

# NAME & GENDER MARKER CHANGE GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS OF WASHINGTON, DC

**DISCLAIMER:** This guide provides information about the legal and administrative steps associated with changing one's name and gender on identity documents. Please note that specific steps may have changed since this guide was printed, and every individual may have unique name and gender change needs. This guide is to be used as a resource only and does not constitute legal advice.



WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH

*we see you.*



## **INTRODUCTION**

This guide provides an outline for District of Columbia residents who wish to change their name and/or gender marker on identity documents and other records. Below are the most common steps to make these changes in the District. You will find information regarding when and where we recommend completing each step, what documents you will need to bring, how long the process should take, and any additional requirements.

For most clients, we recommend pursuing these steps in the order listed. You may, however, have unique needs/goals that require a different approach to pursuing name and/or gender marker changes on your identity documents. For example, if you only want to change your gender marker, you can skip Section 1: Obtaining a Court Order for Name Change and proceed to Section 2 instead.

If you have questions or concerns about the process, we encourage you to contact the Whitman-Walker Legal Services Program to discuss your specific situation and goals. Starting the name and/or gender marker change process can be daunting, and we are happy to guide you through the necessary steps. Together, we can create a name/gender marker change strategy that fits your unique needs. Call us at (202) 939-7630 or email [contact-legal@whitman-walker.org](mailto:contact-legal@whitman-walker.org).

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Obtaining a Court Order for Change of Name.....	5
2. Changing your name and gender with the Social Security Administration (SSA).....	14
3. Changing your name and gender with the DC Department of Motor Vehicles.....	19
4. Changing your name and gender on your birth certificate .....	25
5. Changing your name and gender on your U.S. Passport .....	27
6. Changing your name and gender with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) .....	29
7. Changing your name and gender with the Selective Service, DC Department of Human Services Economic Security Administration (DC-ESA), insurance providers, creditors, and others .....	30

## DC ADULT NAME & GENDER CHANGE ROAD MAP

### STEP 1: File Name Change with DC Superior Court

- ✓ Completed name change packet
- ✓ Identity document (*see inside for details*)
- ✓ Valid photo ID with current legal name (*see inside for details*)
- ✓ Proof of DC residency (*see inside for details*)
- ✓ \$60 filing fee or fee waiver if you qualify

Receive the Order and Notice of Final Hearing by email.

### STEP 2: Notify Your Creditors After You Receive Order and Notice of Final Hearing

SEND WITHIN 10 DAYS BY CERTIFIED MAIL:

- ✓ A copy of your signed name change application to each creditor
- ✓ Keep all receipts, tracking numbers and return receipts as proof for Final Hearing
- ✓ Email to Judge-in-Chambers ([JICOffice@dcsc.goc](mailto:JICOffice@dcsc.goc)) 2-3 days prior to the final hearing, or bring in person if you have an in person hearing

### STEP 3: Request Gender Marker Letters (if updating your gender marker as well)

REQUEST FROM MEDICAL PROVIDER:

- ✓ Letters of Gender Marker Change (one for each ID document agency)

### STEP 4: Attend Final Hearing either virtually or in person

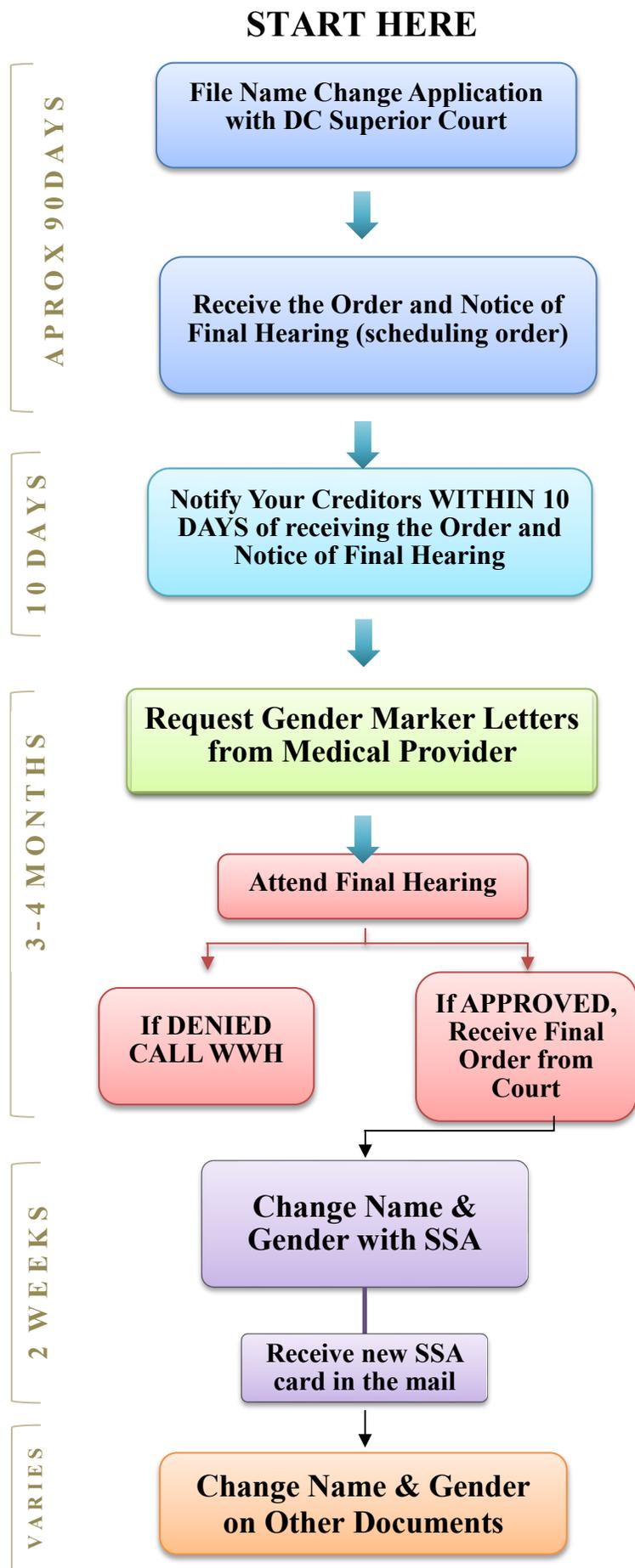
- ✓ Request certified copies

### STEP 5: Update Name & Gender at SSA

MAIL TO YOUR LOCAL SSA OFFICE:

- ✓ Application for Social Security Card (form SS-5)
- ✓ Certified copy of Court Order
- ✓ Letter of Gender Marker Change
- ✓ Identity document (*see inside for details*)
- ✓ Proof of US citizenship or lawful immigration status (*see inside for details*)

### STEP 6: Update Other Documents



## **DC NAME & GENDER MARKER CHANGE CHECKLIST**

**This checklist is the client take-away form that we use at our Name & Gender Change Clinics. It summarizes the first few steps of a typical name and/or gender change client.**

**STEP 1. File the Application for Change of Name with the Court:** Submit the following documents to DC Superior Court in person, via drop box, via mail, or online via CaseFileXpress (“CFX”)

- Completed Name Change Application;
- Copy of valid identification (current driver’s license, ID card, or passport);
- The original or copy of your birth certificate<sup>1</sup> - note that non-English birth certificates must be translated;
- Proof of current D.C. residency (DC ID/driver’s license or other documentation with DC address, such as recent paystub, utility bill, official mail);
- The \$60 filing fee (cash, or certified check or money order payable to “Clerk, DC Superior Court”) **or** a completed Fee Waiver Application;
- [*if applicable*] Motion to Seal. Once approved, the order sealing the name change record will be mailed to you.

