

NAME & GENDER MARKER CHANGE GUIDE FOR MARYLAND RESIDENTS

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

Need further assistance? Come to the
NAME & GENDER CHANGE CLINIC

Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services Program and Trans Legal Advocates of Washington (TransLAW) hold monthly Name & Gender Change Clinics to assist clients navigating the name and/or gender change process. Clinic attendance is by appointment only! For more information about upcoming Clinics and to make an appointment, please contact Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services at (202) 939-7630.



WHITMAN-WALKER HEALTH
We see you.



INTRODUCTION

This guide provides an outline for Maryland Residents who wish to change their name and/or gender marker on identity documents and other records. Below are the most common steps taken to make these changes in Maryland. 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 that may apply.

For most clients, we recommend pursuing these steps in the order listed. We understand, however, that you may have unique needs/goals, which may 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 the subsequent sections instead.

We encourage you to make an appointment with staff from the Whitman-Walker Legal Services Program to discuss your specific situation and goals. We know 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 visit one of our Legal Intake offices: 1525 14th Street NW, 5th floor, Washington DC 20009 or Max Robinson Center at 2301 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE, Washington, DC 20020.

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MARYLAND ADULT NAME & GENDER MARKER CHANGE ROAD MAP

STEP 1: File Name Change Court Order

FILE AT THE COURTHOUSE:

- ✓ Completed name change packet
- ✓ Notice by Publication (form DR-61), **or** Notice by Posting, **or** Waiver of Publication, **plus** the associated fees (options vary, see County Notes)
- ✓ Copy of an official document with current legal name (unexpired state ID, passport, birth certificate, etc.)
- ✓ Filing fee **or** fee waiver if you qualify
- ✓ County-specific requirements, e.g. copy of a birth certificate (see County Notes)
- ✓ A request for certified copies of the final Order (**at least 4**) to update other IDs

STEP 2: Request Gender Marker Letters

REQUEST FROM MEDICAL PROVIDER:

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

STEP 3: Update Name & Gender at SSA

FILE AT YOUR LOCAL SSA OFFICE:

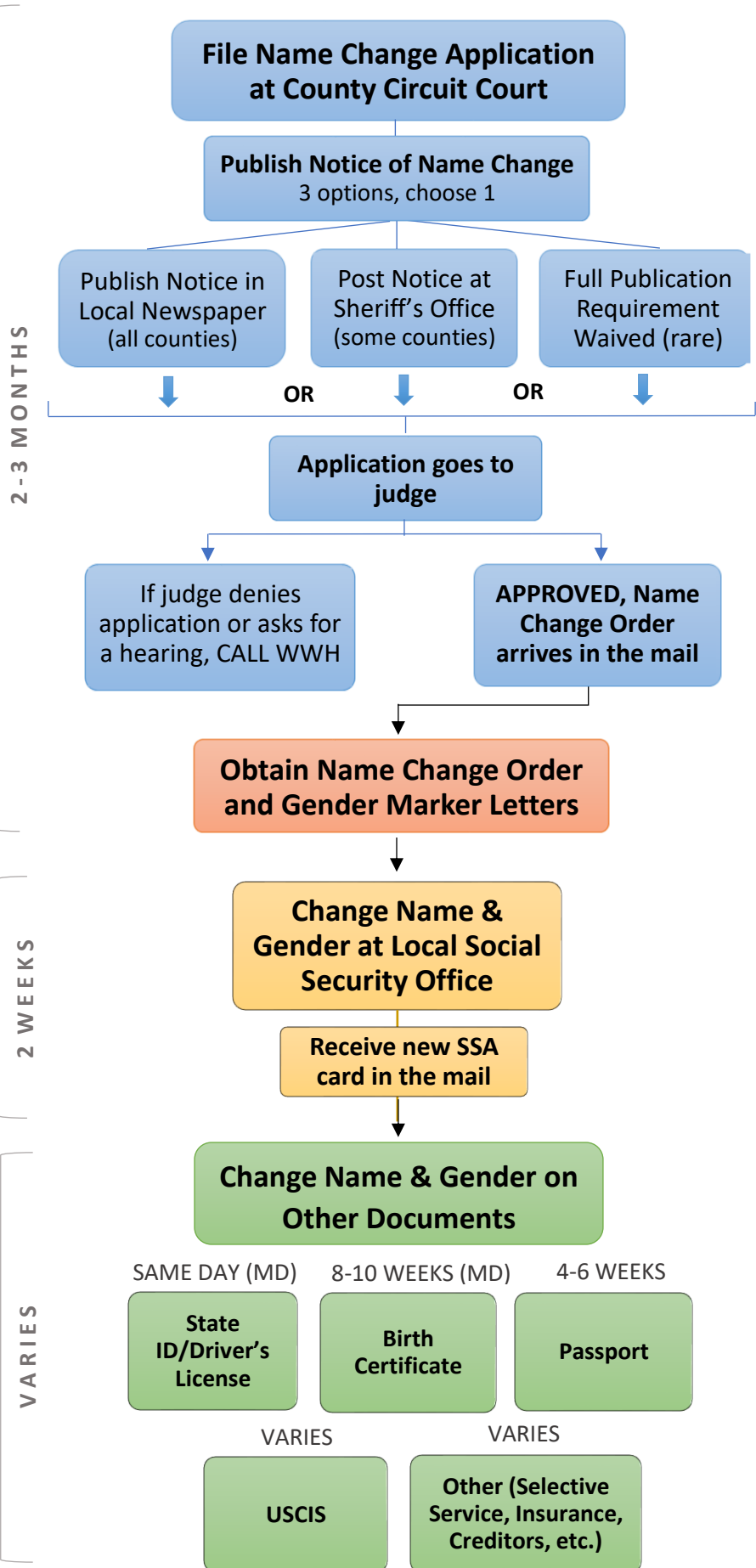
- ✓ Application for Social Security Card (form SS-5)
- ✓ Certified copy of Court Order
- ✓ Letter of Gender Marker Change
- ✓ ID document (valid state ID or passport)
- ✓ Proof of US citizenship or lawful immigration status (**original** passport, birth certificate, immigration documents)

