

PIERCE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

Civil/Infraction Division

1902 96th Street South

Tacoma, WA 98444

www.piercecountywa.org/districtct

NAME CHANGE INFORMATION

WHERE TO FILE

Any person desiring to change his/her name or that of his/her child may apply to the District Court in which he/she resides. District Court hours for processing name changes are 9:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. Name Changes are processed only at the Civil Division located at 1902 South 96th St, Tacoma, WA 98444.

FILING

To petition the Court you must complete the Petition for Change of Name and Order Changing Name. The clerk will provide these forms. You must provide picture identification and birth certificate for yourself. If the petition is for a minor child, you must provide a certified copy of the birth certificate of your minor child.

The filing fee is **\$157.00 CASH OR CREDIT CARD (VISA or MASTERCARD)**, payable at the time of filing the Petition and Order. The breakdown of the fee is as follows:

\$63.00 - Filing Fee	\$15.00 - Certification Fee
\$62.00 - Auditor's Recording fee	\$ 7.00 - Administrative Fee
\$10.00 - DRC Fee	

MINOR CHILD NAME CHANGE

If you are requesting a name change for a minor (under 18 years of age), both birth parents must sign the Petition. If a birth parent is not available for the hearing, s/he must provide an affidavit consenting to the minor's name change. If the absent birth parent does not consent to the name change, a hearing will be set and petitioner must serve a copy of the Petition for change of Name on the other birth parent and provide proof of service to the court.

If the whereabouts of the other birth parent is unknown, the Court will require the petitioner to publish a notice of hearing in the newspaper where the absent parent was last known to reside. The petitioner is also required to mail a copy of the notice to the last known address of the absent birth parent, by certified with return receipt.

The petition must include a statement regarding why the name change is in the child's best interest.

District Court has adopted the following policy for persons requesting a name change:

1. Persons under ten (10) need not be present at the hearing.
2. All persons between the ages of 10 and 17 years must be present.
3. Persons 18 years and older either must be present or have a waiver of appearance approved by the judge hearing the request.

CRIMINAL CONVICTION

An offender under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections (DOC) who applies to change his or her name shall submit a copy of the application to DOC not fewer than five days before the entry of an order granting the name change. No offender under the jurisdiction of DOC at the time of application shall be granted an order changing his or her name if the court finds that doing so will interfere with legitimate penological interests. The following documents must be submitted to the court for consideration: Petition for Change of Name, Order Changing Name, proof that DOC has received a copy of the Petition and has no objection to the name being

changed, and copies of your birth certificate, photo identification and social security card. An offender under the jurisdiction of DOC who receives an order changing his or her name shall submit a copy of the order to the DOC within five days of the entry of the order. A sex offender subject to registration under RCW 9A.44.130 who applies to have his or her name changed shall follow the procedures set forth in RCW 9A.44.130.

FAMILY NAME CHANGE

If a family name is changed (i.e., father, mother, minor children), each person must submit a Petition for Change of Name, Order Changing Name, and birth certificate for minors.

A family name change is filed under one case number and one \$157.00 filing fee. However, there is an additional \$77.00 charge for each person changing his/her name beyond the first petitioner to cover certification and recording costs.

COPIES

This Court provides two certified copies of the Order Changing Name. Additional certified copies are \$5.00 each. Regular copies are \$1.00 for the first page, \$.50 for every page thereafter.

REQUIRED NOTIFICATION TO OTHER AGENCIES

A certified copy will be recorded with the Pierce County Auditor. The \$62.00 recording fee and \$5.00 certification fees are included in your filing fee. After recording, the Auditor will mail this copy to you.

If you or your minor child were born in Washington State, the Department of Vital Records requires a certified copy of the name change. You must mail the certified copy to the State Department of Vital Records, P.O. Box 9709 ET-14, Olympia, WA 98504-9709. Approximately four (4) weeks after you have sent the certified copy of the Name Change Order to the Department of Vital Records, you may request a copy of the birth certificate reflecting the name change from the local office. The charge for this is \$20.00 cash, credit card, or certified check. You should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The local Vital Records Department is located at 3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418; counter hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number is 253-798-6418. If reverting to a maiden name after a divorce, there is no need to change your name through Vital Records.