**STEP 2. Mail notices to interested parties** as indicated on the signed Order and Notice of Final Hearing

- You must mail notices **within 10 days of receiving** the Order and Notice of Final Hearing
- Mail the notices by Certified Mail with return receipt requested.
- Keep all U.S. Postal Service receipts.
- Combine the signed Affidavit with the USPS certified mail receipts into one PDF. Name the PDF with your current legal last name and case number. This will need to be emailed to Judge-in-Chambers ([JICOffice@dcsc.goc](mailto:JICOffice@dcsc.goc)) 2-3 days prior to the final hearing.

**STEP 3. Attend Final Hearing**

- The judge may hold a brief hearing.
- Receive certified copy of Court Order for Change of Name by mail.
- Call the Civil Division at 202-879-1133 or email [CivilDocket@dcsc.gov](mailto:CivilDocket@dcsc.gov) to request additional certified copies of the Court Order for Change of Name. Additional copies may cost a fee.

**STEP 4. Mail the following documents to your local Social Security Administration office or call to ask for an in-person appointment** (<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>):

- Application for Social Security card (<https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>) with your changed name;
- Certified copy of the Court Order for Change of Name;
- An unexpired identification document, such as certified medical record, driver’s license, state-issued identity card, or U.S. passport (it is OK if your ID document includes your former name);
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful immigration status, such as a passport, birth certificate, or immigration documentation [**do not submit immigration documents by mail**]; and
- A signed letter on letterhead from your doctor (if doing gender change).

**STEP 5. Go to the D.C. Department of Motor Vehicles** and bring the following documents:

- A completed DMV Gender Self-Designation Form (if doing gender marker change) (<https://dmv.dc.gov/publication/gender-self-designation-form>);
- A certified copy of your Court Order for a Name Change;
- Your newly issued Social Security card with your new name;
- Your current driver’s license or ID card (which you must turn in);
- Cash, check, money order, or credit card to pay the fee for a new ID.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is no longer a mandatory requirement, but some judges may exercise their discretion and ask for the birth certificate. We recommend either presenting your birth certificate at filing or bringing it with you to the final hearing (in case the judge asks for it).

## **1. OBTAINING A COURT ORDER FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

The first step in changing your name in D.C. is to apply for a court order from the Superior Court of the District of Columbia recognizing your name change. This is a straightforward but time-consuming process: It will take at least two months to complete.

**COVID-19 Tip:** The DC name change process, including filing and the final hearing, used to be done in person before the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the start of the pandemic, the Court has modified some of their operations. This filing and name change process is accurate as of the date of this guide, but you should double check with the Court that the process described in the guide is still accurate before filing.

**NOTE:** If you don't follow the deadlines below, your application to change your name may be denied and/or you may need to re-file your application.

- **What are the steps I will need to take to change my name in DC?**

1. You will file the Name Change Application Packet.

**NOTE:** The Name Change Application does not need to be notarized.

2. You will receive the Order and Notice of Final Hearing (scheduling order).

3. Within 10 days of receiving the scheduling order, you must notify, by certified mail, any interested parties about the pending name change.

4. You must email the Affidavit of Service by Mail and certified mail proof to the Court 1-3 days before the hearing.

5. You will attend the final hearing.

6. You will receive your Name Change Court Order by mail and can request additional certified copies.

**COVID-19 Tips:** Currently, during the COVID-19 Pandemic, communications from the Court will be received by email or by mail and hearings are being held virtually. The wait time for receiving the Name Change Court Order is around **6 months** as the Courts have been experiencing processing delays.

## **STEP ONE: Filing the Name Change Application Packet**

Due to changes made during the COVID-19 Pandemic, there are several discrepancies and conflicting instructions on the DC Courts website and forms. We will highlight the discrepancies throughout the process.

### **What to File:**

#### **What To File With The Court if You are OVER 21**

If you are over 21 you will fill out the Adult Form, linked below and file with the Judge-in-Chambers Office (JIC). This form can be accessed using the following link:

<https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2020-10/Adult-Name-Change.pdf>

When filling out the Application for Change of Name of an Adult:

- On Page 1 of the Application, when the Application asks for Telephone Number, make sure that you type in your email next to your telephone number even though the application does not ask for your email. Email is the primary way that the Court is communicating with you, so it is very important that the email is included and spelled correctly.
  - If you require an interpreter or language assistance at the final hearing, also state this in the same line next to your phone number and email.
- On Page 4 of the Application packet, “Applicant’s Current Name Being Used” means your preferred name.
- On Page 5, Line 3 of the Application packet, you are required to list reasons for your name change. We suggest: “This is my preferred name and I want to obtain proper identification.”
- On Page 5, Line 6 of the Application packet, you must list each of your parents’ names **exactly** as the names appear on your birth certificate. If your parents’ names are not on your birth certificate, put “Unknown”.

**NOTES** about discrepancies within the Application:

- Page 2, number 14 of the Application packet states that within 10 days of filing the Application, you must serve personally or by registered/certified mail a copy of the Application and the Order and Notice of Final Hearing on their creditors and on each interested party as designated by the Court. However, the 10-day window does not start on the day that the application is filed, but on the day that the Order and Notice of Final Hearing (the scheduling order) email is received.

- Page 7 of the Application packet says that notarization of the Application is required. This is not necessary. You can sign or e-sign the application and it does not need to be notarized.
  - There are three methods to e-sign the application:
    - You may use the “/s/” method to sign the Application,
      - Example: “/s/ John Doe”
    - You may use an electronic image of your signature, or
    - You may use a scanned signature.
  - If you are filing in person, we recommend signing the application in front of the clerk when you go to file.

The completed Application must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation and payment:

- a. Identity Documents, such as an original certified copy of your birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, previous name change orders, certificate of citizenship, or certificate of naturalization.

**NOTE:** Foreign birth certificates in a language other than English must be translated word-by-word, and the translator must sign and have a notarized letter that swears to the accuracy of the translation and provides their name, address, phone number, and email. A suggested format is:

Certification by Translator

I [typed name], certify that I am fluent (conversant) in the English and [enter appropriate language] languages, and that the above/attached document is an accurate translation of the document attached entitled [enter title of document]. Name, Typed Name, Date, Phone Number, Address, Email.

- b. Proof of current residency in the District of Columbia. Page 1 of the Application provides examples of what may be accepted to establish DC residency. We recommend bringing 2 proofs of residency, if possible. These include:
  - Utility bill issued within the last 60 days
  - Telephone Bill used within the last 60 days
  - DC Property Tax Bill issued within the last 12 months
  - Letter with picture from Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) or DC Department of Corrections verifying your name and residence

- Pay stub or W-2
- Home Security System Bill issued within the last 60 days
- Supplemental Security Income benefits notification issued within the last 12 months
- Bank Statement issued within the last 60 days

NOTE: The DC Courts Application for Name Change website states that you must have lived in the District of Columbia for at least six months before filing the application. This is not true. The requirement is current DC residency and all current DC residents can file.

- c. A valid photo identification. Valid photo identification includes a driver's license, ID card, or passport.

**NOTE:** The identification may not be expired.

- d. The \$60 name change fee.

**NOTE:** CaseFileXpress (CFX) is the court's online e-filing system and is discussed further below under "How to File". If you are filing through CaseFileXpress, then additional charges apply. Filing a name change application on CaseFileXpress is \$77.88 with fees.

- e. **Motion to Seal (Optional):** A Motion to Seal is necessary if you would like to seal the record. Otherwise, the name change case and redacted supporting documents will be accessible to the public on DC case search.

The Motion to Seal fee is \$20 (plus charges if you file on CFX).

If you mail in the Name Change Application or file in person: You can include the Motion to Seal with the appropriate fee when filing.

If you file the Name Change Application on CFX: The Motion to Seal can only be uploaded and filed after the name change application case is opened/accepted. **We recommend contacting the Clerk to discuss how to submit this document.** If you file the Motion to Seal attached to the Name Change Applications on CFX then the case will be rejected.

