out a form to document when and how the service happened. Form [NC-121](#) may be used for any set of forms (name, gender, or name and gender). For more information about this process, see the guidance offered by the California courts:

- [For a name change](#)
- [For a gender change recognition](#)
- [For a name change and gender change recognition](#)

STEP 4: ATTEND THE COURT HEARING, IF REQUIRED

Adult petitioners do not have to attend a hearing unless someone contests the name and/or gender change. This is very unlikely to happen for adult petitioners who are not incarcerated, on parole, or facing active criminal charges. As a result, the clerk should not schedule a hearing when you file the petition; if they try to, you may want to remind them that you are changing your name “to conform to [your] gender identity” and that in these cases, a hearing is not supposed to be set unless an objection is filed (the law that establishes this is CA Code of Civil Procedure section 1277.5(c) for name change petitions and CA Health and Safety Code section 103430(h) for gender change petitions). In the unlikely event that someone files a valid objection and the court schedules a hearing, the clerk is supposed to contact you. All the same, it may be a good idea to call the clerk to confirm that the petition is uncontested after the deadline to file objections has passed. The deadline to file an objection is six weeks after the filing date for all petitions (name, gender, or name/gender).

As of January 2023, hearings should not be scheduled by default for **minor** petitioners with name and/or gender petitions, either. Any non-signing parents must be notified (see step 3 above), but a hearing will not be scheduled unless a valid objection is filed within six weeks of the filing date.

If you do have to attend a hearing, you should bring copies of all of your paperwork with you. It is especially important that you bring your decree (NC-130, NC-330, or NC-530). During the hearing, there may be other people in the room with you who are also changing their name and/or gender. The judge may ask you questions regarding your paperwork at the hearing. Note that the clerk or judge may call you by your old name if that is the name on your petition. If you are concerned about your privacy, you can ask the clerk to hold your petition until last. It’s up to them whether they will honor the request, but it is worth asking if you would like to increase your privacy. Some courts automatically put gender-related name changes at the end of the hearing.

Many California judges do a great job of providing a supportive and non-discriminatory environment in courtrooms for transgender people. However, in rare cases, judges have misunderstood California law regarding name or gender change court orders or have let their personal beliefs about your transition interfere with their duty. If you encounter a judge who exhibits bias or fails to follow the law in the course of a hearing, you have the right to request a continuance (to postpone the decision and reconvene at a later date). You are also welcome to contact our Legal Information Helpdesk at www.transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo.

STEP 5: GET COPIES OF YOUR COMPLETED ORDER

Once your name and/or gender change has been approved, it is generally advisable to get several certified copies of the order from the court, since most agencies (e.g., passport offices and the DMV) require certified copies to change your name in their records. These agencies may never return the certified copies you provide them or may only do so after a long delay.

As a result, it is a good idea to get between two and four copies depending on the number of identity documents you want to change. Each county has a different fee for making certified copies, but they are generally around \$45. If you obtain a fee waiver, three copies should be provided for free. Generally, you can always go back to the same courthouse and get more certified copies of your name and/or gender change order if need be.

A NOTE ABOUT COMMON-LAW NAME CHANGES:

Under California law, you have the legal right, with some restrictions, to change your name by the common-law or usage method; see Cal. Civil Procedure Code § 1279.5(a). To do this, you would simply adopt a new name and use it continuously and exclusively for a period of time. However, while this method is still technically a legal way to change a name in California, it is one that is becoming harder and harder to use. At this time, most financial institutions, the CA DMV, and the Social Security Administration will not recognize a common-law name change, because without a court order, they cannot verify the link between your current and former identities. This is why we urge people to consider obtaining a name change court order. However, referencing a “common-law name change” may be useful in certain circumstances: for example, if you have not yet obtained a court order, but you would like to change your name at work.

IV. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

After you obtain your court order, you may want to go next to the Social Security Administration (SSA) to change your records and request a new Social Security card. This is because if you are planning to change the name on your California driver’s license or state ID, you need to change your name with the SSA first. Additionally, changing your name and/or gender with the Social Security Administration may alleviate some workplace issues.

Though your Social Security card does not list your gender, the SSA does have a gender marker in its computer systems. On January 31, 2025, SSA updated its Operations Manual to state that the agency is no longer processing applications for gender marker corrections. The Transgender Law Center is actively monitoring this situation and will update our guides as it develops.

There is no charge to get a corrected Social Security card; the service is free. As in most other situations, if you are under 18 and are not emancipated, you will need the permission of your parent(s) or guardian(s) in order to change your name on your SSA account.

The process of changing the name on a Social Security card is addressed on the SSA website at <https://faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/article/KA-01981>

SOCIAL SECURITY AND NAME CHANGES

The SSA requires an individual to submit proof of a “legal” name change in order to change their name on Social Security records. In most cases, people satisfy this requirement by submitting a certified copy of a name change court order.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND GENDER MARKER CHANGES

Until January of 2025, it was possible to change the gender marker on your SSA account by self-attestation, and to obtain a passport with an X gender marker. However, SSA no longer permits gender marker changes. This is a developing situation. The Transgender Law Center is monitoring it closely and will update our guides as more information becomes available.

STEPS FOR UPDATING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER ON RECORD WITH THE SSA:

STEP 1: FILL OUT FORM SS-5

Complete an Application for a Social Security Card, Form SS-5. When completing Form SS-5, list your new legal name and/or the gender you would like reflected in your records. Form SS-5 is available at Social Security offices or at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ss-5.html>.

STEP 2: GATHER DOCUMENTS

At minimum, you will need to bring documents proving the following:

- **U.S. citizenship or immigration status** (e.g., a birth certificate or passport) if you have not already established your status with the SSA
- **Identity** (e.g., a driver's license, passport, or other photo ID)

These do not need to be in your current name, as long as you can document the link between your legal identities, e.g., with a court order. Documents with any gender marker(s), including “X” markers, are accepted; it is fine if the gender markers do not match. Additional documents are required to change a minor’s SSA records; see <https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm> (and select “A Child” and “Corrected” on the left-hand side) for more information.

STEP 3: FOR THOSE CHANGING THEIR NAMES

If changing your name, include proof of your change of name. (This is usually a certified copy of your court order. Generally, the only other proofs of name change that the SSA will accept are proofs of name change by marriage, adoption, divorce, or Certificate of Naturalization.)

STEP 4: VISIT THE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

Take your completed application and documents to an SSA office (for an office locator tool, see <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>). You can also mail your application to the SSA office; however, note that you will have to include original (not a photocopy) identity documents (such as a passport, driver's license, and/or birth certificate) in the application, and there may be a significant delay before these documents are returned to you, so you may want to carefully consider the timing if you choose to apply by mail.

Generally, individuals have no issue updating the information on record with the SSA as long as they are able to provide the documentation above, but in rare cases, the SSA may not be able to match your old name with your current identity. The SSA has a policy that requires an applicant to show additional identification in these cases. The policy is available on the SSA website (<https://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/ss5doc.htm>):

“If the document you provide as evidence of a legal name change does not give us enough information to identify you in our records or if you changed your name more than two years ago (four years ago if you are under 18 years of age), you must show us an identity document in your prior name (as shown in our records). We will accept an identity document in your old name that has expired.

If you do not have an identity document in your prior name, we may accept an unexpired identity document in your new name, as long as we can properly establish your identity in our records.”

If you experience difficulty because of this policy, please contact us.

If you have the misfortune to encounter an SSA employee who does not understand the SSA's policies or who has some bias against transgender people, do your best to keep calm. We would recommend asking for a supervisor, or bringing or mailing your application to another office.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE SSI/SSDI:

Changing your name and/or gender marker in your SSA account will not automatically change the information on your SSI/SSDI (Social Security Insurance/Disability Insurance) account. If you have an SSI/SSDI account, you should explicitly ask the SSA to change your name and/or gender on this account as well. For more information about updating your name and gender on Medi-Cal, SSI, and/or SSDI records, see Section XIII.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WITH IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS:

It may be a good idea for you to change your name and/or gender with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) before going to the SSA. This is because the SSA now verifies a person's immigration status when they change the name in their SSA records. If your new name is already in your immigration service records and on your immigration documents, it could speed up the verification process. As always, you should consult with an experienced immigration attorney before initiating contact with the government. There are situations where applying for updated immigration documents can lead to a person being placed into removal proceedings.

V. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

To change your **name** on a California driver's license or state ID, you must submit a certified copy of a name change court order and fill out a Driver License & ID Card Application.

To change your **gender marker** on a California driver's license or state ID, you must fill out the application mentioned above plus a Gender Category Request form (DL 329S). As of January 1, 2019, no medical documentation is necessary to update the gender marker on a California driver's license or state ID, and you may request a gender designation of male (M), female (F), or nonbinary (X).

Before changing your name on your California driver's license or state ID, you will first need to update your name with the Social Security Administration (SSA). This is because the DMV links its computer system with the SSA's computer system to verify the information on a driver's license application. This requirement applies to California residents seeking to change their existing California driver's licenses, as well to people who are moving to California from out of state and wish to obtain a California driver's license in a name different than the one appearing on their out-of-state ID.

For more information about changes to California driver's licenses and state IDs, visit the DMV's website at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-licenses-identification-cards/updating-information-on-your-driver-license-or-identification-dl-id-card/>.

SPECIAL DMV INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE UNDER 18:

If you are under 18 and are not emancipated, you need a parent or guardian's permission to change your name and gender on your California driver's license, provisional driver's license, or state ID card. The steps for doing so are nearly identical to those followed by an adult.

However, note that if you are a first-time applicant for a driver's license or state ID and you have updated the gender markers on all the identity documents you are bringing to the DMV (such as your birth certificate and/or passport), you should not need to fill out DL 329S.

