

HOW TO: NJ NAME CHANGE PROCESS

Note: Please see our [document assistance page](#) for the most up-to-date information on name and gender change policy.



- Changing your legal name begins by filing with the court. Once you have the court order and final judgment you can update your official IDs like your driver's license, birth certificate, passport, and Social Security card so they match who you are.
- It can be an overwhelming process for some, so we wanted to break down the steps for you!

Notes, Key Words, and How-To's:

- [How to fill out a Civil Case Information Statement \(CIS\)](#).
- **"Pro se"** – This is what it's called if you're representing yourself.
- For all of these documents, you will be the plaintiff.
- Each county in NJ has a judiciary ombudsman or self-help office. They can't provide legal counsel, but they can answer general questions about the courts. Listed [here](#).
- [How to use JEDS](#).

You can do this!

Step 1: A Court order to change your legal name

This packet is the official NJ guide for Adult Name Changes. Complete and fill out all five forms in the packet **and** a Civil Case Information Statement (CIS).

- You must fill out **all 6 documents to proceed**.
- Forms **A, A1, B, C,** and **C1** are found in the packet.
- The **CIS** can be found separately [here](#) (scroll down).

Step 2 and 3: Submit Documents and Pay Fees

You can submit your documents to the court a few different ways.

1. Through mail
2. In person at the courthouse
3. Through Online JEDS portal

Note:

- If you file online, you can upload your petition and then pay the fee.
- If you are filing by mail, send the petition via mail and include the fee.
- If you are filing in person at the courthouse, you submit the petition and the fee at the same time.

- **Electronically:** Use the [Judiciary Electronic Document Submission \(JEDS\)](#) system to upload your completed forms and pay the fee online.
**If filing through JEDS, there is a \$7.50 processing fee*

- By **Mail** or In **Person**: Make two copies of each form. Send the originals and one set of copies to the [Civil Division of the Superior Court in your county](#). Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope and your payment. It's recommended to send your documents by certified mail with return receipt.

Note: Submitting a Fee Waiver Request Form

Note (waivers): To apply for a hardship waiver, complete the [Fee Waiver Request Form](#) and send it along with your documents.

Fee waivers are assessed based on 1. Income and 2. Assets.

If you earn at or below 150% of the current [Federal Poverty Line](#), you are income-qualified for a fee waiver and must then provide documentation that your assets do not exceed a total of \$2,500 in value

If you have *pending* criminal charges

- If someone has pending criminal charges, they need to send a copy of their **entire petition**, including the **order fixing date of hearing**, to the Director of the Division of Criminal Justice in Trenton **AND** to the prosecutor involved in their pending charges. **Both mailings should be Certified Mail with Return Receipt Requested.**
- People should write down the tracking number of their cert mail, or take a picture of the receipt, so they can track the certified mail/just in case they do not receive the "green slip" showing that the mail was delivered.
- If they are getting close to their hearing date and did not receive the green slip back, they can use the tracking number to track their mail, and if it is shown as delivered, they can print that web page showing delivery and use that instead of the green slip.

note: If you submit the petition by mail, in person, or via JEDS, you will receive a copy of the filed petition and the Order Fixing Date of Hearing.

If you file with JEDS, you will receive those electronically in your JEDS portal (and likely via mail as well).

Step 4: Post submission of Petition

No matter how you submitted the petition, you will receive a copy of the documents you submitted. These documents will now have a **docket number** written on them. This number is important as it **identifies your case** and you will need to use it on **all future papers** you send to the court about your case.

The Order Fixing Date of Hearing form will have the date you need to appear in court for your case, usually 1–3 months out.

At least 20 days before your hearing:

You **must** send a copy of the **Order Fixing Date of Hearing** by regular mail, certified mail, return receipt requested to:
The Director of the Division of Criminal Justice in Trenton, NJ.

You must also send a copy of the **Proof of Mailing** (Form **D** from the packet) with certified mail receipts attached from each office that received the packet to the County Courthouse. You can scan and upload it to JEDS. It can be good to upload your green certified mail receipt as well.



You're almost there!

Step 5: Go to the Courthouse

Depending on your county, you will be asked to appear in person, online or not at all *On the Papers; for your hearing.