- f. **Fee Waivers:** Use the fee waiver form if you have no income or receive public benefits such as Medicaid/DC Alliance, SSI, TRNAF, and/or SNAP/food stamps. The fee waiver is available in English (<https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2017-05/Revised%20Form%20106A%20September%202019.pdf>) and Spanish ([https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2017-05/Revised%20Form%20106A%20September%202019\\_SPANISH.pdf](https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2017-05/Revised%20Form%20106A%20September%202019_SPANISH.pdf)).

**NOTE:** When filling out the fee waiver, after you fill out the caption, once you check the box for the public benefit that you receive you may skip to the “Declaration” on page 3.

- If you require a fee waiver, you must email your entire name change filing, including your supporting documents, to [civilefilings@dcsc.gov](mailto:civilefilings@dcsc.gov). The Civil Clerk’s Office will email you a “promo code” back so that you can file the case on CaseFileXpress without having to pay the fee.
- If your fee waiver has not been approved after a week of filing, we recommend following up on the email submission at [Civilefilings@dcsc.gov](mailto:Civilefilings@dcsc.gov) and calling the Civil Division at 202-879-1133.

### **What to File With the Court if You are UNDER 21**

If you are under 21, you will have to use the Minor Form and file with Family Court. The Application for Change of Name of a Minor Form can be accessed using the following link: [https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/Minor%20\(Name%20Change\).pdf](https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/Minor%20(Name%20Change).pdf).

There is a parental consent requirement on page 8 of the Application packet. If you are over 18, this portion does not need to be completed.

**NOTE:** You must include a Cross Reference Sheet, available at this link: <https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/2019-07/CROSS%20REFERENCE%20INTAKE%20FORM.pdf>. This is a requirement for everyone filing in Family Court so they can check and see if any cases have to be assigned under the “one family, one judge” rule. (The Family Court is mandated to keep all cases involving one family with the same judge whenever possible.)

**NOTE:** If you are involved in an open Family Court case, an ongoing child support order, or an open Civil Protection Order, you may be required to file your name change application with the Family Court Central Intake Center.<sup>2</sup>

The completed application must be accompanied by the same supporting documentation and payment as explained in the OVER 21 Section.

### **How to File:**

You can mail in, drop off, or file in person name change filings, but as of 2021 the Court’s preferred method of filing is via **CaseFileXpress (CFX)**.

- In Person Filing: Take your filing to the DC Superior Court Judge-In-Chambers office, located in the Moultrie Courthouse, 500 Indiana Ave., NW, Room 5000, Washington,

---

<sup>2</sup> D.C. Superior Court Administrative Order 11-14.

DC 20001; phone: (202) 879-1450; fax: (202) 879-1579. The nearest Metro stop is Judiciary Square on the Red Line. The office is open from 8:30am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

**COVID-19 Tip:** Individuals entering the Court are currently required to wear a mask. We recommend you have a mask with you or check the current policy before arriving at the courthouse: <https://www.dccourts.gov/coronavirus>.

- Mail: For mailing, send to: DC Superior Court ATTN: CIVIL DIVISION, 500 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington DC 20001
- Drop Box: DC Superior Court, 500 Indiana Avenue NW. The drop box is located next to the information booth on the first floor of the courthouse.
- CaseFileXpress (CFX): We recommend that you watch the two CFX training videos: Self-Represented Litigant Registration and Single Party Cases both accessible on the following website; also see the FAQ's if you scroll down the page: <https://www.fileandservexpress.com/dc/>.
  - You should create your own account based on the training videos.
  - Accounts should always be created by selecting the “pro se non-attorney filer” option on the registration page (by type of filer dropdown).
  - Remove the instruction pages from the Name Change Application form before filing. If the instruction pages are included, the filing may be rejected. Name change application (without the instruction page) **MUST** be the leading document in CFX.

**Remember**, supporting documents should be attached to the name change packet as photocopies or bundled into one PDF document. CFX can merge or bundle the uploaded application form and supporting documents into one PDF. **PDFs of supporting documents MUST be legible if uploaded on CFX. Blurry PDFs will be rejected. Documents uploaded as pictures/JPEGs will also be rejected.**

**NOTE:** You should only file your Name Change Application and supporting documents. The Motion to Seal should not be included in your initial filing, when filing on CFX. Once the case is accepted, you will receive a confirmation email which will contain the case number. Then, you can file the motion to seal and pay the motion fee on CFX.

**Special Considerations:**

2. If you are Over 21 with a fee waiver: email everything to Civil Division, ask for a CFX promo code. Once you have the promo code, file on CFX with promo code.
3. If you are Over 21 with no fee waiver: File on CFX and pay filing fee. Motion to Seal must be uploaded and paid for separately once the name change application is accepted.

4. If you are Under 21: email filing to Family Division. They will open a case and give you a case number. Use that case number to file and pay for filing on CFX.

### **STEP TWO: Receiving the Signed Order and Notice of Final Hearing**

You will receive Order and Notice of Final Hearing (the scheduling order) from the Court. If you file on CFX, you will receive this by email. If you file in person, you will receive this by mail. This sets the hearing date and time and provides instructions on how to join the hearing. This also starts the 10-day clock to notify interested parties if applicable.

### **STEPS THREE AND FOUR: Notifying Interested Parties and Completing the Affidavit/Declaration of Service by Mail**

The Order and Notice of Final Hearing form provided to you by the court when you file may require that you notify your creditors, and in some cases, the D.C. Chief of Police, the Department of Corrections, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, your current probation/parole/supervisory release officer, law enforcement officials in other states, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the Bankruptcy Court, and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency, Washington Field Office.

- **When:** You must notify these parties **within 10 days** of receiving the Order and Notice of Final Hearing (scheduling order) via email.
- **What:** You must print out the Name Change Application and Order and Notice of Final Hearing.
- **How:** You must use **certified mail** with return receipt requested. You will need to keep and scan the certified mail receipts to submit to Judge-in-Chambers via email prior to your final hearing.

After you have notified all relevant parties, you must complete and sign the Affidavit/Declaration of Service by Mail. This is located on page 10 of the Application packet. Include the name and address of each notified party and the date each party was notified. Ignore the counsel info and the notarization block on the Affidavit form. For simplicity, you may want to combine the signed Affidavit with the USPS certified mail receipts into one PDF. Name the PDF with your current legal last name and case number. This will need to be emailed to Judge-in-Chambers ([JICOffice@dcsc.goc](mailto:JICOffice@dcsc.goc)) 2-3 days prior to the final hearing.

Below are common parties that need to be notified. Remember, each office must be notified within 10 days of filing the Application for Change of Name.

1. **Creditors:** You must notify each of your creditors to which you owe money (e.g. loan servicers or past due on utilities rent). You can look up the mailing address to notify your creditor on your latest statement or on the creditor's website.
2. **Department of Corrections, Police, CSOSA, and Parole Officer:** *If you have been convicted of a felony in D.C.*, you must notify the following parties:

D.C. Department of Corrections  
2000 14th St. NW, Seventh Floor  
Washington, DC 20009

D.C. Chief of Police  
Metropolitan Police Department Headquarters  
300 Indiana Ave. NW, Room 5080  
Washington, DC 20001

D.C. Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA)  
633 Indiana Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20004-2902

*If you have been convicted of a felony in another state*, you must notify the equivalent in the state where you were convicted.

*If you are currently on parole, probation, or supervised release*, you must notify your current parole/probation/supervisory release officer.

3. **Federal Bureau of Prisons:** *If you are currently incarcerated in a jurisdiction other than DC*, you must notify the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Federal Bureau of Prisons  
320 First St. NW  
Washington, DC 20534

4. **Bankruptcy Court:** *If you have filed for bankruptcy*, you must notify the Bankruptcy Court.

