



Adult Name Change Process

54 Pa.C.S.A. § 701 et seq.

An adult (age 18 and over) who wishes to change their name must file a petition in the Court of Common Pleas. You, the petitioner, must live in the City and County of Philadelphia.

Note: Name change petitions for minors (age 17 and under) are filed with the Clerk of Family Court at 1501 Arch Street, 11th floor – (215)686-3805.

You can expect to have a conference hearing scheduled within ninety (90) days from filing and to incur costs that could exceed \$900.00 to complete the process requirements.

Note: Any fees paid to court offices must be made by cash, credit card (with valid identification) or money order.

The following step-by-step guide should be followed to complete the process.

Step One – Fingerprints

You are required to obtain a set of fingerprints. The court cannot recommend any specific place where you can get fingerprinted. A quick search of the web will return places in your area.

Note: It is important to obtain a set of fingerprints before you proceed to the next step.

Step Two – File a Petition

Go to the court's web-site and fill out the forms. Click this link: [Name Change Petition Form](#) or find the forms in the *Motions and Petitions Filing Forms* area under *Court of Common Pleas Trial Division – Civil* here: www.philacourts.us/forms.

Bring the completed forms and the following to the *Civil Filing Center* located in room 296, City Hall, Philadelphia PA 19107:

- ❖ A copy of your birth certificate
- ❖ A copy of your social security card
- ❖ State-issued photo identification
- ❖ The original fingerprint card
- ❖ Filing fee of **\$333.23** payable by credit card, cash or money order. **Personal checks are not accepted.**

Step Three – Public Notification

Once you have received the formal notice that your petition is scheduled for a hearing, you must notify the public you have filed a petition to change your name by posting a notice in two newspapers of general circulation. The form of notice is page 6 of the [Name Change Petition Form](#).

- ❖ One notice must be published in The Legal Intelligencer (215)557-2300.
- ❖ The second notice must be published in another publication of general circulation in Philadelphia. A list of suggested publications can be provided upon request.

Step Four – Judgment Searches

You must obtain searches in Philadelphia and any other county where they resided in the past five (5) years to show whether or not there are any judgments, decrees or other matters against you. You must contact other counties to obtain the certified judgment searches or hire an agency/company to do the searches for you.

The searches for Philadelphia must be obtained from:

- ❖ *Family Court – Customer Service Unit* – 1501 Arch Street, 8th floor. Cost = **\$20.00**.
- ❖ *Office of Judicial Records – Civil Filing Center* – Room 296, City Hall. Cost = **\$58.52**.

Note: Bring a copy of your filed petition and court order for hearing to each of the offices where the searches must be completed.

Note: Searches must be completed within thirty (30) of the hearing. DO NOT get your searches done TOO EARLY. Wait until under thirty (30) days before hearing date.

Step Five – Conference Hearing

Bring all documents including proof of the publication announcements and all search results including the *Family Court* and *Office of Judicial Records* searches.

A Hearing Officer will review the required paperwork and discuss any issues with any of the documents presented. At the conclusion of the conference hearing, the Officer will make a recommendation to a judge. Following the recommendation, a decree may be entered and mailed to the petitioner or a new hearing with a judge may be scheduled.

Step Six – Certification of Decree

Once you receive the final decree approving the name change, it is suggested that you get a certified copy of the decree from the *Civil Filing Center* in room 296, City Hall, Philadelphia PA 19107. The cost to obtain a certified copy of any document is \$41.58. Having certified copies of the decree is important and necessary for updating your social security card, driver's license and passport among other pieces of identification.

**If you have questions about any of the steps, please call the
Discovery Court Program at (215)686-7914.**