STEP 4: Update Other Documents

SEE RELEVANT SECTIONS FOR DETAILS.

Application processes and wait times vary by agency.

START HERE



MARYLAND 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 following with your local Court: _____ Circuit Court

1. Completed and signed Name Change Packet and Motion to Seal (if applicable);
2. Copy of valid identification in the form of a current driver's license, ID card, or passport;
3. Copy of your birth certificate; and
4. The filing fee, OR a completed fee waiver petition. Your filing fee is \$165.

STEP 2: Comply with Publication requirement (by meeting one of the options below):

Option 1: Publish Notice of your (pending) Name Change in Newspaper

1. Court Clerk sends Notice of Publication (DR-61 Form) to local newspaper
2. You pay the invoice from newspaper (fee:____) and receive Certificate of Publication
3. Confirm that the Court Clerk has received the Certificate of Publication

Option 2: Request Posting by Sheriff by Filing a Motion with the Court

1. Confirm that the Court approved your request (Motion) to post by Sheriff
2. Pay \$40 to the Sheriff's Office (or Clerk) to have your Name Change Notice posted at the courthouse

Option 3: Ask the Court to Waive Publication & Posting by Filing Motion with Court: If the Court waives the entire publication requirement, there is no further action for you to do.

STEP 3: Judge signs Order for Name Change

- The judge may hold a brief hearing to ask you some questions; or the Court Clerk may mail you the signed Order.
- The Court will provide certified copies of the signed Order for Change of Name. You should ask for at least 4 copies, but you may have to pay a fee for additional copies.

STEP 4: Go to a Social Security Office (find the closest one here:

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>) with the following things to update your name (and gender) with SSA:

1. Application for Social Security Card ([SS-5 Form](#), available at SSA office) with your changed name;
2. Certified copy of the Court Order for Change of Name;
3. An unexpired identification document, such as driver's license, state-issued identity card, or U.S. Passport (it is okay if your ID document includes your former name);
4. Proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful immigration status, such as a passport, birth certificate or immigration document; and
5. The signed letter on letterhead from your physician (if doing gender change).

STEP 5: Go to the MD Motor Vehicles Association and bring the following documents:

1. A certified copy of your Court Order for a Name Change;
2. Your newly issued SSA card reflecting your new name;
3. Your current driver's license or ID card (which you must surrender); and
4. Cash, check, money order, or credit card to pay the fee for a new ID.
5. If changing your gender marker, Maryland allows residents to self-identify during the application process. There are no required forms or documentation.

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

You have the right to change your name so long as you are not changing it for fraudulent purposes (such as, evading creditors, child support obligations, or criminal charges), or in a way that interferes with the rights of others.

➤ **When should I petition for a Court Order for Change of Name?**

An Order for Change of Name is often a requirement for changing your name on identity documents and on accounts with various entities, institutions, and organizations. Thus, it should be the first step you take when starting your name change (or name and/or gender change) process.

You can skip this section and go to section 2 if you are only interested in updating your gender marker.

➤ **Where do I go to get a Court Order for Change of Name?**

You will fill out and sign petition and file supporting documents in order to obtain a Court Order for Change of Name at the Circuit Court for the county (or city) in which you live. You can find the address and contact information of your Circuit Court at <http://www.courts.state.md.us/circuit/>.

Almost every Maryland Circuit Court allows you to file your name change by mail. To do so, mail all your documents and the relevant fee to the appropriate court division. See **County Notes** for more information about the specifics for each county.

If you file in person, look for the division that handles name changes—in almost every Circuit Court in Maryland, that will be either the Civil or Family Division. If in doubt, the Clerk of the Court should be able to direct you to the right division/office.

➤ **What do I need to file with the Court?**¹

To file for a Court Order for Change of Name, you will need:

1. **Completed Name Change packet**, which includes:

- a. A completed, signed **Petition for Change of Name**, also known as Form DR 60 (available at <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdr060.pdf>)

¹ For minors, see a list of required documents further along in this section.

- When deciding how to answer Question 4, please keep in mind that whatever you write will likely appear verbatim (exactly as you wrote it) in the Notice of Name Change, which may be published in your local newspaper or posted at the courthouse (the publication requirement is discussed in greater detail below). If you're worried about revealing your gender identity, consider writing "This is my preferred name and I wish to obtain appropriate identification" or "This is my name of common usage" or "This is my preferred name." You can also simply write "Personal."
- Make sure to sign your petition for name change with your *current* legal name.