United States Bankruptcy Court  
333 Constitution Ave. NW  
Suite 1225  
Washington, DC 20001

### **STEP FIVE: Attending your Final Hearing and Getting your Court Order**

These will be virtual hearings scheduled on any number of days the Court is in session. Judge-In-Chambers or Family Division will schedule virtual/telephonic final hearings and will send the remote hearing information to you. In the email, the Court will give you step by step instructions on how to take part in the remote hearing.

If you are having a telephonic hearing, make sure to join the hearing a few minutes early. Find a private and quiet space and if possible be alone in a room during the hearing. Try to limit distractions as much as possible.

If you are having a video hearing, download the court's hearing software, WebEx, in advance to do a test run. The Court will provide you with a WebEx link in advance of the hearing. Remember the judge will be able to see everything on your screen, so pick a location that is not distracting. If

your sound or video freezes during the hearing, use the chat feature or call the Clerk's Office to let them know that you are having technical issues.

**Remember**, at least one business day prior to the final hearing, you must email a PDF of the Affidavit of Service by Mail and USPS certified mail receipts and any other proof of service to the Judge-In-Chambers at [JICOffice@dcsc.gov](mailto:JICOffice@dcsc.gov). The email must include: your case number, any people who will be attending the hearing, and the phone numbers and emails of the parties who will attend the hearing. You should also note language needs, if applicable.

For more information on the remote hearing, click <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/remote-hearing-information>.

**Certified Copy of Court Order for Name Change:** If the Judge grants your name change at the hearing, you will receive a certified copy of your Court Order for Name Change by mail. We recommend contacting the Court to request additional certified copies as you may need them to update your name with various agencies. You may also receive a copy by email, but most agencies require a certified copy to make name change updates.

**Requesting Additional Certified Copies:** Call the Civil Division at 202-879-1133 or email [CivilDocket@dcsc.gov](mailto:CivilDocket@dcsc.gov) for requests. You can also request additional certified copies in person. You will need to provide your former name and case number. The clerk will provide a payment link. Each additional copy is \$5.00. Currently, the only form of payment being accepted is a credit or debit card. If you were approved for a fee waiver, we recommend notifying the Court of this when you request additional certified copies; they may be able to provide these without a fee.

## ➤ **Let's recap the Name Change Process**

### **STEP ONE: Filing the Name Change Application Packet**

- ✓ Name Change Application Form
- ✓ Supporting Documents
  - Identity documents
  - Proof of current DC residency
  - Valid photo identification
  - \$60 filing fee

### **STEP TWO: Receiving your Order and Notice of Final Hearing via Email**

### **STEPS THREE: Notifying Interested Parties**

- ✓ You must notify these parties **within 10 days** of receiving the Order and Notice of Final Hearing (scheduling order) via email

**STEP FOUR: Completing the Affidavit/Declaration of Service by Mail**

- ✓ Email to Judge-in-Chambers ([JICOffice@dcsc.goc](mailto:JICOffice@dcsc.goc)) 2-3 days prior to the final hearing.

**STEP FIVE: Attending your Final Hearing and Request Certified Copies**

**2. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

The process for changing your name and/or gender marker with the Social Security Administration (SSA) is described below.

**COVID-19 Tip:** Currently, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Social Security Administration is not open to the public but is offering in-person appointments for situations where a person needs a new or replacement Social Security Card and meets certain limited, critical situations. If you prefer not to mail your documents, we recommend contact SSA by phone.

➤ **When should I update my name and/or gender marker with the SSA?**

Once you have received a court order recognizing your name change, you must report the name change to the SSA. You can also report your gender marker change by providing documented proof of your gender transition (more on this below).

You will need to change your name with the SSA **before updating your District of Columbia ID or driver's license** because the DMV will ask for your updated SSA card before issuing an updated ID or driver's license.

➤ **Why should I update my gender marker with the SSA?**

Although your Social Security card does not show a gender marker, other government agencies look to your Social Security records (including gender marker on your SSA account) in order to verify your identity. A gender marker mismatch may create issues in the future.

➤ **What gender markers can I choose from?**

The SSA only allows you to choose either an "F" (female) or an "M" (male) gender marker. Currently, the SSA does not offer a non-binary "X" option. However, you will have the ability to choose an "X" for your District of Columbia ID or driver's license, and it does not need to match the gender marker on file with SSA.

➤ **What do I need to include in my Social Security Administration Record Update Submission?**

A. **Updating Name:** To update your name with SSA you will need:

1. A **cover letter** clearly stating that you are requesting a name change with a list of the documents included and your mailing address for return of documents (see page 16 for **SSA Template Cover Letter**);
2. An original or certified **Court Order for Name Change**;
3. A **completed and signed** SS-5 Form (<https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>);
4. **Original proof of identity.** For proving identity, a photocopy of a photo ID will NOT be acceptable. Proof of identity must be original documents such as a driver's license, passport, or birth certificate. You can instead submit alternative proofs of identity, including:
  - a. Certified copy of medical record (clinic, doctor, or hospital) or letter providing extract data from the medical record showing your name and DOB. A certified photocopy is a photocopy of the original document that you affix a signature, stamp, or seal with a statement attesting to the accuracy of the photocopy.
    - i. For WWH patients: This can be coordinated by Legal Services. Please contact us at [contact-legal@whitman-walker.org](mailto:contact-legal@whitman-walker.org) or by calling our Legal Intake line at 202-939-7630.
    - ii. For non-Whitman-Walker patients: You can call medical provider's records department and ask for a medical record extract (ex: last medical visit note) that is certified as a true copy. The medical records custodian will print out the record and hand write on it, "This is a true and exact copy of the patient's original medical record.". The medical record custodian will legibly write their own name, title, and date AND sign or stamp the document.
  - b. School identity card or certified school record or transcript (for current school year showing name and either a photograph or DOB);
  - c. Life insurance policy showing age or DOB;
  - d. Or, for a full list of documents that can be used as identification, see: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps10/poms.nsf/lnx/0110210420> (Part B has the list for minors and Part C has the list for adults).

B. **Updating Gender Marker:** To update your gender marker with SSA, you will need everything listed above and a gender marker provider letter.

1. An original signed provider **gender marker letter**. See page 17 for **Sample Provider Gender Marker Letter**.

- a. For WWH patients: This can be coordinated by Legal Services. Please contact us at [contact-legal@whitman-walker.org](mailto:contact-legal@whitman-walker.org) or by calling our Legal Intake line at 202-939-7630.

**NOTE:** If you are only updating your gender marker, you will not need a Name Change Court Order.

### **Template SSA Cover Letter**

**NOTE: The highlighted sections will need to be changed to include your information.**

Social Security Administration  
Field Office  
**Address**

**U.S. Social Security Administration**

**Re: Name Change, Pursuant to POMS RM 10212.080 (Evidence of a Name Change based on a US Issued Court Order Name Change) and Gender Marker Change, Pursuant to POMS RM 10212.200 (Changing Numident Data for Reasons other than Name Change) for **FULL LEGAL NAME** (formerly **FULL FORMER NAME**), SSN: ###**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to request a change of the name and gender marker on my Social Security record, pursuant to POMS RM 10212.080 and 10212.200. **I legally changed my name, and my legal name is now FULL LEGAL NAME. My gender marker has also changed to FEMALE/MALE.** I have enclosed the following documents as evidence of these changes:

1. **Request to Update SSA Record:** Completed SSA Form SS-5
  2. **Proof of Identity:** Certified copy of medical record from Whitman-Walker Health per [POMS RM 10210.420](#).
  3. **Proof of Name Change:** Original or certified court order for name change
- Proof of Gender Marker Change:** Original signed provider letter from Dr. Lane at Whitman-Walker Health

Please update the name and gender marker on my Social Security record based on the documents attached. For questions or the return of my original documents, please see my contact information below.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full Legal Name**  
**Address:**  
**Phone:**  
Date of request: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Provider Gender Marker Letter**

[On Office Letterhead]

[DATE]

**U.S. Social Security Administration**

**Re: Gender Marker Change, Pursuant to POMS RM 10212.200 (Changing Numident Data for Reasons other than Name Change)**

To Whom It May Concern:

I, [Doctor Full Name], MD (Medical License No. [#####], issued by [State/Country]), am the physician of [Patient Legal Name], whom I have treated (formerly known as [Patient Former Name], DOB [XX/XX/XXXX]).

