

# HOW TO CHANGE THE NAME OF AN ADULT IN \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY

Name changes are governed by O.C.G.A. §19-12-1. There are two sets of forms available for name changes. One set is for adults (i.e., 18 years old or older) who want to change their own name (NAME CHANGE OF ADULT). The other set is for people who want to change the name of a minor child(ren) (NAME CHANGE OF A MINOR CHILD OR CHILDREN). Decide which set of forms you need to use and follow the instructions accordingly. THIS SET OF FORMS IS FOR A NAME CHANGE OF AN ADULT.

- STEP 1:** Fill out the Petition to Change Name (of an Adult)
- STEP 2:** Fill out the Verification form
- STEP 3:** Fill out the Notice of Petition to Change Name form
- STEP 4:** Make a copy of each of the forms
- STEP 5:** Publish Notice
- STEP 6:** File the forms you just filled out
- STEP 7:** Obtain your Final Decree
- STEP 8:** File the Final Decree, and obtain a certified copy of it
- STEP 9:** Change Birth Certificate and notify creditors

**STEP 1: Fill out the Petition to Change Name (of an Adult):**

- A. Print or type your current name next to the word, "Petitioner:." You should not fill in the blank next to "Civil Action File No:." because the clerk will assign your case a number when you file the Petition, and the clerk will fill that number in for you. This top part of the form is called the "style" of the case.
- B. Paragraph 1: Print or type your current, full name, your residential address, the county and state of your residence, and the date and place of your birth where indicated.
- C. Paragraph 2: Print or type the name that you want your current name to be changed to.
- D. Paragraph 3: Explain why you want to change your name where indicated.
- E. Paragraph 5: Print or type the date when you filled out the form and sign your name.

**STEP 2: Fill out the Verification form to go with the Petition:**

- A. Print or type your current name next to the word "Petitioner".
- B. Next to the number [1], print or type your current name.
- C. Where it says: This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, fill in the date, month and year where indicated.
- D. Next to the number [2], sign your name. Then print or type your name on the following line, and fill in your address and telephone number.
- E. You will need to have a notary notarize the verification form for you.

**If you require materials in alternate format, please notify the Family Law Information Center as soon as possible.**

- STEP 3:**        **Fill out the Notice of Petition to Change Name form** as follows:
- A.    Print or type your current name next to the word "Petitioner".
  - B.    Next to the number [1], print or type your current name.
  - C.    Next to the number [2], print or type the date that you filed the Petition.
  - D.    Next to the number [3], print or type the month and year that you filed the Petition.
  - E.    Next to the number [4], print or type your current name.
  - F.    Next to the number [5], print or type your new name (the name that you want the court to change your name to).
  - G.    Next to the number [6], print or type the date that you are signing this document (it may be the same date that you file it).
  - H.    Next to number [7], print or type the month and year that you are signing this document.
  - I.    Then sign your name and print or type your name, address, and telephone number.

**STEP 4:**        **Make one copy of each of the forms.** You will keep the copies for your records and bring them to court with you when you come to get your final decree.

**STEP 5:**        **Publishing Notice:** This notice (Notice of Petition to Change Name form) must be published once a week for four weeks in the \_\_\_\_\_ County Daily Report. The charge for publication of this notice is **\$80.00**. Be sure to include your name and address so that the \_\_\_\_\_ County Daily Report can mail you proof that the notice was published.

**STEP 6:**        **File the forms you just filled out.** To begin the process, the Petition, the Verification, and the Notice of Petition to Change Name forms must be filed in the clerk's office in the county of the Petitioner's residence (which should be \_\_\_\_\_ County if you are using our forms). If you are not a resident of \_\_\_\_\_ County, then these instructions may not apply to you, and you should seek further information about filing for a name change in the county of your residence. The filing fee is **\$65.00**.

**STEP 7:**        **Obtaining your Final Decree.** Thirty (30) days after the petition is filed, and after the notice has been published once a week for four weeks, you can go to court to ask the court to enter a decree of name change. When you get to court, find out the name of the presiding judge and go to that judge's chambers. You must bring with you the following documents:

- ▶    Your original petition and a copy of all the other forms
- ▶    Proof that the notice was published
- ▶    the **Final Decree Changing the Name of an Adult** form for the judge to sign. You should first fill it out by printing or typing your name next to "Petitioner". Then next to number [1], print or type your current name, and next to number [2], print or type your new name. **DO NOT FILL OUT THE REST. THE JUDGE WILL DO IT FOR YOU.**

Tell the judge's secretary that you are there for a name change. When you go into the judge's chambers, the judge will have you swear to the truth of what you will say, then tell the judge the following:

- ▶    your name
- ▶    your county of residence
- ▶    that you are asking the judge to grant a name change
- ▶    what your birth date is and that you are 18 years old or older
- ▶    that you want to change your name from what to what
- ▶    the reason you want to change your name
- ▶    that you are not changing your name with the intent to defraud any one

Then ask the judge to sign the form decree for you.

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**STEP 8:**       **File the Final Decree.** Take the decree to the clerk's office and ask for a certified copy of it. This is proof that your name has officially changed.

**STEP 9:**       **Changing your birth certificate.** If you wish to have your birth certificate amended to reflect your name change, you must provide a certified copy of the Decree to the Department of Vital Records. You may also want to notify your creditors (for example, your landlord, credit card companies, your bank, Social Security, etc.) of your name change so that there will be no confusion at a later time.

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