- b. Document that complies with Maryland's publication requirement (you have 3 options):** Maryland law requires name change petitioners to publish their pending name change case in a local newspaper's Legal Notices section. This requirement ensures that interested parties are "notified" and have an opportunity to object to petitioner's name change.

Depending on their county, Maryland petitioners have three options to handle the publication requirement (check **County Notes**):

- **Option 1: Have Name Change Notice Published in Newspaper** (this option is available in ALL counties):
 - File **Notice for Publication**, also known as **Form DR 61** (<https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdr061.pdf>) with the Court.
 - Fill out the top section and first paragraph only of Form DR 61; leave the second paragraph (regarding objections) blank. The "because" section should mirror what you put down in question 4 of the name change application (DR 60 form).
 - Depending on which county/city you live in, it will be either the applicant's (your) or the Court's responsibility to submit the Notice for Publication to the selected newspaper (please check **County Notes**).
 - Once your name change is published in a local newspaper, you will receive a bill from the newspaper in the coming weeks. The publication fee ranges from around \$50 to \$200, depending on the county (see **County Notes**). Once you pay the bill, the newspaper will issue a Certificate of Publication. Some newspapers mail the Certificate of Publication directly to the Court. Others, depending on the county, mail it to the name change applicant. You will need to check with the newspaper and the Court to see what procedure they use. Depending on

your county, you may need to file/mail the Certificate of Publication with the Court.

- **Option 2: Request Posting by Sheriff** (allowed by many counties):
 - Many courts allow name change applicants to have their Notice of Name Change posted at the courthouse by the Sheriff's Office instead of publishing it in a newspaper. Posting by the Sheriff's Office at the courthouse is more private than publishing it in a newspaper. Importantly, posting by Sheriff is still viewable by the public at the courthouse. The Sheriff's posting fee is \$40, so it is always cheaper than publishing in your local newspaper.
 - If you want your name change notice posted at the courthouse by the Sheriff, *do not* fill out Form DR 61. Instead, check the **County Notes** to see how you should request posting by Sheriff. Some courts allow the name change applicant to verbally request posting by the Sheriff's Office. Other courts need a motion in writing, such as a "Motion for Notice by Posting in Lieu of Publication" or a "Motion to Waive Publication."
 - If your request is denied, contact WWH Legal Services. Or, you may proceed with option 1 if you feel comfortable with having your Notice of Name Change published in a local newspaper.
- **Option 3: Waive Publication** (allowed by few counties):
 - Instead of Form DR 61, you can file a **Motion to Waive Publication**
 - A few counties/cities allow name change applicants to waive (cancel) the publication requirement entirely, meaning that you do not have to post or publish your Notice of Name Change. Please check **County Notes**. If you live in one of these counties/cities, you should ask for a complete waiver of the publication requirement.
 - If your motion is denied, you can try to request posting by Sheriff (see option 2 above).

2. A photocopy of your birth certificate

3. A Motion to Seal (optional):

- When you apply for a name change, your petition (including your birth/former name and chosen name, address, and other information) may be accessible to the public online via the court's website:
<http://casesearch.courts.state.md.us/casesearch/>.

- To prevent this disclosure, you may file a Motion to Seal using this state form CC-DC-053 (https://courts.state.md.us/sites/default/files/import/courtforms/joint/ccd_c053.pdf) asking the court to protect your privacy by sealing the entire record of your case. You should describe in detail why you are worried about your personal information, including your birth/former name, chosen name, address, other contact information, etc. being publicly available. Include examples of any past harassment/discrimination you have encountered or may happen if your information is publicly accessible. You can attach additional pages if the form does not provide you with enough space to describe your fears/concerns.
- Note that if your Motion to Seal is approved, you are still required to meet the publication requirement by doing one of the three options described above.
- If the court denies your request to seal your case, contact WWH Legal Services to talk about filing another motion to seal.

4. The relevant fee(s).

- **Filing Fee:** If you are representing yourself, the Maryland name change petition filing fee is \$165. If you are represented by an attorney, there may be an additional \$10 or \$20 notice of appearance fee. See **County Notes** for more information.
- **Fee Waiver:** Depending on your income, you may qualify for a waiver of the filing fee. If your fee waiver is granted, the court will process your name change petition without charge. If your fee waiver is denied, your case will be closed. You can reopen the case by returning to the Court and paying the filing fee. The process to file for a fee waiver varies by county (see **County Notes**). However, most of counties will require you to submit:
 - **A Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs** (form CC-DC-089). To obtain a complete waiver of the filing fee, you must strike out the words “prepaid” and write in “all”.
 - **Documents that support your financial hardship** (proof of income, Medicaid, TANF, SNAP, SSI, homelessness, outstanding bills, etc.).
- **Publication Fee:** Unless the Court waives the publication requirement, you are required to notify the public of your name change (discussed above). The publication fee – newspaper’s fee or the Sheriff’s posting fee – cannot be waived:

- A local newspaper's publication fee can range from \$50-\$200, depending on your county (see **County Notes**).
- The Sheriff's Office posting fee is \$40 payable to the Sheriff's office.