I hereby attest that [Patient Legal Name] has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to [male/female]. I support [his/her] efforts to change the gender marker on [his/her] identity documentation to [male/female].

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

[Signature]

[DOCTOR FULL NAME], M.D.  
[TITLE]  
Medical License No. [#####]  
[ADDRESS]  
[PHONE NUMBER]

➤ **How do I submit my Social Security Administration Record Update?**

**By Mail:**

**NOTE: We recommend sending via certified or Priority mail so that you can track the mailing and have proof that the documents were received by SSA. If you were not born in the United States, you may need to submit additional documents and should contact SSA by phone to request an appointment.**

1. The cover letter and listed documents should be mailed to your local field office via certified mail. You should make a photocopy of everything being sent for your own records. Find your local field office by using this link:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>.

**NOTE:** Non-citizens should NOT send in original immigration documents. You must make an appointment with SSA if immigration documents are required. If there is an issue with scheduling an appointment, please contact us at [contact-legal@whitman-walker.org](mailto:contact-legal@whitman-walker.org) or by calling our Legal Intake line at 202-939-7630.

2. Once processed you should receive your updated SS card in the mail. SSA will also return the original documents to you via certified mail.

**NOTE:** The local Social Security field office processes the request and mails back the original documents to you, but the central office mails the updated card. **This means that you will receive two mailings, possibly at different times.** If you receive your new card but have not yet received your original documents back, you should check in with your local field office: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.js>.

### **By Drop Box: Downtown DC Office**

- **Address:** 1300 D St. SW, Washington, DC 20024.
  - SSA Field Office (and the drop-box) are inside an office building. Open the front doors and turn immediately to the right. Make sure to submit the original documents!
  - As of August 2021, the drop box is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM. Hours may change, so call to check before utilizing the drop box.
- **Phone:** 1-866-708-3255.

### **By Appointment:**

- Limited, brief in-person appointments are being offered certain services. To request an appointment, you will need to call your local field office (<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.js>). You may be asked to explain why you cannot mail your documents. We recommend asking to speak with a supervisor if you need to present documents in person and are not given an appointment. More information can be found at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/categories/conducting-business-with-social-security-during-the-pandemic/>

### **➤ How long will this process take?**

We cannot estimate how long name and gender update requests will take. The majority of SSA staff is currently working remotely and limited staff is in the office to accept mail. A good rule of thumb is to wait 3-4 weeks after submitting your documents. If nothing arrives in the mail in 3-4 weeks, then you can call your field office's direct number to inquire:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.js>. If the representative is not helpful, ask to speak to a supervisor.

### ➤ **Where can I go for more information?**

See the following resources on updating your Social Security records:

- The National Center for Transgender Equality’s Know Your Rights page on the Social Security Administration: <https://transequality.org/know-your-rights/social-security>
- SSA’s Gender Change Policy: <https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0110212200>.

## **3. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND GENDER WITH THE DC DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV)**

The DC DMV is open on a walk-in basis. Check location days and hours of operation to specific locations by going to [dmv.dc.gov](http://dmv.dc.gov) or call 311 before making an in-person trip. If you need to change both your name and gender marker on your driver’s license, it is best to change them at the same time at the DMV. We understand that certain clients will only need/want to change one or the other, so we have provided separate instructions for each change below, but if you are changing both items at the same time just combine the documents listed in Sections B and C.

**NOTE:** To comply with Real ID requirements, you need to update your Social Security record **before** updating your identity documents. Please see Section 2 before completing this section.

### **A. Real ID Act Requirements**

Changes in the law require that all new IDs issued by the DC DMV must comply with the REAL ID Act. These new IDs have a star in the top right corner. If you have one already, you should skip to Section B below. If your current ID does not have a star in the top right corner, you will need to provide the DMV with additional original documents listed below.

**NOTE:** Non-US citizens can obtain a DC REAL ID identification card as long as they have an unexpired document issued by USCIS or U.S. Department of State showing lawful presence.

### **Original Documents You Need to Take to DC DMV to Obtain a REAL ID:**

#### **1. One Proof of Identity**

- U.S. Birth certificate, Unexpired U.S. Passport, Unexpired Permanent Resident Card, Certificate of Naturalization, etc.. Your name on this document does not need to be updated but you must also present the Court Order for Name Change.
- **NOTE:** The document used for proof of identity **cannot** also be used to satisfy proof of ability to drive or Social Security number requirements.

- For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to:  
<https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115566>.

## **2. Proof of Lawful Presence**

- Documentation showing United States citizenship or lawful presence as required by federal law. Lawful presence means that a person is legally living in the United States according to federal immigration laws.
- For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to:  
<https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1414691>.

## **3. Two Proofs of DC Residency**

- Utility/telephone bills (cellphone bill is accepted)/bank statement, etc., less than 60 days old, that display name and DC address.
- For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to:  
<https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115502>.

## **4. One Proof of Valid Social Security Number**

- Your new Social Security card or SSA printout<sup>3</sup> reflecting name change

## **5. One Proof of Ability to Drive (if applying for a Driver's License)**

- Valid DC license, out-of-state license not expired more than 90 days, etc.
- For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to:  
<https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115487>.

- 6. Proof of Parental Approval** (if applicant is 16 or 17 years old) For forms, go to:  
<https://dmv.dc.gov/node/136072>.

## **B. Changing Your Name with the DMV**

After you have changed your name with SSA, bring the following to the DMV:

1. Your current driver's license or ID card;
2. A certified copy of your court order for a name change; and
3. Your newly issued Social Security card reflecting your new name.

**NOTE:** To make corrections on your DC DMV REAL ID or Limited Purpose credential, you must bring original documents. DC DMV cannot accept photocopies or scanned documents.

---

<sup>3</sup> The SSA office may provide you with a printout reflecting your name change. The DC DMV may or may not accept the SSA printout to change your name on your DC driver's license or ID card. We recommend that you wait for your updated Social Security card to arrive in the mail (approx. two weeks) before going to the DMV.

The DMV will change your name and will mail your ID to the address you have on file (P.O. boxes are not accepted.) See Appendix B for a list of applicable fees.

### **C. Changing Your Gender Marker with the DMV**

Applicants establishing or requesting to change their gender designation on their driver's license or identification card must:

1. Submit a completed and signed Gender Designation Form.

a. Complete a Gender Self-Designation Form. Find the form here:

<https://dmv.dc.gov/publication/gender-self-designation-form>.

You must complete this form. The form does not need to be signed by a medical or social services professional, and no further evidence of your transition (such as medical records or a letter from a surgeon) is required.

The form is available in English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, and Korean.

**NOTE:** The Gender Self-Designation form contains private medical information and will be kept confidential and protected under the provisions of the Driver Privacy Protection Act.

2. Take the completed form and the following items to a **DMV Service Center Manager** at the DMV:

a. Your current driver's license or ID card (which you must surrender);

b. If you do not have a Real ID driver's license or ID card, you will need to bring original versions of the Real ID required documents listed above<sup>4</sup>; and

c. Cash, check, money order, or credit card to pay the fee for a new ID

**NOTE:** It is important to take these documents to a **DMV Service Center Manager** because not all DMV employees have undergone training on this procedure. Be prepared to take a new photograph for your new ID. The DMV will mail you your new ID with the new gender marker, so it is very important to have an up-to-date address on file; P.O. boxes are not accepted.