**where a hearing is heard in the absence of parties. The parties do not make oral submissions and a decision is made based on the written material and submissions filed by the parties*



Here's what you can expect at your In Person or Virtual Hearing:

- The judge may ask you questions about your name change.
- If the judge asks why you want to change your name, you can say this is your preferred name as stated in your application, or you can provide more details if you feel comfortable.
- If the judge asks about your transition, you can answer if you are comfortable or you can respectfully say that is private medical information. You **DO NOT** need to provide any personal medical information or documentation for a name change.
- At the end of the hearing, the judge should sign the Final Judgment form and provide you a copy.



Step 6: Get Certified Copies of the Final Judgment

To legally change your name on your state and federal IDs, you need to order certified with a seal copies of your Final Judgment and send them to different agencies. **You cannot use photocopies.**

Certified with seal copies are **\$25 each**. It is recommended you purchase at least **three!**

- To get a certified copy of the Final Judgment form, complete NJ Courts' Records Request Form.



You can submit your completed form through the NJ Courts' online system, email it to SCCOMailbox@judiciary.state.nj.us,

OR

mail it to the following address:

Superior Court Clerk's Office

P.O. Box 971

Trenton, NJ 08625-0971

Order at least 3 certified copies.

The fee for each copy is \$25.

NOTE: Your certified copies HAS to have an NJ official raised **gold seal!**



Step 7: Notify State Agencies

You **must** send a certified copy with raised seal of the Final Judgment **and** Final Judgment Addendum to the Dept of Treasury **and** the Registrar of the Office of Vital Statistics **within 45 days** after **the date of the judgment**.

There is a \$50 fee for filing with the Treasury. You will have to inquire with the Registrar about their current fees. When you file with the Registrar you can request corrected copies of birth certificates, marriage licenses, civil union certificates, and domestic partnership records!

NOTE:

The Date of the Judgment is the date the Final Judgment was signed.

The Effective Date is the date you can begin using your new legal name on official documents.

Both will be listed on the Final Judgment.

Step 8: Almost There!

Within **two weeks** of the **Effective Date** listed on your Final Judgment or Final Judgment Addendum, you **must** present these documents to the MVC for a corrected driver's license. You don't need 6 Points of ID for this! You just need the court orders, your old license and proof of address.

Some MVC offices prefer you update with the Social Security Administration first, you can inquire with them. (And see the next step for SSA!)

When you go to the MVC, you can also **update** your gender marker and voter registration!

If you've already updated your Social, now is also a great time to update to a Real ID!

Step 9: Finishing Up!

For a Social Security Card, use [this form](#). Local offices can be found [here](#). You only need the form, your **IDs with your original name** (if you are doing this step before the MVC), and the Final Judgment and Final Judgment Addendum! You can contact them at [+1 800-772-1213](#) with any questions!

Phew! Now that you have an updated License, Social Security Card, and court orders, don't forget to update: (not an exhaustive list)

- Your [passport](#)
- Your records with your employer
- Your records with the 3 major Credit Bureaus (Experian, TransUnion, Equifax)
- Your bank or finance records

Name Change Checklist

The Name change Process can be overwhelming for some, please utilize this checklist to keep track of your progress!

- ☐ Fill Out Court Documents
- ☐ Pay the Administrative Fee
- ☐ Send Your Documents To The Court.
- ☐ Review Returned Copies.
- ☐ Send Copies of Documents to Treasurer and Registrar. (with applicable fees)
- ☐ Go To The Courthouse.
- ☐ Get Certified Copies of the Final Judgment
- ☐ Inform the State, and update Your State and Federal IDs.
- ☐ Update your personal information (creditors, employers, doctor's offices, etc.)

A Comment from the State of NJ's Transgender Information Hub:

The State of New Jersey is committed to providing accurate and up-to-date public information.

It has come to our attention that some federal webpages have been taken down and, as a result, links to federal webpages on this website may be broken and unavailable. As a result, access to important guidelines, data, and resources may be impacted. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. We are working to restore vital information when possible at the State level. We are working on updates to this webpage, please visit us again soon.

Changing your name can be an overwhelming process.

You can do this. You are not alone.

We aren't going anywhere, and we got this, because we got us.



**GARDEN STATE
EQUALITY**