5. Depending on your county, the Court may ask for additional identity documents (ex: copy of your state ID card or passport) or information. Please check **County Notes** for more information about the specifics for each county.

6. A request for additional certified copies. When you file these materials with the Clerk, we recommend that you request at least four (4) extra certified copies of the final court order. You will need these extra copies to make later name changes to various identity documents. If your Fee Waiver was approved, extra certified copies will be provided to you at no cost. If you did not get a Fee Waiver, then extra certified copies cost \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page). If you forget to ask for extra certified copies when you file, you can always purchase them from the Clerk later.

➤ **What do I do after I file with the court?**

After you submit your initial petition, there may be an additional step(s) to receive your Court Order for Name Change. The step(s) depend on whether or how you must comply with Maryland's publication requirement. Please see the options below and follow the one that applies to your situation:

1. Option 1: You are required to publish your name change notice in a newspaper:

After you file or mail in the documents listed above with the Court Clerk, they will sign the Notice of Publication. If you mailed in your application packet, we recommend that you call the Court Clerk to confirm that they signed off on the Notice of Publication. The publication process gives members of the public a legally required opportunity to object to the petition.² *At least 15 days before the objection deadline*, you must publish notice of the name change in a local newspaper. Publication requirements differ from county to county. In some jurisdictions, publication arrangements are the responsibility of the name change applicant asking for publication. In other jurisdictions, the Clerk of Court will arrange to have the Notice published. Ask the Clerk if publication is your responsibility. See **County Notes** for more information about publication procedures in specific counties.

² Generally, no one objects. If you encounter an objection, please contact WWH Legal Services.

The newspaper that publishes your name change will send you an invoice to have the Notice published. You are required to pay this invoice. The cost will vary from county to county but can run as high as \$200. When your name change is published, you should buy a copy of the paper and keep it for your records.

After the notice is published, you and the Clerk should receive a confirmation letter from the newspaper – this is called the “**Certificate of Publication.**” In some jurisdictions, the Certificate of Publication is only sent to you and not to the Court. Please ask the Clerk of your Circuit Court whether you need to send in or file the Certificate of Publication, or if it is sent in by the publishing newspaper.

2. Option 2: Court approves your Notice by Posting at the Courthouse:

If the Judge grants your motion to publish by posting at the courthouse, the Sheriff will post notice of your name change in the courthouse. The fee for posting your Notice at the courthouse is \$40 payable to the Sheriff’s Office (in some counties/cities, the Clerk accepts the \$40 posting payment instead of the Sheriff, check **County Notes**). You must pay the \$40 posting fee in order to proceed with your case.

3. Option 3: Court waives your publication requirement

A few counties/cities allow name change applicants to waive (cancel) the publication requirement entirely, meaning that you do not have to post or publish your Notice of Name Change. If the Court allows waiver of publication, there are no additional steps for you to do besides waiting for your name change to be approved.

➤ **How do I receive my Court Order for Change of Name?**

The clerk will send your Petition to the Judge for approval after the publication requirement is satisfied – either by:

1. **Option 1:** Clerk receiving the Certificate of Publication from you or the newspaper;
2. **Option2:** Clerk receiving confirmation from the Sheriff’s Office that they posted your Notice of Name Change at the courthouse; or
3. **Option 3:** Clerk receiving Order from Judge waiving the publication requirement.

The Judge will review all the information in your petition. If someone has objected to your name change or if the Judge has any questions about your petition, a hearing may be scheduled. If this happens, please contact WWH Legal Services for guidance.

If no one has objected to the name change and the Judge has no questions about your paperwork, then the Judge will approve and sign the Order for Name Change. You will typically receive only one copy of the Order in the mail. You can purchase additional certified copies (which you will need to change your name with other agencies) from the Clerk of the Court.

➤ **How long will the process take?**

Because there are several steps you must complete, including the publication requirement, receiving a Court Order for Name Change can take 2 to 4 months. It may take longer if the Judge decides to hold a hearing or if the Court is backlogged.

Your case will process more smoothly if your information listed in the filed documents is correct (e.g. no spelling errors, complete names listed throughout), if all the required documentation has been filed with the Court, and once the publication requirement has been met.

If your case has been pending for over 2 months after filing, you should call the Clerk's office (see **County Notes**) to inquire about your name change case.

➤ **How do I file if I am a minor (under age 18)?**

People under the age of 18 may change their name in Maryland using the following minor-specific forms:

1. **Petition for Change of Name (Minor)**, also known as form DR-62 (available at <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdr062.pdf>)
2. **Notice (Minor)**, also known as form DR-65 (available at <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdr065.pdf>)
3. **Consent to Change of Name**, also known as form DR-63 (available at <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/ccdr063.pdf>)

The same publication requirements and costs apply as for adult name changes (see relevant subsections above on Publication and Fees).

We encourage minors and their parents/legal guardians to speak to an attorney before pursuing the name change of a minor as special legal issues surround this decision, especially if the parents/legal guardians split legal or physical custody of the minor.

A minor's petition for a legal name change **must include signed consent from both parents**. If signed consent from a parent/legal guardian cannot be obtained, then they must be served with the name change documents filed with the court (Petition for Change of Name, Notice, Order for Change of Name, all attachments filed with these documents, and Writ of Summons), or a Death Certificate must be provided to the court. You should speak to an attorney about how to properly serve that parent/legal guardian.