3. Pay applicable fees for a new or amended license; and

4. Have a new photograph taken.

---

<sup>4</sup> If you are changing your address, you will also need to bring 2 forms of proof of the new address.

➤ **Where can I go for more information?**

See the following resources on updating your Name and Gender Markers with the DMV:

- DC DMV Name Changes and Corrections Page: <https://dmv.dc.gov/page/name-changes-and-corrections>

**D. Limited Purpose IDs for People Without a Social Security Number**

**1. What is a Limited Purpose Driver's License?**

The Limited Purpose driver's license, learner's permit, and ID card are official state-issued identification credentials for those who do not have a social security number or cannot establish legal presence in the U.S. The limited purpose driver's license and learner's permit allow you to legally drive but cannot be used for official federal purposes (such as boarding commercial airline flights, accessing federal buildings or purchasing firearms), and will be **marked** to reflect this requirement.

**Eligibility Requirements:**<sup>5</sup>

- You must have never been issued a Social Security number; or previously been issued a social security number but cannot establish legal presence in the United States at the time of application; or not be eligible for a Social Security number.
- You must be a DC resident for at least 6 months from the date of application.
- You must have no outstanding debts to the District of Columbia or unpaid fines for moving traffic violations in other jurisdictions.

**2. Steps to Obtain Limited Purpose Identification Credentials:**

1. You Must Make an Appointment

While DC DMV no longer requires an appointment to visit one of its service centers to obtain a Limited Purpose driver license, an appointment is required by everyone to take the road skills test.

To make an appointment contact a DC DMV Service Center using the following link: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1089402>.

2. You Must Take the Knowledge Test and Road Skills Test

---

<sup>5</sup> District of Columbia, Department of Motor Vehicles, <https://dmv.dc.gov/service/obtain-limited-purpose-driver-license> (last visited October 1, 2021).

Prior to your DMV appointment, be sure to study and review the Driver Manual because you will be required to take a knowledge test. If you fail the knowledge test, you will be required to make another appointment.

DC Driver's Manuals are available in English, Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Manuals can be accessed through the following link: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115302>.

3. You Must Bring the Following Documents

For complete list of acceptable documents see the required and acceptable identification documents for limited purpose credential applicants found here: <http://dmv.dc.gov/page/limited-purpose-credential-required-and-acceptable-documents>.

- **Proof of Identity and Age:** showing name and date of birth. For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115407>.

**NOTE:** Must be at least 16 years old.

**NOTE:** You cannot use the same document as proof of ability to drive AND a proof of identity. You will need separate documents for each proof.

- **Proof of Current DC Residency:** You must provide 2 of the documents listed (utility bill, telephone bill, deed, mortgage or settlement agreement, etc.) that are not from the same business, company, or agency in which the address matches exactly on both documents. For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115502>.
- **Proof of 6-Month DC Residency:** You must fill out the 6-Month DC Residency Certification form available in English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, and Korean. The form can be accessed using the following link: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/811382>. You must provide 2 of the documents listed (utility bill, telephone bill, deed, mortgage or settlement agreement, etc.) that are not from the same business, company, or agency in which the address matches exactly on both documents. For a complete list of acceptable documents, go to: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1115362>.
- **Proof of Social Security Ineligibility:** You must fill out of the Social Security Declaration Form available in English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese, French, Vietnamese, and Korean. The form can be accessed using the following link: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/811392>.
- **Driver's License Application Form** (or Non-Driver ID Application Form)
- **Proof of Parental Approval:** If you are 16 or 17 years old your parents must fill out the Parental Consent Form to Obtain a Learner Permit Form available in English, Spanish, Amharic,

Chinese, French, Vietnamese, Korean. The form can be accessed using the following link:

<https://dmv.dc.gov/publication/parental-consent-form-obtain-learner-permit-or-identification-card>.

4. At the DMV, You Will:

- Provide the required documents.
- Take and pass a vision screening (driver's license/learner's permits only). For more information, go to: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1119377>.
- Take and pass knowledge test and road skills test (driver's license/learner's permit only). For more information, including an online practice knowledge test, go to: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1119296>.
- Take a digital photograph: DC law and policy requires a full-frontal digital photo that shows either the ears or up to the hairline without exposing the hair.
- Pay the appropriate fees. DMV accepts payments in the form of cash, check, money order, or credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover). For fee schedule, click here: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/185742>.

**NOTE:** No cash is accepted at the Deanwood Road Test/CDL Office or the CDL test facility.

- DC DMV will issue you a temporary DC DMV driver license after you have completed the process and paid the fees. The temporary license will be valid for 45 calendar days. Your actual license will be mailed to you within 10 calendar days. You can check the mailing status of your license, here: <https://dc.dmv-portal.com/home>.

**NOTE:** DC DMV does not mail licenses to PO Box.

➤ **Where can I go for more information?**

See the following resources on updating your Limited Purpose ID:

- DC DMV Credential FAQ's: <https://dmv.dc.gov/node/1120167>
- DC DMV Website Step by Step Process: <https://dmv.dc.gov/service/obtain-limited-purpose-driver-license>

## **4. CHANGING NAME & GENDER ON A BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

### **A. Birth Certificate Issued in a State Other than D.C.**

**Name Change:** Most states will allow you to change the name on the birth certificate upon presentation of a court order recognizing the name change. Some states will issue new birth certificates while others will issue an “amended” birth certificate which reflects the old and new names. Note that some states will **not** accept a court order from another state to change one’s name (e.g., Louisiana which requires the client to file for a name change in Louisiana regardless of where you live now).

**Gender Change:** Most, but not all, states will allow you to change the gender marker on the birth certificate upon presentation of a court order recognizing the gender change. Some states will issue new birth certificates while others will issue an “amended” birth certificate which reflects the previous and updated gender markers. Tennessee will **not** change the gender marker on a birth certificate.

## **B. Birth Certificates Issued in D.C.**

Amendments to vital records may be requested in person or through mail remote order services.

**Name Change:** To request an amendment, you must:

1. Download and complete the Birth Amendment Application (by court order) application form. The form can be accessed here:  
[https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page\\_content/attachments/Birth%20Amendment%20with%20court%20order\\_0.pdf](https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page_content/attachments/Birth%20Amendment%20with%20court%20order_0.pdf).
2. Have your signature authenticated by a notary republic. DC Health offers an on-site notary service.
3. Prepare payment. See fee schedule here:  
<https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/publication/attachments/Fee%20Schedule.pdf>.
4. Provide a certified legal name change court order that reflects the history of the changes to name on the certificate requested.
5. Provide one form of primary photo identification plus two forms of additional identification. For full list of approved Identity Verification Requirements follow this link:  
[https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page\\_content/attachments/Remote%20Identity%20Guidelines%20Information%20Sheet\\_0.pdf](https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page_content/attachments/Remote%20Identity%20Guidelines%20Information%20Sheet_0.pdf).  
**NOTE:** A photocopy or electronic image will be accepted in place of many of the actual id/documents. Pay special attention to the Identity Verification Requirements.
6. Mail in copies of the required remote amendment identity documents and supporting documents to the DC Health Vital Records Division, Customer Service and Certification Operations Unit 899 N. Capitol Street NE, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20002.  
**NOTE:** You may also present these in-person to the Registrar of Vital Records at 899 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Walk-up services are available, but DC Vital Records Department recommends scheduling an appointment: <https://dchealth.dc.gov/vital-records>.

**Gender Change:** If you were born in D.C. and wish to amend your birth certificate to reflect your gender, you can mail or hand-deliver the following documents to the Registrar of Vital Records. The process takes approximately three business days; there is no surgery requirement.

