

Guide to Name Change

in Chester County, Pennsylvania

General Info

1. In order to change your name legally, both adults and minors need to go through your local court to get a court ordered name change. **Below are instructions.**
2. Once you have the court order, you will be able to change your name on your birth certificate if you were born in PA. If you were born in a different state, check out the requirements for your birth state. <https://transequality.org/documents>
3. Other places you will be able to change your name: IDs, driver's license, passport, professional licenses, car title, car registration, house deed, mortgages, and more.
4. Note: Be sure to write all 3 credit bureaus to inform them of your name change, as this can sometimes cause you to lose your credit history. **This happens a lot!**

Changing your name with a Court Order:

1. Download forms from the prothonotary office in Chester County <https://www.chesco.org/DocumentCenter/View/50589/Name-Change-Minor-Judicial-Ages-0-to-17?bidId=>
2. Go to court house and submit the petition at the prothonotary's office
201 Market St #1425, West Chester, PA 19380
3. You can also file the petition electronically. <https://efiling.chesco.org/>
201 Market St #1425, West Chester, PA 19380
4. You can file a petition to waive publication requirements <https://www.chesco.org/DocumentCenter/View/63043/Name-Change---Waiver-of-Publication-and-Sealing-of-Records-Order>
5. Schedule fingerprints at the West Chester Sheriff's Office. Appointments are required. Call **#610.344.6984**. The Sheriff's office is located in the Justice Center, **201 W Market St, West Chester, PA 19830**. Fingerprints are NOT required for minors 12 years old or younger.
6. Obtain certified copy of minor's birth certificate to be submitted

7. Fees: The name change fee is **\$194.75**. Fees can be made via check, cash, money order, Visa, Mastercard, and Discover. Please make checks payable to the “Prothonotary of Chester County.”
8. Office Hours: Prothonotary office hours are from 8:30am to 4:30pm but filings are only accepted until 4:15pm.
9. Bring these things to the prothonotary office: petition, finger prints, envelope, and money to pay fee.
10. Your hearing will be scheduled around 90 days following the filing of your petition.
11. Publications. One you have filed the petition, with the birth certificate and fingerprints and the fee (\$194.75), you will need to publish your intent to do a name change in 2 publications.
12. Publications must be published in the Chester County Law Reporter, which is the official publication for legal notices for Chester County. Notice must also be published in one (1) of the following newspapers of general circulation within Chester County. These are Daily Local News (legals@dailylocal.com) or Pottstown Mercury (legals@pottsmmerc.com). Both are located at **390 Eagleview Blvd, Exton, PA 19341**.
13. See here: <https://www.chescobar.org/?pg=ChangeofName>. You must bring proof of publication to your court hearing.
14. Cost of Publication at Chester County Law Reporter. Advertising cost is **\$90.00**. Please send a check made out to Chester County Law Reporter or proceed to check out on this website to receive a proof of Publication Affidavit. The cost includes publication and one affidavit (proof of publication). Notice must be submitted at last two (2) weeks prior to the court date. If you have any questions regarding advertising, contact the Bar Association at **610.692.1889**. Use this link to submit online for publication. <https://www.chescobar.org/?pg=ChangeofName>
15. Name Search. Immediately following filing the petition, visit the following 2 offices and ask for name search for minor name change.
16. Name Search Office #1: Recorder of Deeds, **313 W. Market St, Suite 3302, West Chester, PA 19380. #610.344.6330**. You can call, email or stop in to the office. You will be asked to provide: hearing date, current name of the minor, whether the petition is for adult or minor, contact person and phone number.
17. Name Search Office #2: **201 W Market Street, Suite 2200. West Chester, PA 19380-0989. #610.344.6335**
18. The court will set a court date and notify you of the date. Your publications must be done before the court date and you must have proof of publication.

19. If you have filed a petition to waive the publication requirements, there is an initial hearing for this in advance of your name change hearing. You must show to the court why publication of notice would jeopardize the safety of the petitioner or their child. Legal counsel may be indicated for a successful petition to waive publication requirements.
20. On the day of your hearing, bring copies of all your paperwork but you must bring proof of both publications and of the name searches.

Enjoy your name change.

You may be nervous but unless there is a reason (large outstanding debt, felonies, etc) for your name change to be denied, you can expect that your name change will be approved.

TIP:

Ask for multiple certified copies with court seal once you receive your official name change. Do this while you are still at the court. Some places (like changing name on passport) will ask for an official, original copy of your name change court order — you want to have more than one copy with the court seal. This usually just costs a couple dollars.

Places to change your name once you receive your court order.

- o Social security card
- o Passport
- o Driver's License
- o Vehicle Registration
- o Car insurance
- o Medical Insurance card
- o Doctors offices
- o HR paperwork for work
- o At your bank and on your credit cards

Important: send letters to all 3 credit bureaus with a copy of your name change court order. It is common that your credit history gets lost with a name change.

Congratulations!

PS: If you need more help with this, please contact us. We are happy to help. Find all of our contact info on [ArriveTherapy.com](https://www.ArriveTherapy.com)