Please Note: A Minor's petition for name change is a matter of public record. Parents/guardians may file a Motion to Seal using this state form CC-DC-053 (<https://courts.state.md.us/sites/default/files/import/courtforms/joint/ccdc053.pdf>) asking the court to protect the Minor's privacy by sealing the entire record. Please refer to the Motion to Seal subsection above for more information.

➤ **If I also want to update my gender marker, should I file for a Court Order for Change of Gender/Sex as well?**

In Maryland, a court order to change your gender/sex is not necessary in order to update your gender marker on your Federal or Maryland identity documents.

It is faster and easier to update your gender marker through available administrative (non-court) processes than to file for a Court Order for Change of Gender/Sex. For example, there are administrative processes available to update your gender marker with:

- Social Security Administration for Social Security card/record (see Section 2),
- Maryland MVA for driver's licenses and IDs (see Section 3),
- Maryland Vital Records office for Maryland birth certificates (see Section 4), and
- U.S. State Department for passports (see Section 5).

Some of these administrative gender marker update processes require "proof" of gender transition like a letter from your medical provider, so we generally recommend that you request a letter from your provider once you file for your name change (see the following Sections for more). This way, you will likely have your letters ready by the time you receive your Name Change Order and can begin updating the name AND gender marker on your documents right away.

If you were born outside of Maryland, your birth state may require a Court Order for Change of Gender/Sex in order to update your gender marker (or sex field) on your birth certificate. Check out the National Center for Transgender Equality's ID Documents Center at <https://transequality.org/documents> for more information regarding your birth state's requirements.

If you must obtain a Court Order for Change of Gender/Sex, almost every Maryland court will allow you to file for a name and gender/sex change in the same filing. Thus, if you are planning to complete both, it makes sense to submit your petition for a gender/sex change at the same time, so that you only have to pay the filing fee once.

While there is a court-issued form and procedure to change your name in MD, there is no similar procedure for changing your gender marker/sex. To do so, you will need to add a paragraph to your name change petition explaining that you are also asking for a gender/sex change in order to update the gender marker (or sex field) on your identity documents. You should attach any relevant supporting evidence, such as an affidavit from your health care provider that you have received “appropriate treatment for gender transition to male/female.”³ Proof of gender-affirming surgery is not required.

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

Please refer to the **County Notes** for court-specific information. You may ask the Clerk of the Court for assistance with any part of the process.

➤ **I have my Court Order for Name Change, what's next?**

Once you have a Court Order for a Name Change, you can use it to update your name with Social Security, with the MVA, on your Birth Certificate, on your Passport, and with all financial institutions and entities where you have an account. You can also update your gender marker at the same time you update your name, but you will need different documentation for gender marker updates (usually a form signed by you or a letter from your health care provider). See the following sections on next steps.

We recommend updating your Social Security record next. And once you have received your updated Social Security card, you should go to the MVA to obtain an updated ID. All other updates can be done in the order that you prefer.

³ Prior to 2015, the standard for a Court Order for Change of Gender Marker was having undergone a medical procedure that “permanently and irreversibly changes your gender.” The Maryland Court of Appeals established this standard in the 2003 case *In re Heilig*, but the court did not elaborate on what type of medical procedures qualified. The court drew its standard from Maryland Code § 4-215(b), which required a “surgical procedure” in order to change the sex designated on a birth certificate. However, in 2015, the Maryland State Legislature amended the Maryland Code, moving the relevant code to § 4-211 and **requiring only “appropriate treatment” based on “generally accepted medical standards.”** While the Maryland Court of Appeals has not revisited its 2003 decision in light of these statutory changes, you no longer need to show proof of gender-affirming surgery in order to obtain a Court Order for a Gender Change.

➤ **Let's Recap the Name Change Process**

STEP 1: File Name Change Petition at County Circuit Court

- ✓ Petition for Change of Name
- ✓ Documents to fulfill publication requirement (3 options, choose 1)
 - Option 1: Publish in Newspaper (available in all counties/cities)
 - Option 2: Posting by Sheriff (available in some counties/cities)
 - Option 3: Requirement Waived altogether (rarely approved)
- ✓ Copy of an official document with your current legal name (valid passport, state ID, birth certificate, etc.)
- ✓ A Motion to Seal (Form CC-DC-053) (optional)
- ✓ Relevant fees **or** Fee Waiver if you qualify
 - Filing fee (\$165 if you are representing yourself)
 - Publication fee (varies based on publication option and county/city)
- ✓ Check county/city-specific requirements in **County Notes**
- ✓ A request for four (4) additional certified copies

STEP 2: Comply with Publication requirement by meeting one of these options:

Option 1: Have Name Change Notice Published in Newspaper

- ✓ Clerk sends Notice of Publication to local newspaper
- ✓ Pay invoice from newspaper
- ✓ Confirm that Court has Certificate of Publication

Option 2: Request Posting by Sheriff

- ✓ Confirm that the Court approved your request (Motion) to post by Sheriff
- ✓ Pay \$40 to the Sheriff's Office (or Clerk) to have your Name Change Notice posted at the courthouse

Option 3: Waive Publication: If the Court waives the entire publication requirement, there is no further action for you to do.