In order to apply for an updated gender marker (and name, if applicable) on your DC birth certificate, you must:

1. Completed and signed Birth Certificate Gender Designation Application Form, signed by the applicant. Address on the application should be the address where you want your certificate mailed. Access the Birth Certificate Gender Designation Application Form on page 2, here:  
[https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page\\_content/attachments/Gender%20Designation%20Application\\_0.pdf](https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page_content/attachments/Gender%20Designation%20Application_0.pdf).

**NOTE:** Must be signed in front of a Notary Public. DC Health offers on-site notary services.

2. Completed and signed Statement of Licensed Healthcare Provider Certifying the Applicant's Gender Designation, signed by your healthcare provider. Access the Statement of Licensed Healthcare Provider on page 3, here:  
[https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page\\_content/attachments/Gender%20Designation%20Application\\_0.pdf](https://dchealth.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/page_content/attachments/Gender%20Designation%20Application_0.pdf). All medical provider signatures must be originals.

**NOTE:** The application form and certification from a healthcare provider are the only documentation of gender change required; no additional medical information will be requested.

3. Provide a photocopy of your photo ID: driver's license, passport, or other government issued identification card that reflects a good likeness and satisfactorily identifies the applicant.
4. Provide an original or certified copy of the Court Order for a Name Change, if applicable.

**NOTE:** If you are not also requesting a name change this is not needed.

5. Payment of \$51 which includes amending the birth record (\$28) + (1) certified copy of the birth certificate (\$23).

Mail to: Department of Health, Vital Records Division, First Floor, 899 North Capitol St. NE, Washington, DC 20002.

**NOTE:** You may also present these in-person to the Registrar of Vital Records at 899 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Walk-up services are available, but DC Vital Records Department recommends scheduling an appointment: <https://dchealth.dc.gov/vital-records>.

## **5. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER ON YOUR U.S. PASSPORT**

- **When should I apply to update my name and/or gender marker on my passport?**

You can apply for or update your U.S. passport at any stage in the name change/gender marker update process once you have your Court Order for Name Change. If you have plans for international travel, you should prioritize this document update.

If you are a U.S. citizen and do not have a passport, you may still want to apply for a passport even if you do not plan to travel internationally. Your U.S. passport can serve as a proof of U.S. citizenship and can be an alternative to presenting a birth certificate in order to demonstrate your U.S. citizenship.

➤ **What gender markers can I choose from?**

Currently, the State Department only allows you to choose either an “F” (female) or an “M” (male) gender marker. However, the State Department is working to add a gender marker for non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming persons. Although there is currently no non-binary “X” option, you have the ability to choose an “X” for your D.C. driver’s license or state ID. See section 3 for more details on obtaining an “X” gender marker on your license and how it would impact the rest of your identification documents.

➤ **How do I update my passport?**

The process of updating your passport will vary depending on whether you are:

- renewing your existing passport to show the name change only, **or**
- updating both your name **and** gender marker, whether on your existing passport or applying for the first time.

The sections below will describe the processes required for each situation.

➤ **How do I update my legal name only (no gender marker update) on my existing valid passport?**

When you already have a valid Passport, you may submit by mail a Passport Renewal Application (DS-82 form) and supporting documents to change your legal name to National Passport Processing Center, PO Box 90155, Philadelphia, PA 19190-0155. You will need to mail in the following:

- a. Passport Renewal Application (Form DS-82: <https://eforms.state.gov/Forms/ds82.pdf>);
- b. Your most recent passport;
- c. A recent passport photo 2x2 inches in size (you can have passport photos prepared at most pharmacy chains, Fedex, and post offices);
- d. Order for Name Change (certified copy); and

- e. Fees: \$110 for a passport book (and/or \$30 for a passport card) and a \$35 execution fee payable by check or money order to the “U.S. Department of State” (see more at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/requirements/fees.html>).

➤ **How do I update my gender marker (both name & gender marker or gender marker update only)?**

In order to update your gender marker (in addition to updating your name or if you are updating gender marker only), your case will be processed as a first-time passport applicant. This means that you need to submit an initial passport application (DS-11 form) in person at a Passport Acceptance Facility, even if you already have a passport. To find the closest facility to you, please search online at <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov> or call the National Passport Information Center at (877) 487-2778.

You will need to bring with you the following documents:

- a. Application for a U.S. Passport, also known as Form DS-11 (<https://eforms.state.gov/Forms/ds11.PDF>). On the form, check the correct (preferred) gender marker;
- b. Current ID that includes a signature and photograph;
- c. One recent passport photo that is passport (2x2 inches) size;
- d. Certified copy of a court Order for Name Change (if you are also changing the name on your passport);
- e. Proof of U.S. Citizenship, which can be either your current U.S. passport, an original or certified copy of your Birth Certificate, a Certificate of Naturalization, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad;

**NOTE:** Do not be alarmed that the Acceptance Facility will keep the original. The original proof of U.S. citizenship is submitted with your application but will be mailed back to you within approximately 4-6 weeks (may vary depending on current processing times) in a separate mailing from your new passport.

- f. Fees: \$110 for a passport book (and/or \$30 for a passport card) payable by check or money order to the “U.S. Department of State” (see more at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/requirements/fees.html>), **and** a \$35 execution fee payable to the Acceptance Facility (some of them, especially U.S. Post Offices will accept the execution fee via credit/debit card as well).
- g. As of July 2021, the State Department allows self-selection of gender markers. This means you do not need a letter from a medical provider to update your gender marker. Information about this rule is available here:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/need-passport/selecting-your-gender-marker.html>.

➤ **How long will the process take?**

Processing times for all passport services are typically between 4 - 6 weeks but can take longer depending on current processing times. If you need a passport in less time, you can pay an additional fee for expedited service; you can find more information at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/hurry.html>.

To check on the status of your application, you can call the National Passport Information Center at (877) 487-2778 or (888) 874-7793 (TTY).

➤ **Where can I find more information?**

For more detailed information on how to change your name or gender marker on your passport, please see the U.S. Department of State's "Gender Designation Change" page (<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/information/gender.html>) or the National Center for Transgender Equality's "Know Your Rights- Passports" guidance (<http://www.transequality.org/know-your-rights/passports>).

## **6. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER WITH THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES**

If you are a foreign-born individual who intends to apply for legal status with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, has already applied for legal status with Citizenship and Immigration Services, or who has already been granted some form of legal status in the United States, Whitman-Walker Health may be able to help you obtain immigration documents such as green cards, work authorization cards, or naturalization certificates that match your changed name and/or gender. This section does not apply to U.S. citizens who were born in the U.S., but it does apply to foreign-born persons who have been naturalized.

If this section applies to you, please contact the Whitman-Walker Legal Services Program at (202) 939-7630 for further information.

## **7. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER WITH OTHER ENTITIES (SELECTIVE SERVICE, INSURANCE, AND CREDITORS)**

As part of your name and/or gender marker change process, you may be required or want to update your name and/or gender marker with other entities. These include:

### **A. The Selective Service**

While you do not need to notify the Selective Service of a change in gender, you are obligated to inform them of a change in name. To notify the Selective Service of your name change you must fill out Form SSS 2 (technically a change of address form),

available at your local post office. You must attach a certified copy of the court order changing your name.

### **People Assigned Female at Birth:**

If you were assigned female at birth, you do not have to register with the Selective Service, even if you have had gender-affirming surgery or changed your legal gender marker. However, if you are applying for federal financial aid, grants, loans, or other benefits as a male, you may be asked to provide proof that you are exempt from the Selective Service. To obtain such proof, you should request a Status Information Letter (SIL) from the Selective Service.

To request a SIL that shows you are exempt, you can either download a SIL request form from the Selective Service website (<https://www.sss.gov/Portals/0/PDFs/Status.pdf>) or call them at 1-888-655-1825. The SIL request form requires female to male individuals to identify as such and attach a copy of a birth certificate showing the birth-assigned sex. If the sex on your birth certificate has been changed, attach any documentation you have to that affect. This service is free and the exemption letter you will receive does not specify why you are exempt so it will not force you to “out” yourself in any other application process. Once you receive your SIL, keep it in your files.

