

Instructions to change the name of an adult.

You can print out these instructions to use as a checklist.

Step 1: Fill out your court forms.

Fill out these forms:

- ***Petition to Change the Name of an Adult* [1]**

This form asks the judge to change your name. It also tells the judge if you have a criminal record.

This form **MUST** be signed in front of a notary. Do **not** sign it until you are in front of a notary.

- ***Order Changing the Name of an Adult* [2]**

The judge signs this form to legally change your name. Fill out all spaces on the form except for the judge's signature.

Fill out this additional form *only* if you have a low-income, receive public assistance because you have a low income, or cannot pay the court filing fee:

- ***Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs* [3]**. This form asks the judge to waive the court filing fee. The judge may ask you to present evidence of income and expenses at a hearing. Read **Court Fees & Fee Waivers** [4] for more information

Note: You can print your court forms and fill them out neatly in blue or black ink. Or, you can use our **Automated Online Interview for Adult Name Change** [5] to help you fill out the forms online.

Fill out all the spaces on the forms unless instructed otherwise. The judge and court clerks will not fill them out for you. The judge may deny the name change if the information is inaccurate or incomplete.

Step 2: Get your fingerprints taken.

Get a legible and complete set of your fingerprints made on a Texas Department of Public Safety of Federal Bureau of Investigations fingerprint card. There will be a fee for this service. Check with your county law library or local law enforcement to learn where to get your fingerprints taken.

Step 3: Collect additional paperwork if you have a felony conviction or you are a sex offender.

If you have a felony conviction: For each felony conviction, get proof that either: 1) you have been pardoned or 2) it has been at least two years since you were discharged or completed probation.

- If you were pardoned, get a copy of your pardon or clemency proclamation from the Secretary of State Registrations Unit. Get more information here: **FAQs about Clemency Process** [6].
- If you served time in a Texas prison, get a copy of your discharge papers from the Classification and Records Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. If you served time in another state or federal prison, get a copy of your discharge papers from that state's department of criminal justice or the Federal Bureau of Prisons.
- If you were on felony probation or juvenile probation for a felony, get proof that you completed your period of probation from the district clerk's office in the county where you were prosecuted.

If you are required to register as a sex offender: Get proof that you have notified local law enforcement that you intend to ask the court to change your name

Write **Exhibit** at the top of each document and attach each document to your *Petition to Change the*

Name of an Adult form.

Step 4: Make copies.

Make a copy of your completed *Petition to Change the Name of an Adult*, fingerprint card and, if applicable, your *Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs*.

Step 5: File your Petition in the county where you live.

You can file in person or e-file online.

To file in person, take the following to the district clerk's office in the county where you live:

- *Petition to Change the Name of an Adult*
- Fingerprint Card
- *Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs* (only if you are asking the judge to waive the filing fee)

To e-file online, follow the instructions included with the **Automated Online Interview for Adult Name Change** [5]. You will e-file your *Petition* and, if applicable, a *Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs*. Do not include your fingerprint card. If you e-file, take your fingerprint card to your court hearing.

Whether you file in person or e-file online, you must **pay a filing fee** or, if you have a low-income, file a *Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs*. Contact the district clerk's office in your county to learn the filing fee for an adult name change.

If you file in person, the clerk will "file-stamp" the copy of your *Petition* with the date and give the copy back to you.

Step 6: Get ready for court.

Contact the District Clerk's Office in your county to learn:

- How to get an uncontested hearing for an adult name change. Some counties will schedule a date and time for your hearing. Other counties have a time you can walk-in to see the judge.
- If there are local rules that you need to know for your name change case.
- If the court requires you to get a criminal background check before your hearing.
 - If you need a criminal background check, mail your fingerprint card to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) with a file-stamped copy of your *Petition to Change the Name of an Adult* with the court. There is a fee for this service.
 - DPS will send the results directly to the court. Visit the **Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)** [7] website for specific instructions on submitting fingerprint cards for a legal name change.
- Read **TIPS for the Courtroom** [8].

Step 7: Go to your court hearing.

Bring the following to your court hearing:

- Your *Order Changing the Name of an Adult* form completely filled out, except for the judge's signature. **and**
- A file-stamped copy of your *Petition to Change the Name of an Adult* and all the exhibits you filed with your *Petition*. **and**

- Your fingerprint card (if you e-filed your *Petition*). **and**
- Proof of your identity, such as your passport, driver's license or state identification card.

When you get to the courthouse, stop by the clerk's office to find out where to go and whether or not you need to bring the court file.