STEPS FOR CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER WITH THE DMV:

STEP 1: FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FORM (DL 44)

The first step in obtaining a California driver's license or state ID that reflects your name and/or gender is to fill out an application form. **Note:** when you fill out this application, list your name and gender as you want them to appear on your license.

The most common way of doing this is to fill out the electronic application form (eDL 44) on the DMV's website at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/forms/dl/dl44>. This site will ask you to create a login and then will gather the needed information to process your application. After you have filled out the application, you will receive a confirmation number. You will bring in this number when you go into the DMV field office to complete the process.

Alternatively, you have the option of filling out a hard copy of the application form (DL 44). The hard-copy form cannot be obtained online, as each form has a special barcode, but may be obtained at a local DMV office. When you receive the form, fill it out completely.

STEP 2: FILL OUT FORM DL 329S (ONLY IF YOU ARE CHANGING YOUR GENDER MARKER)

If you are requesting a new gender marker, you should fill out the DMV's Gender Category Request form (DL 329S). This form is available at your local DMV or can be downloaded from the DMV website at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/uploads/2020/03/dl329S.pdf>. Fill out the form completely (if you have been issued a name change court order, you should use your "new" name), sign the affidavit, and bring it with you when you go to the DMV.

Note that, in order to update the gender marker on a California license or state ID, regardless of whether you have a gender change court order, you must fill out the DMV's own form.

STEP 3: VISIT A DMV FIELD OFFICE AND PAY THE FEE

To finish the process, you will need to visit a DMV field office. You can find an office near you by visiting the DMV's website at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/dmv/offices>. Appointments are not required, but are recommended; you can make one by visiting <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/foa/welcome>.

When you visit the office, bring in a printed or electronic photo of your eDL 44 electronic application confirmation page (or form DL 44, if you filled out a hard copy), form DL 329S (if you are requesting a new gender designation), any documentation needed to obtain a REAL ID-compliant ID, if you are requesting one (see next page), and the necessary fees.

At this visit, you will provide your Social Security number (so the DMV can verify your name with the SSA), give a fingerprint scan, and have your photograph taken.

You will be asked to provide additional documentation to show that the name provided on the application is your full legal name. The most common form of documentation is a certified copy of a name change court order. Documents the DMV will accept in place of a court order are listed at https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/uploads/2020/06/federal_noncompliant_dl_docslist.pdf. However, please note that this document must state your current legal name as you want it to appear on your driver's license. It cannot be your birth or other former name.

If you filled out form DL 329S, the DMV office where you submit the form needs to sign the form and stamp it in the bottom right corner. If the office forgets to sign and stamp the form and submits it to the DMV processing center in Sacramento, the form will be returned to you and you must return to the DMV to have them sign and stamp the form. Save yourself a second trip and politely ask the DMV staff member who is processing your form to make sure it is stamped AND signed.

As of August 2023, the fee for a *new* standard California driver's license is \$41, and the fee for changing name/gender on a California driver's license is \$33. The fee for obtaining a new California state ID *or* for changing name/gender on a California state ID is \$35 (reduced-fee ID cards are \$10, and there is no fee for people 62 and older). For a complete list of fees, visit http://www.dmv.ca.gov/dl/fees/driverlicense_fees.htm.

STEP 4: WAIT FOR THE LICENSE OR ID

The DMV will issue you a paper record of your application for a new license at the time you submit your forms; they may ask you to submit your old license or identification card as well. The DMV will mail your actual plastic license or ID about two weeks after processing your application. You should plan accordingly so that you are not traveling by airplane or train or leaving the country during the time you are waiting for your license or ID. If you do not receive your license and/or ID card after 60 days, you can call 1-800-777-0133 to check on the status. Have your interim license and/or ID card receipt with you to provide information when requested.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REAL ID ACT:

California offers driver's licenses and ID cards that comply with the federal REAL ID Act. People who are applying for, renewing, or changing information on their driver's licenses or ID cards for the first time since the act was passed and want a REAL ID-compliant license/card will have to present additional documentation when they visit the DMV.

To obtain a REAL ID license or ID card, you must provide:

1. Proof of identity such as an original or certified copy of a U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport, employment authorization, permanent resident card, or foreign passport with an approved form I-94.
2. Two California residency documents such as a utility bill, rental agreement, mortgage bill, or medical document.
3. *(If your identity document is in a different name)* A name change document such as a marriage license, divorce decree or court document.
4. Your Social Security number (you do not need to provide proof of it, but you will need to provide the number as part of your application).

REAL ID-compliant IDs may list nonbinary gender markers. For more information about REAL ID, see <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/realid>.

STEPS FOR CHANGING YOUR NAME ON YOUR VEHICLE REGISTRATION RECORD:

If you change your name on your driver's license, it will not automatically change your name on your vehicle registration information. Here is how to change your name on your vehicle registration information:

STEP 1: SUBMIT A CALIFORNIA CERTIFICATE OF TITLE FOR THE VEHICLE

Submit to the DMV (or to its licensed agent, such as AAA) a California Certificate of Title for your vehicle with your full correct name printed or typed in the "New Registered Owner" section.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE STATEMENT OF FACTS (REG 256) SECTIONS F & G

You must also complete and submit a Statement of Facts form (REG 256). On the form, you must indicate the reason for the change and sign the bottom of the form. The Statement of Facts form can be found at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/uploads/2020/06/reg256-1.pdf>. You should fill out parts F and G (including your reason for your name change). There is no cost to make a name change to your Certificate of Title.

For more information about updating information on a vehicle registration record, see the DMV's page at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/vehicle-registration/updating-information-on-your-registration/>.

VI. CALIFORNIA VITAL RECORDS (BIRTH AND MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES)

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is responsible for maintaining and amending records of births, marriages, and deaths that happen in California. Birth, marriage, and death certificates are collectively referred to as “vital records” and the office within CDPH that handles them is the Vital Records office, or CDPH-VR.

California law allows a person born in the state to receive a new birth certificate recognizing their gender identity. The process for changing the name and gender marker on a California birth certificate is fairly simple. Vital Records has created forms and publications to assist with this process. Note that if you are *only* changing your name on your birth certificate, you will use a different form ([VS 23](#)) from the form used if you are changing your gender marker only or your name and gender marker at the same time ([VS 24B](#)).

As of January 2023, California has also established a process for someone who was married in California or had a child in California to amend their name and gender designations (“mother,” “father,” “parent,” “wife,” “husband,” or “spouse”) on their marriage certificate and/or their child’s birth certificate. You can use form [VS 24B](#) to update your information on your child’s birth certificate and form [VS 24C](#) to update a marriage certificate.

To obtain an official copy of any of these updated records, you will need to include in your application a Sworn Statement (form [VS 20](#)) that you’ve signed in front of a notary. This form establishes your identity and your right to obtain the vital record you’re requesting (generally, only individuals referenced in the vital record and their close relatives may request official copies of vital records). This form is included at the end of the form packets (VS 23, VS 24B, and VS 24C) linked to above.

It is possible to obtain a revised version of your California birth certificate with a gender marker listed as nonbinary or - (dash). There are no special requirements for this; you may simply indicate your desired gender marker on form VS 24B.

Most people update their California vital records by mail. If you live out of state, you can still change your California birth certificate. The requirements and process are the same as those for California residents. Vital Records will accept certified court orders from any US state.

According to the state agency's website (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records-Processing-Times.aspx>) the processing time to amend a birth certificate is currently (last updated March 2023) 15-19 weeks, but it can several months for a person to actually receive the birth certificate in the mail.

After the California Vital Records office has received your application, you will either receive a postcard accepting your request or, if rejected, your application will be returned to you along with a letter explaining what corrections are needed. You should expect to wait several weeks after your application is mailed for a reply.

If you apply for a name change only on your birth certificate, you will receive an “amended” two-page birth certificate. The first page will include your new name and the second page will be a copy of your unchanged, old birth certificate.

If you apply for a name and gender marker change on your birth certificate, you will receive a new birth certificate without any notation that it is not your original birth certificate. Your old birth certificate is not destroyed; however, it is sealed and is only accessible to other individuals if they have a court order.

CDPH-VR’s website is <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Vital-Records.aspx>.

Below are step-by-step instructions for the following processes:

- Changing the name and gender marker (or just gender marker) on your California birth certificate (for adults born in California) – page 31
- Changing the name and gender marker (or just gender marker) on your child’s California birth certificate (for minors born in California) – page 33
- Changing just the name on a California birth certificate (for anyone born in California) – page 35
- Changing your name and/or gender designation on your child’s California birth certificate (for parents who had a child in California and want to amend their information on their child’s birth certificate) – page 36
- Changing your name and/or gender designation on your California marriage certificate (for people who were married in California and want to amend their information on their marriage certificate) – page 38

STEPS FOR CHANGING THE NAME AND GENDER MARKER (OR JUST GENDER MARKER) ON YOUR OWN CA BIRTH CERTIFICATE AS AN ADULT:

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE VS 24B FORM

Form VS 24B (“Affidavit to Amend a Birth Record”) can be found in CDPH’s guide available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS24B.pdf>, by calling (916) 445-2684, or by going to your local Recorder’s Office.