### **People Assigned Male at Birth:**

If you were assigned male at birth, you must register for the Selective Service if you are between the ages of 18 and 26, even if you have had gender-affirming surgery or changed your legal gender marker. You may register online at <https://www.sss.gov/register/> or you may complete and mail a “mail-back” registration form available at any post office. In the unlikely event that the draft resumes and you receive an order to report for examination or induction, you may file a claim for exemption from service.

## **B. Health Insurance, Medical Providers, and Pharmacy**

Once you have updated your name and/or gender marker on your Social Security card and driver’s license/ID, you should also update your name and/or gender marker with your insurance. It is important to update your insurance record before you update your information with your doctor’s office and pharmacy.

When providers and pharmacies submit claims to your insurance, everything (name and/or gender marker) must match. If there’s a mismatch, your insurance may get confused and deny coverage for medical services or medications. In order to avoid claim denials, update your insurance information first, ask for an updated insurance card, and then change your name and/or gender marker with medical providers and pharmacies.

The following table has helpful information on how to update your insurance record based on the type of insurance you have. Here are the general steps:

1. Update your name and/or gender marker with your insurance by sending them:
  - a. A copy of your Name Change Court Order,
  - b. A copy of your updated driver's license/ID, **and**
  - c. A copy of your updated Social Security card (not every insurance will ask for this).
2. Ask your insurance to send you an updated insurance card with the correct information.
3. Show your updated insurance card and driver's license/ID to all your medical providers and pharmacies.

**If you are a WWH patient and you have already updated your insurance record:**

- Please show your updated insurance card and name change court order or updated driver's license/ID, if available, to Client Services in order to update your medical records.
- Separately, please show your updated insurance card and updated driver's license/ID to the WWH Pharmacy to update your pharmacy record as well.

WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM  
DC GUIDE, JANUARY 2022

If you have...	This is how you update your records...		
DC Medicaid	<p>Submit your Name Change Court Order and updated driver’s license/ID to the DC Economic Security Administration (ESA)’s Change Center. Please ask for an updated card to be mailed to you.</p> <p>WWH’s Public Benefits and Insurance Navigation (PBIN) department can help you submit your documents to the ESA Change Center and request a new card to be mailed to you.</p>		
MD Medicaid	<p>Upload your Name Change Court Order, updated driver’s license/ID, and updated Social Security card to your Maryland Health Connections account. Once uploaded, call MD Health Connections at 1-855-642-8572 to confirm the update and to request a new card.</p> <p>If you run into issues, you can also visit your local Department of Social Services and present your Name Change Court Order and updated driver’s license/ID.</p>		
VA Medicaid	<p>You can update your information by contacting Cover Virginia at 1-855-242-8282, by logging in to your account on <a href="https://www.coverva.org">https://www.coverva.org</a>, or by visiting your local Department of Social Services.</p> <p>If the update is requested over the phone, you will need to mail in copies of supporting documents (Name Change Court Order and updated driver’s license/ID).</p>		
Medicare	<p>By updating your record with the Social Security Administration, your Medicare information is automatically updated as well. Please request an updated Medicare card by logging in to your MyMedicare account (<a href="http://www.mymedicare.gov/">www.mymedicare.gov/</a>) or by calling 1-800-772-1213.</p> <p>To update your prescription (Part D) plan card, please contact your plan directly.</p>		
Insurance through Employer	<p>Please contact your Human Resources or Benefits Department to ask about the update procedure. Your HR or Benefits Department may refer you to make the update directly with your insurance.</p>		
Insurance through Marketplace	<p>Please call or log in to your account with the insurance marketplace where you purchased your insurance plan (DC Health Link, MD Health Connection, or Healthcare.gov). You will need to upload or mail/email/fax in your Name Change Court Order and your updated driver’s license/ID. You may also need to submit a copy of your updated Social Security card.</p> <p>Once the marketplace changed your information, please contact your insurance carrier (i.e. United Health Care, Aetna, BCBS, etc.) to confirm that they have accurate information and ask for a new insurance card.</p>		
	<p><u>DC Health Link:</u></p> <p>Phone: 1-855-532-5465 Fax: 202-478-1322 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@dchealthlink.com">info@dchealthlink.com</a></p>	<p><u>MD Health Connection:</u></p> <p>Phone: 1-855-642-8572</p> <p>See also: <a href="https://www.marylandhbe.com/new-law-recognizes-non-binary-gender-identification/">https://www.marylandhbe.com/new-law-recognizes-non-binary-gender-identification/</a></p>	<p><u>Healthcare.gov</u></p> <p>Phone: 1-800-318-2596</p> <p>Mailing address: Health Ins. Marketplace Attn: Coverage Processing 465 Industrial Blvd. London, KY 40750-0001</p>

### **C. Banks, Creditors, and Financial Institutions**

You must inform your banks, any creditors, and any financial institutions where you hold an account once you have legally changed your name. Updating these records can help protect your privacy and ensure your credit history is consistent with your name change. Each institution will have its own policy for changing your name and/or gender on your records, so we recommend contacting them to confirm what is required. You will most likely need to provide a certified copy of the court order for your name change and may be asked to present updated IDs to confirm the gender change. Make sure to update any direct deposit payers as well.

Once you've updated your banks, creditors, financial institutions, and social security, your new information should "trickle down" to the credit bureaus that create your credit report. However, it may take months for the information to transfer, and there is no guarantee that your old name will never show up again. To make sure your new information appears correctly on your credit history, you can check your credit report. Under federal law you are entitled to a free credit report every 12 months from each of the three major consumer reporting companies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion). To request your free credit report(s), visit [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com). You can read more about requesting credit reports here: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/ask-cfpb/how-do-i-get-a-copy-of-my-credit-reports-en-5/>.

If you do find errors on your credit report, there are a few ways you can try to rectify it. First, reach out to your creditors and financial institutions again to make sure they've updated your name on your records. If they have indeed updated your name, you can also directly notify the credit bureaus. Send an explanation of what needs to be fixed in writing along with your social security number, name and address to the credit bureau(s), and they will update your credit report. You can read more about correcting your credit report here: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports>.

While these are all proactive measures that you can take, please note that your old name will likely always be tied to certain accounts (like social security and long-time creditors), and it is still possible that your old name may appear on credit or background checks.

### **D. Other Legal Documents**

We recommend that you also update any legal documents which you have prepared and/or in which you are named as a party, such as a rental lease, will, powers of attorney, advanced health directive, deeds, or other documents that name you as a party. Until you update these documents, you will have to present your Court Order for Name Change in conjunction with the document.

If you are a member of any professional organizations (state bars, medical boards, or professional associations), you may also need to change your name with these organizations.

Some clients also want to change their name and/or gender marker in their education

records, such as high school or college transcripts and diplomas. Institutions have different policies so you will need to check on the process with the school. If you run into difficulty, Whitman-Walker Legal Services may be able to assist you with these changes.

\* \* \* \* \*



If you have any questions about the steps described in this guide, please do not hesitate to contact us at the numbers listed below.

Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services Program  
1377 R Street NW, Ste 200  
Washington, DC 20009  
Main telephone (202) 939-7630 Fax (202) 939-7651  
[contact-legal@whitman-walker.org](mailto:contact-legal@whitman-walker.org)  
[www.whitman-walker.org/legal-services](http://www.whitman-walker.org/legal-services)

Operations Manager: Lee Hicks  
[lhicks@whitman-walker.org](mailto:lhicks@whitman-walker.org)  
202-939-7627

Intake Coordinator: Leonor Suarez  
[lsuarez@whitman-walker.org](mailto:lsuarez@whitman-walker.org)  
202-939-7630