



# Guide to Adult Name Changes

## 1. Basic Information

- You must file the [Petition](#) in the county where you reside.
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- If you are a prior felon, use the JDF 385 name change instructions instead.
- You must attach a fingerprint-based criminal history check dated within 90 days before filing.
- Some counties require a hearing before the order will issue. Check with the Court for their process and how to schedule that hearing.
- Unless waived by the Court, you will need to publish a notice of the name change before the order will issue.
- The law that directs this process is C.R.S. §§ 13-15-101, 102.

**Note:** To just change your last name after a marriage or civil union, you don't need this process. Just file a certified copy of the certificate with the related agency.

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## 2. Step-by-Step Guide

Terms defined on [page 4](#).

### Step 1 – Fingerprints

Schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted at:

[www.coloradofingerprinting.com](http://www.coloradofingerprinting.com)

### Step 2 – History Check

Order a fingerprint-based criminal history check from the:

- [Colorado Bureau of Investigation](#) (CBI); and
- [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#) (FBI).

Keep in Mind:

- 1) You must **start the case within 90-days** of the report's date.
- 2) You must provide any certified copies of criminal dispositions not reflected on the reports.

### Step 3 – Start the Case

- 1) Complete the starting paperwork:
  - JDF 433 – Petition.  
**Attach:** History Checks and any Criminal Dispositions.  
**Note:** See section below to waive publication requirement.
  - JDF 427 – Public Notice.
  - JDF 426 – Order for Publication. (Just do the [case caption](#).)
  - JDF 448 – Final Decree. (Just do the [case caption](#).)
- 2) File with the County Court in the county where you reside.
- 3) Pay the filing fee. See [Fees Section](#) for details.

**Note: Waiving Publication**

In the Petition, you may ask the court to waive [Public Notice](#). If you are:

- A victim of child or domestic **abuse**;
- Or changing your name to conform with your **gender identity**;

Be sure to note that in the Petition, under question 9. In those cases, the Court must grant the waiver. [C.R.S. § 13-15-102\(2\), \(4\)](#).

Step 4 – Hearing (*sometimes*)

While most courts do not hold a hearing, some may. If so:

- 1) The Court will provide notice of the hearing date and time.
- 2) Be sure to arrive early to find the room and get through security.
- 3) The Judge will review the paperwork, ask any questions they have, and order (or waive) publication.

Step 5 – Publication

Unless waived by the Court, you must give [Public Notice](#) of your proposed name.

- 1) You must publish at least three times within 21 days in a newspaper of record.
  - 2) Provide the paper the court-signed copy of *JDF 426 – Order of Publication*.
  - 3) Once completed, the newspaper will provide you documentation of publication. Or, make copies of each publication for proof.
- File the proof of publication into your case.

## Step 6 – Final Decree

Once you file the proof of publication, or if the Court waived publication:

- 1) The Court will send you the signed Decree.
- 2) You may order certified copies for a fee.
- 3) Send a copy or certified copy to any business or government agency to reflect your name change on their records.

Examples:

Department of Motor Vehicles for your Driver’s License

County Clerk and Recorder for any property owned.

US Department of State for Passports.

Credit Reporting Bureaus. And so on.

### 3. Common Terms

#### Case Caption

The boxes at the top of the form. It contains the court’s address, parties’ names, the filer’s contact information, and the case number.

#### Petition

Document officially commences the Change of Name process.

#### Petitioner

The person filing a Petition for Change of Name.

#### Public Notice

Change of name shall be published at least three times within 21 days from the date of the order in a legal newspaper in the county where this case is filed.

#### May

In legal terms, “may” is defined as “optional” or “can.”

#### Shall

In legal terms, “shall” is defined as “required.”

## 4. Fees

Filing Fee	\$88 – County Court ( <i>most common choice</i> ) \$238 – District Court ( <i>same process, more expensive</i> )
Certified Copy	\$20

### To Request a Court Fee Waiver

File Forms:

- JDF 205 - Motion to Waive Fees.
- JDF 206 - Order. (Just do the [case caption](#).)

Or, if you receive certain public benefits, file:

- JDF 209 – Notice of Fee Waiver.

You will also need to pay the related entities for fingerprints, criminal history checks (*CBI/FBI*), and to publish the name-change notice (*newspaper*).

## 5. All Forms (*In numerical order*)

JDF 426 – Order for Publication.

JDF 427 – Public Notice.

JDF 433 – Petition.

JDF 448 – Final Decree.

## 6. ADA Information

For reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities act contact the local court's ADA coordinator.

## 7. Legal Advisory

These are basic instructions for informational purposes only. They do not constitute legal advice. If you choose to represent yourself, you are bound by the same rules and process as a lawyer. If you do not understand this information, please contact a lawyer.