STEP 3: Receive Final Order for Name Change in the Mail or Go to Court⁴

⁴ If you are scheduled for a hearing, please contact WWH Legal Services at 202-939-7630 right away.

2. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

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

➤ **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 Maryland ID or driver's license** because the MVA 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?**

Like all federal agencies, the SSA only allows you to choose either an "F" (female) or an "M" (male) gender marker. While the SSA doesn't offer a non-binary "X" option, you will have the ability to choose an "X" for your Maryland ID or driver's license.

➤ **Where do I go to update my name and/or gender marker?**

You can either take the required documents in person to your nearest SSA office during normal business hours or submit them via mail. We recommend going in person. You can find your nearest Social Security office at <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>.

➤ **What do I need to bring to update my name and/or gender marker with the SSA?**

1. **Updating Name:** to update your name with the SSA, you will need:
 - a. An **Application for a Social Security Card**, also known as Form SS-5 (available at <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf>), that includes your legal name).
 - If you are updating your gender marker also, be sure to mark your correct (preferred) gender marker on the SS-5 form.
 - b. A certified copy of your **Court Order for Change of Name**.
 - c. An **identification document**, such as an unexpired driver's license or state-issued identity card (it is ok if your ID document includes your former name).
 - d. **Proof of U.S. Citizenship or lawful immigration status** (such as a passport, birth certificate or immigration documentation). This is required for first-time applicants only.
2. **Updating Gender Marker:** in addition to the items required to process a name change, listed above, you will need one of the following items to update your gender marker:
 - a. **Passport:** A valid, 10-year U.S. passport with the updated gender marker (**Please Note:** Passports with less than 10 years of validity will not be accepted).
 - b. **Birth Certificate:** An original, state-issued birth certificate reflecting your updated gender marker.
 - c. **Court Order:** An original court order directing legal recognition of change of gender marker.
 - d. **Physician Letter:** A signed letter on letterhead from your licensed physician stating that you had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition⁵ and including the following language:

⁵ "Clinical treatment for gender transition" is a purposefully broad term. It can mean gender-affirming surgery, or hormone replacement therapy, or counseling/therapy on transitioning. Physicians are not required to specify the type of treatment provided. We recommend keeping the broad language of "clinical treatment for gender transition."

[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 long will this process take?**

You will receive a new Social Security Card in the mail with the amended name in approximately two weeks. If you also updated your gender marker, it should be reflected in the Social Security system within 2 weeks but you will not receive written confirmation showing this change (since Social Security Cards do not include a gender marker).

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

See the following resources on updating your Social Security records:

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

3. **CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER WITH MARYLAND MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION (MVA)**

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

Maryland law requires that you notify the MVA of a name change within 30 days. This change must be reported in person and only after you have changed your name with the SSA. The update with the SSA will trigger a system update within approximately 24 hours but you will also need to present your updated Social Security card (which usually takes 2 weeks to arrive in the mail).

If you need to change your gender marker as well, you may do so at the same time as you change your name. Maryland allows residents to self-identify their gender as part of the application process and it does not require any additional documentation – meaning you can indicate your gender marker on the application without additional proof.

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

As of October 1, 2019, Maryland allows residents to self-identify the gender on a license or ID and offers “F” (female), “M” (male), and “X” (non-binary) gender markers. No additional documentation is needed to choose your gender marker.

If you choose the non-binary “X” option, **it should not impact** your other identification documents or your health insurance. Federal agencies (which issue social security cards, passports, immigration documents, etc.) only offer female and male gender marker options, so they will retain whatever gender marker you already have on file. If you have questions or encounter difficulties, please call Whitman-Walker Legal Services at (202)-939-7630.

➤ **Where do I go to update my name and/or gender marker with the MVA?**

Both name and gender marker changes can be processed in person at a full service MVA facility. You will need to bring all relevant documents and the required fees. You can find the MVA office nearest you at <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/locations/mvabranchesandveiplocations.htm>.

➤ **What should I bring to update my name and/or gender marker with the MVA?**

1. Updating Name: To update your name, you will need:

- a. Your current driver's license or ID card (see below for additional requirements if you do not already have a "Real ID").
- b. A court Order for Name Change (make sure that it is a certified copy).
- c. Your Social Security card with your updated name.
- d. The relevant correction fee (\$20). If this is a new application or a renewal, please see the applicable fees here: <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/about-mva/fees/index.htm>.

2. Updating Gender Marker: Maryland allows residents to self-identity the gender on a license or ID and offers a male, female, and non-binary option. To update your gender, you will need:

- a. Your current driver's license or ID card.
- b. The relevant correction fee (\$20). If this is a new application or a renewal, please see the applicable fees here: <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/about-mva/fees/index.htm>.

When you check in, you will show your documents and wait to be called. An employee will take a new picture for your driver's license or ID and then you will use a touch screen to finish the application process through the Driver Licensing System. When it asks if you want to change your gender, select "yes" and choose the appropriate gender designation (F, M, or X).

➤ **How do I update my car title and registration?**

Please Note: If you change your name with the MVA, you will also need to update the name on your vehicle registration and title. You can print an updated registration

at any MVA desk or electronic kiosk (where available) without requesting a formal name change for the registration. For vehicle titles, complete form VR-448 (available at <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/resources/docs/VR-448.pdf>) and either bring it in person to an MVA office or mail it to 6601 Ritchie Highway N.E., Glen Burnie, MD 21062 along with the existing title, proof of identification (such as a driver's license) and the relevant fee (\$40).