When you get to the courtroom, check in with the clerk.

When the judge calls your case, stand in front of the judge's bench.

- The judge will swear you in and review your forms.
- The judge may ask you some questions about your name change.
- Some judges will require that you testify under oath that you are not changing your name to avoid criminal prosecution or get out of paying a debt.

If everything is in order, the judge will sign your *Order Changing the Name of an Adult* form.

Step 8: File the Order signed by the Judge and get certified copies.

Once the judge has signed the Order changing your name, the clerk in the courtroom may file the Order or you may need to take the Order to the clerk's office to be filed. Your name will not be changed until the Order is filed.

Get several certified copies of the Order from the clerk. There is a fee for certified copies, but you will need certified copies of the Order to get your official documents changed to your new name.

Step 9: Change official documents to show your new name.

It is your responsibility to have your official documents changed to show your new name.

To change your social security card, take or mail a certified copy of the order changing your name to your local social security office. For more information visit: [U.S. Social Security Administration \[9\]](#).

To change your driver's license or state identification card, you must take a certified copy of the order changing your name to a Texas Department of Public Safety office. For more information, contact the [Texas Department of Public Safety \(DPS\) \[10\]](#).

To change your name on your voter registration card, notify your County Voter Registrar in writing. For more information, contact the [Texas Secretary of State \[11\]](#).

To change your name on your passport, notify the [U.S. State Department \[12\]](#).

You can also change your name on your birth certificate if you choose, but it is not required. If you wish to change your birth certificate, you will need to get an [Application to Amend Certificate of Birth \[13\]](#) from the Texas Vital Statistics Unit.

© TexasLawHelp.org - Source URL: <https://texaslawhelp.org/checklist/instructions-change-name-adult>
Links

[1] https://texaslawhelp.org/sites/default/files/fm_nca_100_name_adult_petition_english_nov16.pdf

[2] https://texaslawhelp.org/sites/default/files/fm_nca_200_name_adult_order_english_july16.pdf

[3] https://texaslawhelp.org/sites/default/files/tx-pr-pay-112_scot_statement_of_inability_to_pay_court_costs.pdf

[4] <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/court-fees-fee-waivers>

[5] <https://selfhelp.efiletexas.gov/SRL/SRL/>

[6] <http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/bpp/faq/ClemencyProcess.html>



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
CRIME RECORDS SERVICE
Access & Dissemination Bureau



SUBMISSION OF FINGERPRINT CARDS TO DPS/FBI FOR LEGAL NAME CHANGE

The Texas Family Code, Section 45.102, requires that each petition include a legible and complete set of the petitioner's fingerprints on a fingerprint card format acceptable to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

WHERE TO GET FINGERPRINTS TAKEN: The petitioner may call 1-888-467-2080 to schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted at a "Print and Go" FAST location or access the website at www.identogo.com and select **Option B – Fingerprint Cards**. Fingerprints **cannot** be transmitted to DPS electronically. The fee for this fingerprinting service is \$10.00. Petitioner must submit fingerprint cards and all required information to DPS by mail.

FEES: Under the authority of Chapter 411.088, Texas Government Code, DPS charges a \$15.00 fee and the FBI a \$12.00 fee for processing State and Federal Criminal History Checks. A cashier's check, certified check, personal check or money order made payable to Texas DPS in the amount of \$27.00 must be attached to the fingerprint card(s).

INFORMATION ON THE CARD: All cards submitted to DPS by mail must include a complete set of legible fingerprints and the following information about the petitioner and court being petitioned:

- Full Printed Legal Name
- Race
- Signature (Must match Legal Name)
- Petitioner's Mailing Address
- District Court Name/Number and City (in the ORI field)
- District Court Originating Agency Number (in the ORI field)
- Reason Fingerprinted (Legal Name Change - Family Code Section 45.001)
- Sex
- Date of Birth
- Social Security Number
- Cause/Case Number (in the OCA field)
- Driver License Number (in the MNU field)

***A copy of the petition MUST be attached to the fingerprint card(s).**

WHERE TO SEND COMPLETED CARD: Mail completed fingerprint card(s) and payment to:
Texas Department of Public Safety
Central Cash Receiving
P. O. Box 15999
Austin, Texas 78761-5999

WHERE RESPONSES WILL BE SENT: Responses, other than rejects, will be sent from DPS directly to the court.

QUESTIONS: For questions, call the Criminal History Inquiry Unit at (512) 424-5079, Option 3.

Extreme care should be taken in following the directions above to alleviate any delay in processing the request.