The Social Security Department requests a certified copy of the name change. The address of the local office is: 2608 South 47th Street, Tacoma, WA 98408.

You must change the name on your driver's license. The Department of Licensing requires a copy, not certified, to issue a new license.

If you are in the military service, you will need an additional certified copy for your military records.

HEARING AND COURTROOM PROCEDURE

Name Changes may be heard immediately, depending on courtroom availability. If the courtroom schedule does not allow for an immediate hearing, the clerk will set your Name Change hearing on the next available date. When the Judge calls your name, report to the front of the Courtroom. The Judge will ask you some general questions. If your name change is granted, you will return to the counter and your certified copies will be provided to you.

[Revised 03/10)

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MINOR NAME CHANGE INFORMATION

The absent parent must agree to change the name(s) of the minor child(ren) or be notified of your intent to change the names and given an opportunity to appear at the hearing. **PLEASE NOTE:** This agreement or notification is required even if the absent birth parent is not named on the child's birth certificate.

If there is **written consent** from the absent birth parent to change the minor's name, the hearing on the name change may be presented ex parte as soon as a Judicial Officer is available. The written consent **MUST** be in the form of a notarized affidavit. If you are unsure about the format of the written consent, please ask the clerk.

If there is NO written consent from the absent birth parent, notice must be given to the absent parent. The Court will provide you with a **Notice of Hearing** form. This notice will advise the absent parent of your intent to change the minor child's name and the date and time of the hearing. You must file a statement (proof) that the notice was served on the absent birth parent at the time of the hearing.

If you know the address of the absent parent, the notice may be served by personal service or by certified mail.

Personal service means that the absent parent is personally given a copy of the Notice of Hearing and Petition. These documents **MUST** be given to the absent parent at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing date. **YOU CANNOT PERSONALLY SERVE** the absent parent. Service of the Notice and Petition can be accomplished by a **Process Server** who will give the documents to the absent parent and provide the Court with an affidavit of service stating when and where the absent parent was served. You can find a Process Server in the yellow pages under Process Servers. There will be a charge for this service.

You may serve the absent parent **by mailing** a copy of the Notice and Petition by **CERTIFIED MAIL, RESTRICTED DELIVERY, with a RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**. Restricted delivery tells the post office that only the addressee may sign for the mail. You will receive the return receipt bearing the absent parent's signature which you must present to the court at the hearing. If someone other than the absent parent signs for the Notice and Petition or the absent parent refuses to sign for the certified mail, personal service must be made which is explained above.

If you do not know the address of the absent parent, you may serve through **Publication** of the notice in the newspaper. Before publication is allowed, **every effort must be made to locate the absent parent**. You should contact relatives, friends or associates of the absent birth parent to find him/her.

The clerk will provide you with a copy of the Notice of Hearing form which must be published in a newspaper. There are several newspapers to choose from in any city and they can be found in the yellow pages. Some newspapers specialize in publishing legal notices. You may wish to compare rates for publication in different newspapers as publishing this notice can be expensive. You must choose a newspaper that will provide an **AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**. This is the proof that the Notice of Hearing was published. The following must be accomplished:

The Notice **must** be published once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks. The Notice **must** be published in a newspaper in the city of the last known address of the absent birth parent.

If the absent parent is the father, his whereabouts cannot be found, and/or his name is **not** listed on the minor's birth certificate, the Notice of Hearing must be published where the child was born.

Proof of publication **must** be provided to the Court. Be sure to choose a newspaper for publication that will give you an **AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**. The affidavit must have a copy of the notice published by the newspaper included and must show the dates the notice was published.

On the scheduled hearing date, **YOU MUST APPEAR** at the Court at 1902 96th Street South, Tacoma. **If the minor child is over ten (10) years of age, he/she must appear with you.** At the hearing, **YOU MUST provide:**

- A copy of the birth certificate of the minor child.
- The affidavit of service on the absent birth parent OR affidavit of publication.

If proof of service is not provided or found to be insufficient, the name change for the minor child will not be granted.