➤ **How long will the process take?**

The MVA can process both name and gender marker changes during your visit. The MVA will also provide you with an updated vehicle title during your visit (if you mail in your title correction materials, you will receive your updated title by mail). You can request expedited service for your license for an additional \$15 fee and will receive it in the mail the following day (signature is required for accepting the delivery).

➤ **Are there any other requirements?**

The new Real ID Act requires a one-time review of your **original documents** in order to renew, duplicate, or obtain a new Driver's License or Non-Driver's ID card.

If you do not already have a Real ID driver's license or ID card, you will also need to bring original versions of the Real ID required documents listed below, in addition to all required documents for updating your name and/or gender marker:

7. A proof of age and identity (such as U.S. Passport, permanent resident card or birth certificate);
8. Your newly issued social security card;
9. Proof of U.S. lawful status (such as a visa), if applicable; and
10. Two documents showing proof of MD residency (such as utility bills or bank statements; please note: these documents must show your name and residential address).

➤ **How do I obtain a Federally Non-Compliant Driver's License?**

If you don't satisfy the Real ID requirements, you can acquire a Federally Non-Compliant driver's license, learner's permit, and ID card. The federally non-compliant driver's license and learner's permit allow you to legally drive, but none of the limited purpose credentials can be used for official federal purposes (such as boarding commercial airline flights, accessing federal buildings or purchasing firearms). Your ID will be marked to reflect these limitations.

You must schedule an appointment to obtain a federally non-compliant driver's license, learner's permit or non-driver's ID card. You can learn more about the process for obtaining a federally non-compliant ID at <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/announcements/sb715-information.htm>.

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

See the following resources on updating your MVA records:

1. National Center for Transgender Equality's "Maryland ID Documents Center" guide <https://transequality.org/documents/state/maryland>.
2. For more detailed information on how to change your name or gender marker on your passport, please see MVA's webpage for "Changing Gender Designation" <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/Changing-Gender-Designation/index.htm>.

4. CHANGING YOUR NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER ON YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Changing your birth certificate to reflect your name or correct gender marker can be an important part of your transition process and can facilitate changing your other identity documents.

➤ **When should I apply to update my name and/or gender marker on my birth certificate?**

You can amend your birth certificate any time after you receive your Court Order for Change of Name. You may wish to amend your birth certificate prior to updating your other identity documents, as an updated birth certificate can be used as proof of a name or gender marker change. For example, you can use an updated birth certificate to amend your SSA or educational records.

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

Most states' vital records offices (including Maryland) only allows you to choose either an "F" (female) or an "M" (male) gender marker on your birth certificate. Although there is no non-binary "X" option in Maryland, you still have the ability to choose an "X" for your Maryland driver's license or ID (see section above).

➤ **Where do I go to update my name and/or gender marker on my birth certificate?**

You will need to apply for an amended birth certificate with the state in which you were born.

If you have a Maryland birth certificate, you may change your name and/or gender marker on your birth certificate by mailing your documents to or visiting the Division of Vital Records, located at 6764-B Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, MD 21215 (Telephone: 410-764-3186).

➤ **What do I need to bring to update my name and/or gender marker on my birth certificate?**

1. Birth Certificates Issued in a State Other than MD

The law in the state where you were born governs the rules for changing (amending) your birth certificate. Some states allow you to amend your birth certificate with relative ease, while others will not amend birth certificates at all. Many states require that an applicant for an amended birth certificate present a court order for a gender change (issued in the state where you currently live) before your birth state is willing to amend the gender marker on a birth certificate.

Of the states that will amend birth certificates, some insist that the information on the original birth certificate (name and gender at birth) remain on the amended birth certificate and will make note of the amendment.

The Office of Vital Records in the state where you were born can give you more information about what is required to amend your birth certificate to reflect your new name and gender and what an amended birth certificate would look like. You may also consult the National Center for Transgender Equality's ID Documents Center: <https://transequality.org/documents>.

2. Birth Certificates Issued in MD

Maryland allows an individual to amend their MD-issued birth certificate to reflect both a name and gender marker change. You will need to submit the following documents:

- a. A certified copy of your Name Change Court Order (if changing name);
- b. A completed and signed Application for Change in Sex Designation on a Certificate of Live Birth (if you are updating your gender marker)
(<https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Corrections/Birth/Gender%20>

[Reassignment/Gender%20Re-Assignment%20instructions%2009_01_2016.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Corrections/Birth/Gender%20Re-Assignment%20instructions%2009_01_2016.pdf));

- c. A completed and signed Statement of Licensed Healthcare Practitioner (https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Documents/Corrections/Birth/Gender%20Re-Assignment/Gender%20Re-Assignment%20instructions%2009_01_2016.pdf);
- d. A copy of your photo ID; and
- e. A check or money order payable to State of Maryland for the total cost (the change fee is \$10 and each copy of the birth certificate costs \$10).

➤ **How do I update my information on my child's birth certificate?**

If you are a parent of children born in Maryland, you may want to update your name listed on your children's birth certificates. To do so, bring/send the child or children's birth certificate(s) along with your updated birth certificate (or the same forms of proof required to change your own if you are doing it at the same time as your own application).

