

## Name Change 101

### Changing Your Name in Cook County, IL

#### What's the criteria for a name change in Cook County?

- You must live in Illinois for at least *6 months* before applying
- You must currently reside in Cook County
- If you have a felony conviction, you have to wait 10 years from the date of the *completion* of your sentence to change your name.
- You cannot apply for a name change if you have convicted of any felonies or misdemeanors that require registration with the Sex Offenders Office or if you have any identity theft conviction.

**TJLP is proud to offer *free* and affirming assistance with the name change process in Cook County. Our "Name Change Mobilization" meets the last Friday of every month from 9am-3pm in room 1202 of the Daley Center. For more information, write to us at [namechange@tjlp.org](mailto:namechange@tjlp.org)**

#### FEE BREAKDOWN:

Filing Fee:	\$334
Publication Fee:	\$110
Certified Copy:	\$9
Birth Cert. Fee:	\$15

**TOTAL: \$468**

*NOTE: If you are granted a fee waiver, all above fees are waived except Birth Certificate Fee.*

#### What is the procedure for a name change in Cook County?

1. You must complete: **1)** the Name Change Petition, **2)** the Judgment form, and **3)** the Cover Sheet. The Affidavit must be *signed* by someone who knows you, but not a relative, and *notarized* before submitting all forms. Once these have been completed, make 2 copies of the petition and the judgment. Forms on the web at: [cookcountyclerkofcourt.org](http://cookcountyclerkofcourt.org)
2. Once forms are completed, take them (Name Change Petition and Notarized Affidavit, Judgment, and Cover Sheet) to the Daley Center, 50 W. Washington, Room 1202 between 8:30am & 4:30pm.
3. To file the forms, you must either pay the fee or apply for a fee waiver. The fee waiver form is available online or at the Daley Center in room 1701. To use the waiver, you'll have fill out a fee waiver form and go in front of a judge briefly to answer some questions about your income. Fee waiver petitions are heard between 10:30am-12pm and occasionally in the afternoon.
4. Once you have filed in room 1202, you will be given a court date, judge, room number, and time to appear in court at least 8 weeks from the date of filing.
5. You *must* publish your name in a newspaper for three (3) consecutive weeks. In Cook County, it is standard practice to publish in the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, 415 N. State St., Chicago, IL 60610, ph. 312-644-1672. Send them one copy of the petition (not including the affidavit), the court date, time, name of judge, courtroom, case number, and the publication fee (\$110) in cash, check, or credit card payable to *Law Bulletin Publishing Company*. They'll publish your notice and then mail you Certificate of Publication.
6. Go to your court date with your Certificate of Publication, Judgment form, Petition, and Identity Documents. If you miss the court date, you must begin the whole process again. *INSIDER TIP:* If your judge seems hostile, say: "your honor, at this time I'd like to ask for a continuance" *before* a decision is made on your case, and then get an attorney to come back with you for your next court date.

#### Special rules for People Under 18 Years Old:

An order changing a young person's name may not be entered unless the court finds that it is necessary to serve the their best interest. Parents and/or guardians will need to be involved in the process except in exceptional circumstances. When both parents are in agreement to the name change, and all forms are completed and filed, *the judge may hear the case the day of filing* (no publication). The judge will grant, deny or continue the name change. If one parent cannot be located or the one parent is not in agreement with the name change, then the name change must be published for three consecutive weeks and the name change filed in court on the date given.

#### What is the procedure to change an Illinois birth certificate?

After the court has entered the judgment to change your name, you are able to change your birth certificate if you were born in Illinois by doing the following: **1)** Obtain a certified copy of the Court Judgment from the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court. **2)** Obtain a copy of your old birth certificate. **3)** download and fill out a corrected birth certificate form available at [http://www.idph.state.il.us/vitalrecords/pdf/Affidavit\\_Cert\\_Correction.pdf](http://www.idph.state.il.us/vitalrecords/pdf/Affidavit_Cert_Correction.pdf) **4)** Mail both the copy of the old birth certificate and the certified copy of the judgment for a change of name along with a \$15 money order to: Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Records, 925 E. Ridgely Ave, Springfield, IL 62702. **5)** Wait for your new birth certificate in the mail! *NOTE: Unlike changing your name, changing your gender marker on your birth certificate can be a very difficult process. See the laws in the state you were born in: [www.lambdalegal.org/our-work/issues/rights-of-transgender-people/sources-of-authority-to-amend.html](http://www.lambdalegal.org/our-work/issues/rights-of-transgender-people/sources-of-authority-to-amend.html)*

#### DMV

If you are getting a driver's license or state ID for the first time, the fee is \$30. If you are getting a replacement driver's license or state ID, the fee is \$5. If you are homeless, you can obtain a no-fee identification card by submitting a Homeless Status Certification with other proper documentation.

#### Immigration

If you are undocumented, you are not eligible for a legal name change in Illinois. If you are a legal permanent resident, you are eligible for a legal name change and will need to have proof of residency at your court date. You should discuss these issues further with an attorney.