- On page 1, fill out Applicant Name and Mailing Address using your current legal name (that’s your “new” name, if you have obtained a name change court order)
- Under “Calculate the Fee”: write \$26 as the Total Fee in the table on the right (unless you would like more than one birth certificate copy, in which case add \$29 for each extra copy)
- On page 2, fill out Part 1 with information as it appears on your original birth certificate
- In Part 2, check the boxes “sex” (and, if you’re changing your name, the boxes for “child’s first/middle/last name”) and write your correct name(s) and/or sex marker in the right column (for “sex” you can write “male,” “female,” “nonbinary,” or “-”)
- List the “Reason for Correction” (field 11) as: “To match the sex specified on my birth certificate to reflect my gender identity and not for any fraudulent purposes.”
 - If you are also amending your name, add “Name is changed pursuant to Superior Court of California [**or substitute the name of the relevant court if your order is from another state**], County of [**write county here**], Court Case Number [**write court number here**], dated [**write date the order was issued here**].”
- At the bottom of the page, sign and write your name and address; for “Relationship” you can write “Self.” In this situation, only one signature is required.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE VS 20 FORM

Form VS 20 “Sworn Statement” is the form Vital Records uses to establish your identity and your right to obtain an official copy of a vital record. It is included at the end of the packets CDPH has created for people using form VS 23, VS 24B, and 24C, but is also available on its own at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS20.pdf>.

- Write your name (your “new” name, if you have received a court order) on the line marked “Applicant’s Printed Name” and under “Registrant” (the left column of the table)
- Write “Self” under “Applicant’s Relationship to Registrant”
- Wait to complete the rest of the form until you meet with a notary public. You can find a notary at many kinds of establishments, including post offices, libraries, banks and credit

unions, shipping companies, lawyers' offices, and print and copy stores. It's always a good idea to call or otherwise contact these places in advance to confirm they have notaries available to the public and to see whether you need an appointment.

- Bring forms VS 24B and VS 20, along with at least one form of picture ID as well as a certified copy of your name change court order (if applicable) when you meet with the notary. Finish filling out the form in front of the notary and ensure that they complete the section of the form below "Certificate of Acknowledgement" and sign and seal the form.

STEP 3: GATHER ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

You will need to submit the following along with the VS 24B and VS 20:

- Check or money order for \$26.00 payable to "CDPH Vital Records"
- **If you are changing your name:** a certified copy of the name change order
- Photocopy of the current birth certificate (optional, but may expedite the process)

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

Mail all of these items to:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records – Amendments – M.S. 5105
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

Resource: [Application to Amend a Birth Record](#) (CA Vital Records' guide for people making a variety of changes to their birth certificate using form VS 24B; it includes blank copies of form VS 24B and VS 20 and more guidance for people filling out the forms)

STEPS FOR CHANGING YOUR MINOR CHILD'S NAME AND GENDER MARKER (OR JUST GENDER MARKER) ON THEIR CA BIRTH CERTIFICATE:

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE VS 24B FORM

Form VS 24B ("Affidavit to Amend a Birth Record") can be found in CDPH's guide available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS24B.pdf>, by calling (916) 445-2684, or by going to your local Recorder's Office.

- On page 1, fill out Applicant Name and Mailing Address using your (the parent's) name
- Under "Calculate the Fee": write \$26 as the Total Fee in the table on the right (unless you would like more than one birth certificate copy, in which case add \$29 for each extra copy)
- On page 2, fill out Part 1 with information as it appears on your child's original birth certificate
- In Part 2, check the boxes "sex" (and, if your child is changing their name, the boxes for "child's first/middle/last name") and write your child's correct name(s) and/or sex marker in the right column (for "sex" you can write "male," "female," "nonbinary," or "-")
- List the "Reason for Correction" (field 11) as: "To match the sex specified on my child's birth certificate to reflect gender identity and not for any fraudulent purposes."
 - If your child is also amending their name, add "Name is changed pursuant to Superior Court of California [***or substitute the name of the relevant court if your order is from another state***], County of [***write county here***], Court Case Number [***write court number here***], dated [***write date the order was issued here***]."
- At the bottom of the page, either you or your child should sign and print your/their name and address. If you sign, write "Parent" for "Relationship"; if your child signs, write "Self." In this situation, only one signature is required (but you can include two if you prefer).

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE VS 20 FORM

Form VS 20 "Sworn Statement" is the form Vital Records uses to establish your identity and your right to obtain an official copy of a vital record. It is included at the end of the packets CDPH has created for people using form VS 23, VS 24B, and 24C, but is also available on its own at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS20.pdf>.

- Write your (the parent's) name on the line marked "Applicant's Printed Name"
- Write your child's name (their "new" name, if they have received a name change court order) under "Registrant" (the left column of the table)
- Write "Parent" under "Applicant's Relationship to Registrant"

- Wait to complete the rest of the form until you meet with a notary public. You can find a notary at many kinds of establishments, including post offices, libraries, banks and credit unions, shipping companies, lawyers' offices, and print and copy stores. It's always a good idea to call or otherwise contact these places to confirm they have notaries available to the public and to see whether you need an appointment.
- Bring forms VS 24B and VS 20, along with at least one form of picture ID for yourself and a copy of your child's birth certificate (to establish your parent-child relationship) as well as a certified copy of your child's name change court order (if applicable) when you meet with the notary. Finish filling out the form in front of the notary and ensure that they complete the section of the form below "Certificate of Acknowledgement" and sign and seal the form.

STEP 3: GATHER ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

You will need to submit the following along with the VS 24B and VS 20:

- Check or money order for \$26.00 payable to "CDPH Vital Records"
- **If your child is changing their name:** a certified copy of the name change order
- Photocopy of the current birth certificate (optional, but may expedite the process)

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

Mail all of these items to:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records – Amendments – M.S. 5105
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

Resource: [Application to Amend a Birth Record](#) (CA Vital Records' guide for people making a variety of changes to their birth certificate using form VS 24B; it includes blank copies of form VS 24B and VS 20 and more guidance for people filling out the forms)

STEPS FOR CHANGING NAME ONLY ON A CA BIRTH CERTIFICATE:

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE VS 23 FORM

VS 23 ("Application to Amend A Birth Record After a Court Order Name Change") is available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS23.pdf>, by calling (916) 445-2684, or by going to your local Recorder's Office. Unlike the VS 24 form discussed above, the VS 23 is relatively self-explanatory.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE VS 20 FORM

Complete form VS 20 (the Sworn Statement form) using the process described on page 31-32 (if you are amending your own birth certificate) or the process described on page 33-34 (if you are amending your minor child's birth certificate).

STEP 3: GATHER ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

You will need to submit the following along with the VS 23:

- A certified copy of the name change court order
- Check or money order for \$26.00 made payable to "CDPH Vital Records"
- Photocopy of the current birth certificate (optional, but may expedite the process)

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

Mail all of these items to:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records – Amendments – M.S. 5105
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

Resource: [Application to Amend A Birth Record After a Court Order Name Change](#) (CA Vital Records' guide for people who are ONLY changing the name on their birth certificate; it includes blank copies of form VS 23 and VS 20 and more guidance for people filling out the forms)

**STEPS FOR CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER DESIGNATIONS
("MOTHER"/"FATHER"/"PARENT") ON YOUR CHILD'S CA BIRTH CERTIFICATE:**

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE VS 24B FORM

Form VS 24B ("Affidavit to Amend a Birth Record") can be found in CDPH's guide available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS24B.pdf>, by calling (916) 445-2684, or by going to your local Recorder's Office.

- On page 1, fill out Applicant Name and Mailing Address using your current legal name (that's your "new" name, if you have obtained a name change court order)
- Under "Calculate the Fee": write \$26 as the Total Fee in the table on the right (unless you would like more than one birth certificate copy, in which case add \$29 for each extra copy)
- On page 2, fill out Part 1 with information as it appears on your child's original birth certificate
- For Part 2, do one or both of the following:
 - If you are changing your name, check the boxes "1st/2nd Parent First/Middle/Last Name" (depending on whether you are listed as the first or second parent on your child's birth certificate, and which of your name(s) you are changing) and write your name(s) as they should appear in the right hand column.
 - If you are changing your gender designation: under "Other Items Not Listed Above" write "1st Parent Gender Designation – Mother," "2nd Parent Gender Designation – Father," or the combination of number and designation you are listed under on your child's birth certificate. Under "Enter the New Corrected Name or Value" write "Mother," "Father," or "Parent," depending on how you want to be described on your child's birth certificate.
- Add one or both of the following reasons under "Reason for Correction" (field 11):
 - If you are amending your gender designation, write "To change the parent designation to conform to my gender identity and not for fraudulent purposes."
 - If you are amending your name, write "To add the parent's name change pursuant to Superior Court of California [***or substitute the name of the relevant court if your order is from another state***], County of [***write county here***], Court Case Number [***write court number here***], dated [***write date the order was issued here***]."
- At the bottom of the page, sign and write your name and address; for "Relationship" you can write "Self." In this situation, only one signature is required.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE VS 20 FORM

Form VS 20 “Sworn Statement” is the form Vital Records uses to establish your identity and your right to obtain an official copy of a vital record. It is included at the end of the packets CDPH has created for people using form VS 23, VS 24B, and 24C, but is also available on its own at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS20.pdf>.

- Write your name (your “new” name, if you have received a name change court order) on the line marked “Applicant’s Printed Name”
- Write your child’s name under “Registrant” (the left column of the table)
- Write “Parent” under “Applicant’s Relationship to Registrant”
- Wait to complete the rest of the form until you meet with a notary public. You can find a notary at many kinds of establishments, including post offices, libraries, banks and credit unions, shipping companies, lawyers’ offices, and print and copy stores. It’s always a good idea to call or otherwise contact these places to confirm they have notaries available to the public and to see whether you need an appointment.
- Bring forms VS 24B and VS 20, along with at least one form of picture ID for yourself and a copy of your child’s birth certificate (to establish your parent-child relationship) as well as a certified copy of your name change court order (if applicable) when you meet with the notary. Finish filling out the form in front of the notary and ensure that they complete the section of the form below “Certificate of Acknowledgement” and sign and seal the form.

STEP 3: GATHER ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

You will need to submit the following along with the VS 24B and VS 20:

- Check or money order for \$26.00 payable to “CDPH Vital Records”
- **If you are changing your name on your child’s birth certificate:** a certified copy of the name change order.
- **If the child whose birth certificate you’re updating is 18 years of age or older:** a notarized letter from your child consenting to the change to their birth certificate. The letter must state “I, **[adult child’s full name]**, stipulate to an issuance of a new birth certificate for me that reflects my parent’s legal gender and name.” Your child should not sign this letter until they are in the presence of a notary. See the previous section for guidance about locating a notary. Note: if your child lives near you, you may consider using the same notary for the Sworn Statement and this notarized letter.
- Photocopy of the current birth certificate (optional, but may expedite the process)

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

Mail all of these items to:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records – Amendments – M.S. 5105
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

Resource: [Application to Amend a Birth Record](#) (CA Vital Records' guide for people making a variety of changes to their birth certificate using form VS 24B; it includes blank copies of form VS 24B and VS 20 and more guidance for people filling out the forms)

STEPS FOR CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER DESIGNATIONS ("BRIDE"/"GROOM"/"NEITHER BOX CHECKED") ON YOUR CA MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE:

STEP 1: COMPLETE THE VS 24C FORM

Form VS 24C ("Application to Amend a Marriage Record") can be found in CDPH's guide available at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS24C.pdf>, by calling (916) 445-2684, or by going to your local Recorder's Office.

- On page 1, fill out Applicant Name and Mailing Address using your current legal name (that's your "new" name, if you have obtained a name change court order)
- Under "Calculate the Fee": write \$26 as the Total Fee in the table on the right (unless you would like more than one birth certificate copy, in which case add \$17 for each extra copy)
- On page 2, fill out Part 1 with information about you, your spouse, and your marriage as it appears on your marriage certificate
- For Part 2, do one or both of the following:
 - If you are changing your name, in the left column ("Items to Change"), write, for instance "1st person, first name," "1st person, middle name," etc. depending on whether you are listed first or second on the marriage certificate and which of your name(s) you are updating. List your first, middle, and last names as separate items if you are updating more than one name. Write your name(s) as they should appear in the right column ("Enter the New Corrected Name or Value").

- If you are changing your gender designation: under “Items to Change” write the designation you are listed under on your marriage certificate: “Groom,” “Bride,” or “Neither box checked”. Under “Enter the New Corrected Name or Value” write “Groom,” “Bride,” or “Neither box checked,” depending on how you want to be described on your marriage certificate.
- Add one or both of the following reasons under “Reason for Correction” (field 11):
 - If you are amending your gender designation, write “To change designation as bride, groom, or having neither box checked to conform to my gender identity and not for any fraudulent purposes.”
 - If you are amending your name, write “To add court-ordered name change for a party to the marriage pursuant to Superior Court of California [***or substitute the name of the relevant court if your order is from another state***], County of [***write county here***], Court Case Number [***write court number here***], dated [***write date the order was issued here***].”
- At the bottom of the page, sign and write your name and address; for “Relationship” you can write “Self.”

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE VS 20 FORM

Form VS 20 “Sworn Statement” is the form Vital Records uses to establish your identity and your right to obtain an official copy of a vital record. It is included at the end of the packets CDPH has created for people using form VS 23, VS 24B, and 24C, but is also available on its own at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ControlledForms/VS20.pdf>.

- Write your name (your “new” name, if you have received a name change court order) on the line marked “Applicant’s Printed Name” and under “Registrant” (the left column of the table)
- Write “Self” under “Applicant’s Relationship to Registrant”
- Wait to complete the rest of the form until you meet with a notary public. You can find a notary at many kinds of establishments, including post offices, libraries, banks and credit unions, shipping companies, lawyers’ offices, and print and copy stores. It’s always a good idea to call or otherwise contact these places to confirm they have notaries available to the public and to see whether you need an appointment.
- Bring forms VS 24C and VS 20, along with at least one form of picture ID and a certified copy of your name change court order (if applicable) when you meet with the notary. Finish filling out the form in front of the notary and ensure that they complete the section of the form below “Certificate of Acknowledgement” and sign and seal the form.

STEP 3: GATHER ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

You will need to submit the following along with the VS 24C and VS 20:

- Check or money order for \$26.00 payable to "CDPH Vital Records"
- **If you are changing your name on your marriage certificate:** a certified copy of the name change order.
- A notarized letter from your spouse consenting to the change to their marriage certificate. The letter must state "I, [**spouse's full name**], stipulate to an issuance of a new marriage license and certificate for me that reflects my spouse's legal gender and name." Your spouse should not sign this letter until they are in the presence of a notary. See the previous section for guidance about locating a notary. Note: if your spouse lives near you, you may consider using the same notary for the Sworn Statement and this notarized letter.
- Photocopy of the current marriage certificate

STEP 4: MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

Mail all of these items to:

California Department of Public Health
Vital Records – Amendments – M.S. 5105
P.O. Box 997410
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

Resource: [Application to Amend a Marriage Record](#) (CA Vital Records' guide for people making changes to their marriage certificate using form VS 24C; it includes blank copies of form VS 24C and VS 20 and more guidance for people filling out the forms)

VII. CONSULAR REPORTS OF BIRTH ABROAD

If you are a U.S. citizen born to American citizen parents in another country, then your birth certificate is a Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA).

The name listed on a CRBA may be amended by submitting a certified copy of a name change court order. As of January 2025, it is no longer possible to correct the gender marker on a CRBA. This is a developing situation, and the Transgender Law Center is monitoring it closely.

VIII. UNITED STATES PASSPORTS

A note on the status of US Passport Gender Marker Corrections:

Via the [ACLU](#): “On his first day back in office in January 2025, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that led the State Department to suspend its policy allowing transgender, intersex, and nonbinary people to update the sex designations on their passports, [causing] some with pending applications to have their passports withheld from them and others to receive a new passport with the wrong sex designation listed.

Soon after, the ACLU sued on behalf of seven transgender and nonbinary people on the grounds the policy violates their constitutional rights and the Administrative Procedure Act,” with the lawsuit named *Orr v. Trump*.

As of November 6, 2025, the Supreme Court majority ruled that the government can continue to enforce the “sex at birth” passport rule. This is a temporary ruling and we will update this guide as new information becomes available.

What This Ruling Means

- **Before this ruling (between June 17 – November 5, 2025):** The policy was blocked by a preliminary injunction that extended to class members; a “window” of time was “open” during which transgender people could still get passports matching their gender identity.
- **After this ruling (as of November 6, 2025):** The block is lifted; the government can enforce the “sex at birth” passport rule immediately while the lawsuit continues.

****Please note that the most up-to-date information regarding this case changes rapidly. For the latest guidance as of the day you’re reading this, please refer to ACLU’s page [Q&A: Orr v. Trump](#).***

While one cannot update the gender marker on their passport to their lived gender marker at this time, one may still update their name:

To change your [name](#) and on your [U.S.](#) passport, you can use one of three forms:

[DS-11](#) (“Application for a U.S. Passport”),

[DS-82](#) (“U.S. Passport Renewal Application for Eligible Individuals”), or

[DS-5504](#) (“Application for a U.S. Passport - Name Change, Data Correction, and Limited Passport Replacement”).

You can download each form at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/forms.html>.

The following guide may help you determine which form is right for you.

FORM DS-11

The DS-11 application is the basic application for a U.S. passport and it **must** be used if **any** of the following are true:

- You have never been issued a U.S. passport;
- You are under age 16;
- You were under age 16 when your previous passport was issued;
- Your most recent U.S. passport was issued more than 15 years ago;
- Your most recent U.S. passport was lost or stolen; **or**
- Your name has changed since your previous U.S. passport was issued but you are unable to legally document your name change.

The DS-11 application must be submitted in person. You can fill out the DS-11 electronically, but you must then print it and submit it in person with a fee. A tool to help you find locations where you can submit the DS-11 is available at: <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

FORM DS-82

You should use this form if your passport meets **all** the following conditions **and** has expired or was issued more than one year ago:

- Your passport is undamaged and can be submitted with your application;
- Your passport was issued when you were age 16 or older;
- Your passport was issued within the last 15 years; **and**
- Your passport was issued in your current name or you can legally document your name change (with a court order or marriage certificate changing name).

You will have to submit a fee along with your application, but you can apply by USPS mail.

FORM DS-5504

This form is used in two circumstances:

- To change the name on your passport (or correct a printing error) when your passport was issued less than one year ago and is still valid; or
- To extend the validity of a limited validity passport or upgrade it to a full-validity passport within two years of the limited validity passport being issued.

You will fill out the second section on the last page of DS-5504 to indicate what information was incorrect.

You may submit the DS-5504 by USPS mail and there is no accompanying fee unless you are requesting an expedited passport.

CHECKLIST IF USING FORM DS-11:

If you are not eligible to renew your passport by mail using Form DS-82, you should [apply in-person](#). Bring the following:

- [Form DS-11](#)
- Your evidence of U.S. citizenship and photocopy of that evidence*
- Valid ID and photocopy of that ID*
- One color [passport photo](#)
- Adult First-Time Applicant [fees](#) or Child Applicant [fees](#), depending on your age (for a passport book without expedited service, the total fees are \$165 for people 16+ and \$135 for people under age 16, as of February 2023)
- *If you are changing your name:* Your original or certified name change document, such as a court order

CHECKLIST IF USING FORM DS-82:

- [Form DS-82](#)
- Your most recent U.S. passport
- One color [passport photo](#)
- Adult Renewal Applicant [fees](#) or Child Applicant [fees](#), depending on your age (for a passport book without expedited service, the total fees are \$130, as of February 2023)
- *If you are changing your name:* Your original or certified name change document, such as a court order

Please note: you must send Form DS-82 and supporting documents using USPS. UPS, FedEx, DHL, and other companies cannot deliver to the PO Box addresses listed on Form DS-82.

CHECKLIST IF USING FORM DS-5504:

- [Form DS-5504](#)
- Your most recent U.S. passport
- One color [passport photo](#)
- *If you are changing your name:* Your original or certified name change document, such as a court order

Please note: You will not have to submit any fees unless you request [Expedited Service](#). You must send Form DS-5504 and supporting documents via USPS. UPS, FedEx, DHL, and other companies cannot deliver to the PO Box addresses listed on Form DS-5504.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS WHEN GETTING A PASSPORT

The U.S. Department of State allows you to use a photo that represents the way you look, regardless of whether the photo stereotypically corresponds to the gender marker on your passport. The Passport Office has a number of specific rules about the photos it will accept, though; see <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/requirements/photos.html>.

U.S. passport policies instruct officials to be respectful, use the appropriate pronouns, and not ask further medical questions if the correct documentation is provided. If you encounter any of these problems, please contact us.

The ID you present may list any gender marker(s). Your ID also does not need to list your current name, as long as your name change court order was issued within one year of the date you submit your passport application. If your name change occurred more than one year prior to your application, you must obtain an ID in your new name before a passport may be issued.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE SEEKING PASSPORTS:

If you need to apply for a passport or change information on a passport for someone under 16 years old, there are somewhat different documentation requirements. In particular, you will need to provide documentation showing the name(s) of the minor's parent(s) and their consent. For more information, see <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/under-16.html>.

If you need to apply for a passport or change a passport for someone 16 or 17 years old, you must demonstrate parental awareness. For more information, see <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/16-17.html>.

A passport issued for someone 16 or 17 is normally valid for ten years; a passport issued for someone under 16 years old is only valid for five years.

IX. IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issues over a dozen different forms of identification. This section of the guide focuses specifically on those documents related to permanently immigrating to the United States, but similar policies apply for temporary visas (student, tourist, work, etc.). For specific information about updating other documents or records, please contact our Helpdesk at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo>.

Note: On April 2, 2025, USCIS issued a policy alert stating that it will only recognize two sexes, and that all documents must list a person's gender assigned at birth. USCIS has indicated that they will not impose penalties on trans people who list their lived gender on their applications. However, any discrepancy between the gender on a person's application and their assigned gender may result in processing delays. The USCIS has published new forms with only "male" and "female" available for the gender designation option.

It is recommended that you practice caution and, if possible, speak to an immigration attorney if you are considering requesting a gender marker correction to a USCIS document. The Transgender Law Center is monitoring this situation and will update our guides as more information becomes available.

As always, **please consult with an experienced immigration attorney before initiating contact with the government.** There are situations where applying for updated immigration documents can lead to a person being placed into removal proceedings.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR PEOPLE CONSIDERING IMMIGRATING TO THE U.S.:

If you are not yet in the United States, you may want to try to obtain legal recognition of your name (and gender) change in your home country if possible. This way, you can submit all filings in your new, current name and list your birth name as a prior name. We recognize that in some cases, however, it is not possible to obtain a name or gender change court order before entering the U.S., or it is much easier to do so from within the U.S.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR PEOPLE BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR STATUS:

It may be ideal to start the immigration process with your correct name; for instance, if you are applying for asylum, it may be easier if you submit a court order recognizing your new name along with your asylum application, so that your initial record can include your current name. However, we recognize that it is sometimes not possible, practical, or safe to wait to begin the immigration process. If possible, you may want to get advice from an immigration attorney to ensure that the wait for a court order won't affect your timeliness for the asylum filing deadline.

If you cannot wait until your records are updated to start the immigration process, please rest assured that immigration documents can still be updated with the appropriate documentation; it may just involve more time and expense. Below, we outline the process of obtaining U.S.

immigration documents reflecting your name and gender.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR PEOPLE WITH A PENDING ASYLUM APPLICATION:

If a person has a pending asylum application, it is important to let USCIS know of any changes, including changes to their legal name and gender. USCIS does not have an official process for updating the name for someone with a pending case; it only has an official process for someone with existing documentation, such as a green card or work permit. However, a person can provide a certified copy of their name change court order (along with a copy of an updated identity document, if they have any, such as a driver's license) to USCIS by mailing it to the asylum office where their case is pending. Asylum office addresses can be found online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/asy>.

If a person is represented by an attorney, they should consult with their attorney before mailing any documentation to USCIS. It will be important for a person to take certified copies of court orders with to their asylum interview, as well as updated identity documents. Please note that even after submitting the name change paperwork to the asylum office, a person might still get notices addressed to their previous legal name. It is important when a person has their interview to remind the officer of their name change (and present the certified copy of their name change court order) to ensure that subsequent USCIS documents are issued in their new legal name.

If someone with a pending asylum application has a work permit, and would like to update the name on a work permit, they can do so following the instructions above. However, it should also be possible for a person in this situation to use a work permit in their former name in conjunction with their court order for a name change, and work under their new legal name. If a person is applying for a work permit in their new legal name, but their asylum receipt notice is in their previous legal name, it will be important to provide a certified copy of their name change court order when submitting a work permit application.

STEPS FOR OBTAINING USCIS DOCUMENTS REFLECTING YOUR NAME:

The following information applies whether you are preparing to receive a USCIS document for the first time and would like it to state your chosen or are hoping to amend the name on a USCIS document you have already been issued. Again, we recommend speaking with an attorney, if possible, before taking these steps.

To obtain a USCIS document reflecting your name and/or gender, you'll need:

1) An application form. This is specific to the document you want to update:

- For your **“green card,”** you'll need Form I-90, available at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-90>.
- For your **naturalization certificate**, you'll need Form N-565, available at <https://www.uscis.gov/n-565>.
- For your **EAD (work permit)**, you'll need Form I-765, available

- at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-765>.
- For your **refugee travel document**, you'll need Form I-131, available at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-131>.

For a full list of forms visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/forms>.

For information about filing fees, see here: <https://www.uscis.gov/fees>. Unfortunately, fee waivers are not available in most cases.

2) Supporting documentation related to your name change:

For a name change, a certified copy of a name change court order or similar documentation.

3) General supporting documentation:

- Evidence that your name change was completed according to the relevant state or foreign law; and
- A recent facial photograph that looks like and can identify you (if you are requesting an update on a document that includes a photo). This can be submitted with the application or provided through biometrics collection at an Application Support Center (ASC).

You can generally file these documents online or mail them to a USCIS office. To find out more information on where and how to file this forms, please visit www.uscis.gov and click on the “forms” button.

When corresponding with USCIS, it may be best to be explicit and direct about what you are requesting and why. The officer who receives your application may not be familiar with transgender issues, so consider spelling out the issues in the application as clearly as possible, such as by including a cover letter that states that you are submitting the form to change your name and/or gender marker according to USCIS policy.

SPECIAL NOTE ON NAME RECOGNITION ON CERTIFICATES OF NATURALIZATION:

As with other USCIS documents, you can amend your Certificate of Naturalization after it has been issued by obtaining a name change court order and submitting it to USCIS. But you are also able to request a change in your name at the time you apply for naturalization through the application process. You will be able to confirm this request during the interview process. Your name will then be legally changed at the time that you take the Oath of Allegiance at a Naturalization Ceremony. Your Certificate of Naturalization will then reflect your change of name. To learn more about this process, see the USCIS document available here: www.uscis.gov/files/article/M-476.pdf.

X. SELECTIVE SERVICE AND MILITARY RECORDS

All American citizens and resident aliens aged 18 to 25 who were assigned male at birth are required to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday. This information is compiled by the government as a means of preparing for a military draft. Failure to do so is punishable by a fine and imprisonment. We oppose this policy, as it violently disregards

trans women and femmes' identities, but this is the current legal reality. Also, many federally funded programs, such as financial aid for higher education and federal employment, require proof of registration as a condition of application. As a result, trans people of all genders may be impacted by the registration process.

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ASSIGNED FEMALE AT BIRTH

If you are a transgender person assigned female at birth, you are not required to register with the Selective Service, regardless of your current gender or transition status. However, if you have legally changed your gender to male, you may be required to show that you are exempt from registration in order to apply for federal student loans or other government aid and employment programs. To establish that you are exempt, you must obtain a "Request for Status Information Letter" form. You can request a Status Information Letter by calling (888) 655-1825, using Selective Service's [online form](#), or by completing a [Request for Status Information Letter](#) and mailing it, along with any supporting documentation, to:

Selective Service System

ATTN: SIL

P.O. Box 94638

Palatine, IL 60094-4638

You should fill out the "Transgender" section, attach a copy of your original birth certificate, and sign and submit the document. If your birth certificate has been changed and you do not have the original copy, you should include documentation establishing that your gender and birth certificate have been changed. There is no cost to obtain the Status Information Letter and it usually takes between four and six weeks to receive. The Status Information Letter will not state why you are exempt and thus will not out you as transgender.

If you are a transgender person assigned female at birth who transitioned prior to your 18th birthday and you have changed your birth certificate, it is possible to register with Selective Service. Note that this does not guarantee that you will ultimately be eligible to join the military.

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ASSIGNED MALE AT BIRTH

If you are a transgender person assigned male at birth, you are required to register with Selective Service regardless of whether you transitioned before or after your 18th birthday and regardless of whether you will ultimately be deemed eligible for military service. Selective Service contacts individuals assigned male at birth prior to their 18th birthday to register.

The Selective Service System provides more information about transgender people and Selective Service registration requirements at <https://www.sss.gov/register/who-needs-to-register/#p7>.

Name Changes: If you are a transgender person assigned male at birth and are required to register, you must also inform the Selective Service of any legal name change or change in other record information, such as a change of address, up until your 26th birthday. Notification must take place within ten days of the change. Please note that this notification requirement does not extend to changes of legal gender for individuals who are assigned male at birth, as the Selective Service policy requires that all individuals assigned male at birth between the ages of 18 and 26 must register regardless of transition status.

To update your Selective Service records, use one of the following methods:

- Fill out the Change of Information Form that is sent to you with your Registration Acknowledgement Card.
- Fill out a Change of Information Form called an “SSS Form 2,” available at U.S. Post Offices, embassies, and consulates.
- Send a letter to the Selective Service at: Selective Service System, P.O. Box 94638, Palatine, IL 60064-4638. In the letter, you should specify your old name, Social Security number, Selective Service number, date of birth, current mailing address, and new name.

Regardless of which means you choose, you must attach official documentation of your name change. Updating records generally takes four to six weeks, after which you will be mailed a new registration acknowledgement card. If you have further questions, call the Selective Service at 847-688-6888 or toll-free: 888-655-1825

OTHER INFORMATION REGARDING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AND THE MILITARY

For more information about transgender people's eligibility to serve in the military, refer to SPART*A at <https://spartapride.org/> and the Modern Military Association of America at <https://modernmilitary.org/>.

For information about updating military and veteran records to reflect legal name/gender changes, see the guides from the Transgender American Veterans Association at <https://www.transveteran.org/guidance>, <https://www.transveteran.org/name-gender-change>, and <https://www.transveteran.org/downloadable-documents>, and the National Center for Transgender Equality at <https://transequality.org/know-your-rights/military-records>.

XI. FINANCIAL INSTITUTION RECORDS

BANK RECORDS

If you have a bank account or accounts, different banks have different policies for changing your name and/or gender in your records. Some banks may require a court order while others may only ask you to present identity documents with your old and new name and/or gender marker on them. While you may be able to argue to your bank that a common-law name change is sufficient to change your records, many banks are now requiring a court order. You should contact your bank to find out what it would require to change your name and/or gender in its records.

As a practical matter, you may want to consider whether there is any reason to keep your old name as an additional name on your account. For example, if you receive checks in your old name (from relatives who don't recognize your changed name, from an investment or pension fund, or some kind of copyright or contract residuals) it may be helpful if your prior name is kept on your account as an "AKA" (also known as). Some people even go so far as to list both their old and new names on their checks for a period of time.

CREDIT CARDS AND LOANS

As with banks, if you have a credit card or loan, each credit card or loan provider has a different policy regarding what is required to change an individual's name on its records. You should consult your credit card or loan provider to find out what it would require to change your name on any applicable records or cards.

CREDIT REPORTS

After obtaining a legal name change order, you may want to ensure the three credit reporting agencies are aware of the change so your full credit history is taken into account and there is no disruption to your credit. While it is possible that one or more of the agencies will realize you have changed your name and update their internal records on their own after you update your name on record with your banks and on any credit cards or loans, the agencies strongly recommend that you also contact each of them and show proof of your name change.

The three major credit reporting agencies issued a press release in February 2022 sharing more guidance for transgender people, including links to information about updating one's name in each agency's records: <https://www.cdiaonline.org/news/2022/02/02/credit-reporting-industry-helping-transgender-and-nonbinary-individuals-prevent-potential-disruptions-to-their-credit/>

You can find information on the name change process on each agency's website:

Equifax: <https://www.equifax.com/personal/education/credit/report/change-update-name-credit-report/>

Experian: <https://www.experian.com/blogs/news/2022/01/31/experian-supports-transgender-and-non-binary-consumers/>

TransUnion: <https://www.transunion.com/blog/credit-advice/transgender-name-change-credit-report>

Several advocacy groups, including TLC, sent a letter to the heads of the reporting agencies in response to the press release, acknowledging their work but urging additional changes; you can review the letter at <https://lgbtq-economics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CRA-coalition-to-CDIA-Feb-24-2022.docx-3.pdf>.

DO I HAVE ADDITIONAL OPTIONS IF I HAVE TRIED INFORMING ALL MY CREDITORS AND THE THREE MAJOR REPORTING AGENCIES OF MY NAME CAHNGE, BUT ONE OR MORE AGENCIES REFUSES TO UPDATE MY NAME OR LINK MY "OLD" AND "NEW" ACCOUNTS?

An additional step that people who are experiencing prolonged difficulties in working with the bureaus should consider is filing a complaint with the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau at <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint/>

We understand that, despite the [public proclamations](#) the three major credit reporting agencies have made that they have improved their systems for recognizing name changes, many people continue to have issues, and more systematic oversight and accountability for the credit reporting agencies is needed. Transgender Law Center is part of the NAME Coalition, which is supporting H.R. 8478, the Credit Reporting Accuracy After a Legal Name Change Act. The Act was introduced in 2022 by Representatives Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) and Katie Porter (D-CA). For more information about the bill and the coalition, see <https://lgbtq-economics.org/2022/07/30/name-coalition-tells-house-to-support-name-change-equity-in-credit-reporting/>

If you find yourself in this situation, while we understand that this doesn't provide an immediate resolution to issues with the credit reporting agencies, we would invite you to share your story with the Coalition using our story collection tool. We will be using them to educate about and elevate the issue: <https://www.research.net/r/name-changes-and-financial-records>

For more information about your rights, consult the Federal Trade Commission <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre34.shtm> and/or the National Consumer Law Center: <https://www.nclc.org/>

If you want to check your credit report after you have legally changed your name, federal law provides that you are entitled to one free credit report every twelve months.

XII. SCHOOL RECORDS

Different school districts, colleges, and universities have different policies regarding changing names and/or gender markers on official school records. If you are currently enrolled in a K-12 school, vocational program, or college or university, consider requesting that your school records be updated as soon as you obtain a name change court order and/or a DMV ID is issued in your new name. All California public educational institutions must recognize a name change court order and some will recognize a new name even before a court order is issued.

You should also be able to update diplomas or other school records from your past. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99), is the federal law protecting the privacy of student records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18 or attend a school beyond the high school level.

Under FERPA, current or former students have a right to seek to amend their school records if those records are "inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights of privacy." Transgender students wishing to change their name and gender marker on their educational records can do so under this federal law.

If a school keeps your former name and gender marker on your educational records, that school may effectively be outing you to anyone who looks at them. As the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit has stated, it is "beyond a doubt" that transgender status is "excruciatingly private and intimate" for those who wish to keep it private. See *Powell v. Schriver*, 175 F.3d 107 (2nd Cir 1999).

Some schools have been reluctant to amend educational records for former students. This can be an issue especially for those individuals who transitioned or came out after they attended the school. FERPA does have some language stating that it is not applicable to former students, but in 2008, the U.S. Department of Education clarified that the language was only applicable to fundraising and similar types of records related to alumni. The final regulations clarify that records that pertain to an individual's previous attendance as a student are "education records" under FERPA. This means that former students can examine and change their education records.

FERPA requires that schools provide parents with an opportunity to inspect and review educational records, but not to receive copies, except in limited circumstances. FERPA also requires your school to give you a formal hearing regarding a requested amendment if you request such a hearing.

For more information, see Lambda Legal's FERPA guide at <http://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/youth-ferpa-faq>. The Department of Education also has several guides to FERPA. See <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

XIII. HEALTH AND PUBLIC BENEFIT RECORDS

If you have Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid program), you can update the name and/or gender information in your account, but the process differs depending on whether you have an SSI/SSDI account or not.

If you have an SSI/SSDI account AND Medi-Cal: The SSA has "SSI-linked Medi-Cal", which will change your information with Medi-Cal once you have changed your name and/or gender marker in your SSI/SSDI account. However, it is a good idea to remind the SSA to forward the name/gender change information to Medi-Cal just to make sure it gets updated.

If you have Medi-Cal ONLY (and not SSI/SSDI): Changing your name and/or gender marker in your SSA account will NOT automatically change your information with Medi-Cal. In this case, you need to contact both the SSA and Medi-Cal to change your name with SSA and Medi-Cal.

If you fail to change this information, you may experience problems when trying to use your Medi-Cal or Medicare benefits. Both agencies are generally good about changing name and/or gender markers on a person's records. However, if you make the change with the SSA but do not do so with SSI/SSDI, it is possible that your name and/or gender in your Medi-Cal or Medicare records will get changed back when a routine records check is done. Make sure to change your name and/or gender markers with SSI/SSDI to ensure your records do not get changed back.

You can change your name on Medi-Cal records by following these steps:

- Change your name with SSA and the DMV and obtain a new Social Security card and driver's license. You will need the documentation of your new name on your Social Security card and driver's license in order to provide ample documentation of your new legal name to your county Medi-Cal office.
- Contact your Medi-Cal caseworker at your local Department of Health and Human Services office. Inform your caseworker of the name change and request and fill out the Change of Information form.
- Make copies of your Social Security card and driver's license or birth certificate that reflect your new name and mail the Change of Information form along with the copies of your identifying documents to your county Department of Health and Human Services office.

Your new Medi-Cal card reflecting the name change should arrive in about eight weeks.

If you have both Medi-Cal and SSI, you must change the gender marker in your Social Security records before they will change the gender marker on your Medi-Cal card.

XIV. PRIVACY AND DISCLOSURE

As mentioned in the introduction to this guide, it's important to realize that although people in the US are generally able to update their name and gender on most documents and records, that does not mean that former legal identities are entirely confidential.

Unless you receive a name change court order confidentially or under seal, name and/or gender change court orders are generally part of the public record. As a result, current and former names are often available to interested parties. Below is more information about a few key examples.

CREDIT AGENCIES

Credit reports issued by credit agencies regularly report past and current names. This is because your past and current names are linked by your Social Security number, which credit reporting agencies have access to.

It may be possible to contact a credit agency (Experian, Equifax, or TransUnion) and explain that reports containing both names may put you in danger, or violate your privacy. However, without an injunction or other legal directive instructing a credit agency not to include this information, they will likely continue to do so. The reason is that name usage is very valuable information for creditors, and may in some instances prevent lending to individuals with past bad credit under a different name. Credit agencies also believe that including all of a person's credit information, including past names and addresses, helps combat identity theft.

You may want to check the actual appearance of the reports issued by each of the credit agencies: they may provide different amounts of information, and it is possible that one may not list both your names. It is also possible that if you can establish a credible fear of violence and harassment, you may be able to get a legal order prohibiting the credit agencies or other information agencies from listing both your names. You may want to check with a lawyer who has experience in this area to see if it is possible.

JOB APPLICATIONS AND OTHER FORMS THAT ASK FOR FORMER NAMES

Also, after updating your name and/or gender on all relevant documents, you may encounter forms or applications that ask for any previous names used. Generally, if you are applying for a job that requires a security clearance, you have to disclose any previous legal names, aliases, or nicknames. If you are asked directly if you have used any aliases or previous names, it may help to seek legal advice directly if you do not wish to disclose.

MUST I DISCLOSE MY PREVIOUS NAME WHEN ASKED IN A JOB APPLICATION PROCESS?

It is very common for employment applications to ask for individuals to list any other names that they have gone by in the past. Many transgender people are distressed by this question and feel strongly that they should not have to disclose this information since their previous name(s) may be gendered and therefore disclosure of these name(s) may “out” a person as trans. Unfortunately, transgender people are under the same obligation to provide this information as non-transgender (cisgender) people.

That said, if the business or organization makes any exceptions to listing a person's former name in their record (such as for a person who has experienced domestic violence), then there are strong arguments that can be made as to why an exception should also be made for transgender applicants. You may want to contact the business or organization to find out if any such exceptions apply to their record listings.

For a fairly good resource that discusses different scenarios and may be helpful in thinking about whether to disclose previous names in an employment process, see this article on zippia.com: <https://www.zippia.com/job-search/lgbtq-jobs/trans-job-seeker-guide/>

AFTER HAVING A LEGAL NAME CHANGE, DO I HAVE TO DISCLOSE MY FORMER NAME IF ASKED ABOUT “ALIASES”?

Whether you are required to disclose your previous name if you are asked about aliases by an official (for example, a judge or attorney in court, police officers, etc.) is, unfortunately, a question with no single correct answer. Generally, an alias is another name that someone goes by in a situation where they have two (or more names) that they are known by regularly. An alias is a name that is attached to your reputation, but not a true (legal) name. An alias is also sometimes considered a fictitious name. Considering these definitions of alias, if you have legally changed your name, your former name would not be an alias, it would simply be a former name.

However, some people may consider a former name to be an alias. If you will be testifying in court, and you feel comfortable doing so, you may wish to disclose your former name and transgender status to your attorney in advance. This way, if any questions come up regarding an alias or former name, your attorney will know. Also, you should not be permitted to be questioned about things that are not relevant to the proceedings; however, your attorney would have to object to questions; otherwise, you have to answer them. This is another reason it could be a good idea to be open with your attorney in advance.

The bottom line is that you may not always be able to choose when, or if, to disclose your former name and sex assigned at birth. This is yet another reason that strong community support structures and anti-discrimination laws are vital: to provide our communities with tools to confront the increased risk of discrimination that sometimes comes from disclosure.

XV. CONCLUSION

We hope you have found this guide useful. Please remember that the information presented in this guide should not be considered legal advice.

If you have any questions about your particular situation, feel free to contact Transgender Law Center's Legal Information Helpdesk at www.transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo for further guidance or resources.

Transgender Law Center is committed to improving the laws and policies that affect our ability to obtain accurate identification. If you have any problems in the process of changing your identity documents, please let us know. Thank you.

TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER

P.O. Box 70976
Oakland, CA 94612
Tel (510) 587-9696

Helpdesk intake form: www.transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo

Transgender Law Center (TLC) is the largest national trans-led organization advocating self-determination for all people. Grounded in legal expertise and committed to racial justice, TLC employs a variety of community-driven strategies to keep transgender and gender nonconforming people alive, thriving, and fighting for liberation.

APPENDIX I: COUNTY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR NAME/GENDER CHANGE COURT ORDER PETITIONERS

Below is a list of some of the most relevant county-specific information for people filing for a name and/or gender change court order in California: the name, address, website, and phone number of the courthouse where these petitions can be filed, as well as special forms and procedures, if any.

Unless otherwise stated, name/gender change petitions are filed in the Civil Division and can be filed in person or by mail (just include two extra copies of your petition and a self-addressed stamped return envelope). Some counties may accept petitions by fax or drop box. Petitions may be e-filed in the following counties (consult the appropriate website for more information; this may not be a comprehensive list): Butte, Calaveras, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, Sutter, Ventura, and Yuba.

Alameda County http://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/ Oakland: René C. Davidson Courthouse 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612 510-891-6000 Hayward: Hayward Hall of Justice, 24405 Amador Street, Hayward, CA 94544 510-690-2700	Alpine County http://www.alpine.courts.ca.gov/ Alpine County Superior Courthouse 14777 State Route 89, Markleeville, CA 96120 530-694-2113
Amador County http://www.amadorcourt.org/dv-civil.aspx Amador County Superior Courthouse 500 Argonaut Lane, Jackson, CA 95642 209-257-2603	Butte County http://www.buttecourt.ca.gov/ North Butte County Courthouse 1775 Concord Ave, Chico, CA 95928 530-532-7009
Calaveras County http://www.calaveras.courts.ca.gov/ Calaveras Superior Court 400 Government Center Drive, San Andreas, CA 95249-9794 209-754-9800	Colusa County http://www.colusa.courts.ca.gov/default.asp Courthouse Annex 532 Oak Street, Colusa, CA 95932 530-458-5149

Contra Costa County http://www.cc-courts.org/default.aspx Wakefield Taylor Courthouse 725 Court Street, Martinez, California 94553 925-608-1000 Forms can only be filed in person between 9:30 and 11am in room 210 (the Probate Examiner)	Del Norte County http://www.delnorte.courts.ca.gov/ Main Courthouse 450 H Street, Crescent City, CA 95531 707-464-8115
El Dorado County http://www.eldoradocourt.org/index.html 1354 Johnson Blvd., South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150 530-573-3075 Extra form required for adult petitioners: "Confidential Information re: Petition for Name Change (Adults Ages 18 & Over), C-2" http://www.eldoradocourt.org/files/LocalForms/Civil/C-2ConfidentialInfoNameChangeWestSlope.pdf	Fresno County http://www.fresno.courts.ca.gov/ BF Sisk Courthouse 1130 O Street, Fresno, CA 93721-2220 559-457-1900
Glenn County http://www.glenncourt.ca.gov/index.shtml Orland Courthouse 821 E. South Street, Orland, CA 95963 530-865-1101 Superior Court of California, County of Glenn 526 West Sycamore St, Willows, CA 95988 530-934-6446	Humboldt County http://www.humboldt.courts.ca.gov/index.htm County Courthouse Building 421 I Street, Eureka, CA 95501 707-445-7256
Imperial County http://www.imperial.courts.ca.gov/Index.htm El Centro Courthouse 939 West Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243 760-482-2200	Inyo County http://www.inyocourt.ca.gov/ Independence Courthouse 168 North Edwards St, Independence, CA 93526 760-872-3038
Kern County https://www.kern.courts.ca.gov/ Metropolitan Division – Bakersfield 1415 Truxtun Ave, Bakersfield, CA 93301 661-868-7205	Lake County http://www.lake.courts.ca.gov/index.htm Lakeport Division 255 N Forbes Street, 4th Floor, Lakeport, CA 95453 707-263-2374

Lassen County http://www.lassencourt.ca.gov/index.shtml Hall of Justice 2610 Riverside Drive, Susanville, CA 96130 530-251-8205, ex 152 Extra form required for adult petitioners: "Name Change Criminal History Assessment" http://www.lassencourt.ca.gov/forms/Name%20Change%20Criminal%20History%20Assessment%20to%20Sheriff%20Dept.pdf	Los Angeles County http://www.lacourt.org/ Changes based off of where you live; use http://www.lacourt.org/filinglocatortnet/ui/filingsearch.aspx?CT=CI to find the civil court location to file. The following courthouses accept name change petitions: Antelope Valley, Lancaster, Burbank, Chatsworth, Compton, Glendale, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Norwalk, Pomona, Santa Monica, Torrance, Van Nuys Extra forms required for adult petitioners: "Civil Case Cover Sheet Addendum and Statement of Location (LACIV-109)" http://www.lacourt.org/forms/pdf/LACIV109.pdf and "Name Change Criminal History Assessment (LACIV 226)" http://www.lacourt.org/forms/pdf/LACIV226.pdf
Madera County http://madera.courts.ca.gov/index.htm Main Courthouse 200 South "G" Street, Madera, CA 93637 559-416-5525	Marin County http://www.marincourt.org/home.cgi Street Address: Hall of Justice 3501 Civic Center Dr., San Rafael, CA 94903 Mailing Address: Hall of Justice P.O. Box 4988, San Rafael, California 94913 415-444-7040
Mariposa County http://www.mariposacourt.org/index.shtml Mariposa County Superior Court 5088 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA 95338 209-966-6599	Mendocino County http://www.mendocino.courts.ca.gov/index.asp Mendocino County Courthouse/Ukiah: 100 North State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 707-468-2003 Ten Mile Branch/Fort Bragg 700 South Franklin Street, Fort Bragg, CA 95437 707-964-3192 Extra form required: "Declaration re: Change of Name" http://www.mendocino.courts.ca.gov/forms_and_filing/forms/MNC-110.pdf
Merced County http://www.mercedcourt.org/index.shtml Old Merced Courthouse 627 W. 21st St., Merced, CA 95340 209-725-4111	Modoc County http://www.modocsuperiorcourt.ca.gov Modoc County Superior Court 205 South East Street, Alturas CA, 96101 530-233-6515

Mono County http://www.mono.courts.ca.gov/index.htm Mammoth Lakes Street Address: 100 Thompsons Way, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 Mammoth Lakes Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1037, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 760-924-5444 Bridgeport Physical Address: 278 Main Street, Bridgeport, CA 93517 Bridgeport Mailing Address: P.O. Box 537, Bridgeport, CA 93517 760-932-5239	Monterey County http://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov/Default.aspx Monterey Courthouse 1200 Aguajito Road, Monterey, CA 93940 831-647-5800 Extra form required: "CLETS Name Change Info - CI-140" http://www.monterey.courts.ca.gov/Documents/Forms/Local%20Court%20Forms/CI-140.pdf
Napa County http://www.napa.courts.ca.gov/ Street Address: Historic Courthouse 810 Coombs Street, Napa, CA 94559 Mailing Address: Historic Courthouse 825 Brown St, Napa, CA 94559 707-299-1130	Nevada County http://nccourt.net/index.shtml Historic Courthouse 201 Church Street, Nevada City, CA 95959 530-265-1293 Petitions are filed in the Civil and Family Division.
Orange County https://www.occourts.org/index.html Central Justice Center 700 Civic Center Drive W, Santa Ana, CA 92701 657-622-6878 Extra form required: "Name Change Notice of Related Cases" https://www.occourts.org/forms/local/13008.pdf	Placer County http://www.placer.courts.ca.gov/index.html Santucci Justice Center Courthouse 10820 Justice Center Drive, Roseville, CA 95678 916-408-6000 Extra form required for adult petitioners: "CLETS Background Information Supplement" http://www.placer.courts.ca.gov/forms/Addendum_Name_Change_Packet-2016.pdf
Plumas County http://www.plumascourt.ca.gov/ Plumas Superior Court 520 Main Street, Room 104, Quincy, CA 95971 530-283-6305	Riverside County http://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov/index.shtml Changes based off of where you live; use https://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov/localrules/civilwhe-retofile.pdf under section (d) on pages 6-8 to find your location. The following courthouses accept name change petitions: Riverside Historic Courthouse, Hemet Courthouse, Palm Springs Branch, and Blythe Courthouse. Extra form required: "Certificate of Counsel (Local Form RI-C1032)" http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/localfrms/ri-ci032.pdf

Sacramento County https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/default.aspx Hall of Justice Building 813 6th St, Sacramento, CA 95814 916-874-5522 Petitions will only be accepted at the designated counter for filing in Room 212 Tuesday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Extra form required: "Name Change Criminal History Addendum" included in county-issued packets available at https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/civil/filing-instructions.aspx#name-change	San Benito County http://www.sanbenito.courts.ca.gov/new_site/index.shtml Superior Court of California, San Benito County 450 4th St, Hollister, CA 95023 831-636-4057 Extra form required: "CLETS-001 - California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System Information Form" http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/clets001.pdf
San Bernardino County https://www.sb-court.org/Locations/SanBernardino/Civil.aspx San Bernardino District – Civil Division 247 W 3rd St, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0210 909-708-8678 Extra forms required: "Certificate of Assignment" https://www.sb-court.org/sites/default/files/Forms%20and%20Rules/13-16503-360CertificateOfAssignmentfillable.pdf and, for adult petitioners, "Declaration of Petitioner and Request for Records Check" https://www.sb-court.org/sites/default/files/Forms%20and%20Rules/SB-380.pdf	San Diego County http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov/portal/page?_pageid=55.1555020&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL Hall of Justice 330 W Broadway, Room 225, San Diego, CA 92101 619-450-7275 North County Regional Center 325 South Melrose Drive, Vista, CA 92081 760-201-8600
San Francisco County https://sfsuperiorcourt.org/divisions/civil Civic Center Courthouse 400 McAllister St, San Francisco, CA 94102 415-551-4000	San Joaquin County https://www.sjcourts.org/general-info/court-locations-contact/stockton-courthouse/ Superior Court of California – San Joaquin Civil Division 180 E Weber Ave, Ste 200, Stockton, CA 95202 209-992-5693
San Luis Obispo County https://www.slo.courts.ca.gov/dv/civil.htm Civil & Family Law Branch 1035 Palm Street, Room 385, San Luis Obispo, CA, 93408 805-781-5677	San Mateo County https://www.sanmateocourt.org/general_info/locations_and_contact_info/hoj.php Hall of Justice and Records 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063 650-261-5100

Santa Barbara County http://www.sbcourts.org/qi/loc/sb.shtm Santa Barbara Court Anacapa Division 1100 Anacapa Street (Mailing Address P.O. Box 21107), Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1107 805-882-4520 Santa Maria Court Cook Division 312-C East Cook Street, Building E, Santa Maria, CA 93454 805-614-6414	Santa Clara County http://www.sccourt.org/general_info/contact/courthouses/dts.shtml Downtown Superior Court 191 North First Street San Jose, CA 95113 408-882-2100 Petitions are filed in the Probate Division. Extra form required for adult petitioners: "CLETS Background Information Form" http://www.sccourt.org/forms_and_filing/forms/PB-4010.pdf
Santa Cruz County https://www.santacruzcourt.org/divisions/civil Santa Cruz Courthouse 701 Ocean Street, Rm 110, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 831-420-2200	Shasta County http://www.shastacourts.com/index.shtml Main Courthouse 1500 Court Street, Room 319, Redding, CA 96001 530-245-6789
Sierra County https://www.sierra.courts.ca.gov/generalinfo/contact_location.htm Sierra County Superior Court 100 Courthouse Square, Downieville, CA 95936 530-289-3698	Siskiyou County http://www.siskiyou.courts.ca.gov/generalinfo/contact_locations.htm Yreka Court Location 311 4th Street, Rm 206, Yreka, CA 96097 530-842-8182
Solano County http://www.solano.courts.ca.gov/Courts/CivilCourt.html Old Solano Courthouse, Civil Clerk's Office 580 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533 707-207-7330 A background check form is required but only available in person.	Sonoma County http://sonoma.courts.ca.gov/info/locations/hall-of-justice Hall of Justice Room 107J 600 Administration Drive Santa Rosa CA 95403
Stanislaus County https://www.stanct.org/city-towers-courthouse-civil City Towers Courthouse 801 10th Street, 4th Floor, Modesto, CA 95354 209-530-3100	Sutter County https://www.suttercourts.com/general-info/locations-phone-numbers Sutter County Superior Courthouse 1175 Civic Center Blvd, Yuba City, CA 95993 Main: 530-822-3300 Civil: 530-822-3304

Tehama County http://www.tehamacourt.ca.gov/directions.htm Tehama County Courthouse 1740 Walnut Street, Red Bluff, CA 96080 530-527-3484	Trinity County https://www.trinity.courts.ca.gov/ Main Courthouse 11 Court Street, Weaverville, CA 96093 530-623-1208
Tulare County http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov/index.php?section=civil Tulare County Superior Court, Civil Division 221 South Mooney Blvd, Room 201, Visalia, CA 93291 559-730-5000	Tuolumne County https://www.tuolumne.courts.ca.gov/general-info/directions.shtml Historic Courthouse 41 West Yaney Avenue, Sonora, CA 95370 209-533-5555
Ventura County http://www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/civil.html Ventura Hall of Justice Street Address: 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, California 93009 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 6489 Ventura, California 93006-6489 805-289-8525	Yolo County https://www.yolo.courts.ca.gov/divisions/civil Main Courthouse 1000 Main St, Woodland, CA 95695 530-406-6704
Yuba County http://www.yubacourts.org/divisions/civil Civil Division, Yuba County Superior Court 215 Fifth Street, Suite 200, Marysville, CA 95901 530-740-1800 Ext. 6 Extra form required: "Confidential CLETS/CJIS Information Sheet" http://www.yubacourts.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/CourtForms/G04050B.pdf	

APPENDIX II: SAMPLE PHYSICIAN'S LETTER FOR GENDER MARKER CHANGE ON USCIS IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

(Note: a similar physician's letter was previously required to update the gender marker on a US passport and in Social Security Administration records, but these requirements were phased out in 2021 and 2022.)

USCIS Sample Language for Health Care Certification: It is important that your letter contain the information/language below. If possible, it should be printed on your medical provider's office letterhead. We strongly recommend copying the language below and emailing it to your provider, or printing out this page and sharing it with your provider.

Health Care Certification

[Date]

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a licensed *[counselor, nurse practitioner, physician, physician assistant, psychologist, social worker, or therapist]*, and I have treated or evaluated *[patient's name]* in relation to *[patient's name]*'s gender identity. In my professional opinion, *[patient's name]*'s gender identity is consistent with a designation of *[male or female]*.

Patient's Information:

Full Name:

Date of Birth:

Health Care Professional's Information:

Full Name:

Organization (if any):

Address:

Phone Number:

License Type: [counselor, nurse practitioner, physician, physician assistant, psychologist, social worker, or therapist]

License Number:

Issuing State, Country, or other Jurisdiction of License:

Sincerely,

[Health Care Professional's Signature]

[Health Care Professional's Printed Name]