➤ **How long will the process take?**

According to the MD Department of Vital Records, it will take approximately 8 to 10 weeks to receive your updated birth certificate in the mail.

If you request an updated birth certificate in person at the Division of Vital Records, you can receive your new birth certificate typically within an hour.

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

To learn more about different state requirements to change your name and/or gender marker on your birth certificate, please see the National Center for Transgender Equality's ID Documents Center: <https://transequality.org/documents>.

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 do not have a passport and do not plan to travel internationally, you may still want to apply for or update your passport because it can be used as a proof to show your U.S. citizenship. Your U.S. passport can serve as an alternative document in situations where you need to show your birth certificate in order to demonstrate your U.S. citizenship.

➤ What gender markers can I choose from?

Like all federal agencies, the State Department only allows you to choose either an “F” (female) or an “M” (male) gender marker. Although there is no non-binary “X” option, you have the ability to choose an “X” for your Maryland 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. To find the closest facility to you, please search online at <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov> or call the National Passport Information Center at 1-877-487-2778.

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, a certified copy of your Birth Certificate, a Certificate of Naturalization, or a Report of Birth Abroad. **Please 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 4-6 weeks (depending on their processing times);

- f. A letter from a licensed physician on office letterhead attesting that you have received “appropriate clinical treatment” to transition (known as a Physician Certification). **Please note:** the letter need not describe the specific treatments you have received, and there is no surgical requirement for getting a U.S. passport. A sample Physician Certification is pasted below. Please ask your healthcare provider to follow the template language exactly or your application may be rejected; and

<p style="text-align: center;">[On Office Letterhead]</p> <p>[DATE]</p> <p>United States Passport Agency U.S. Department of State</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>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]).</p> <p>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].</p> <p>I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.</p> <p>[Signature]</p> <p>[Doctor Full Name], M.D. [TITLE] Medical License No. [#####] [ADDRESS] [PHONE NUMBER]</p>
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- g. 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).

➤ **How long will the process take?**

Processing times for all passport services are typically between four and six weeks. 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 1-877-487-2778 or 1-888-874-7793 (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 (USCIS)

If you are a foreign-born individual who intends to apply for legal status with USCIS, has already applied for legal status with USCIS or who has already been granted some form of legal status here in the United States, Whitman-Walker Health can 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 our 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.

1. 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.

2. 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 <http://www.sss.gov/default.htm> 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.

See the table below for helpful information on how to update your insurance record based on the type of insurance you have. Here are the general steps:

Step 1: update your name and/or gender marker with your insurance by sending them:

- Copy of your Name Change Court Order,
- Copy of your updated driver's license/ID, and
- Copy of your updated Social Security card (not every insurance asks for this)

Step 2: ask your insurance to send you an updated insurance card with the correct information

Step 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 already updated your insurance record:

- Please show your updated insurance card and updated driver's license/ID 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
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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 https://www.coverva.org, 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 (www.mymedicare.gov/) 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: info@dchealthlink.com</p>	<p><u>MD Health Connection:</u></p> <p>Phone: 1-855-642-8572</p> <p>See also: https://www.marylandhbe.com/new-law-recognizes-non-binary-gender-identification/</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. You will most likely be asked to provide a certified copy of the court order.

D. Other Legal Documents

We recommend that you also update any legal documents in which you are named as a party, such as a rental lease, wills, powers of attorney, advanced health directive, deeds, or other documents that name you as a party. This ensures that your rights and powers in the document remain intact.

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. Whitman-Walker Legal Services may be able to assist you with these changes.

<h2>COUNTY NOTES REGARDING NAME CHANGE PROCEDURES</h2>
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Anne Arundel County

- **Court Information:** <http://www.circuitcourt.org/>
 - **Address:** Circuit Courthouse, 8 Church Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401
 - **Phone:** (410) 222-1397; (410) 222-1431 (Civil /Family Support)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to Circuit Courthouse, 8 Church Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401.
- **Filing fees:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney. They will accept cash (exact change only), money order, or personal check (payable to “Clerk of the Court”), but no credit or debit cards.
- **Fee Waiver:** To waive filing costs, submit a “Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs” (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your current ID and a copy of your birth certificate.

- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once in *The Capital Gazette*. The paper charges \$85 and can be reached through Legal Advertising, classified@capitalgazette.com, 410-539-7700 – but the Court will send the order of publication directly to the paper which will then bill the client for the \$85 fee and mail the Proof/Certificate of Publication directly to the court. Following a 15-day waiting period from receipt of the Proof, the Clerk's office will forward the petition to a judge for review. Approximately four to ten weeks later, you should receive four certified copies of the Order for a Name Change in the mail. You may also call and go to the court in person to pick up a certified copy if you need one sooner.
- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion to waive the publication requirement with the Clerk. If granted, the Sheriff's Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse (for no fee). This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper, but allowing this is at the discretion of the court. **As of February 2020, we have not yet seen a case in Anne Arundel County where the court allowed the publication requirement to be waived or replaced by posting at the courthouse – but it is worth a try. Please let us know if you have success with this.**
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Baltimore County

- **Court Information:** <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/circuit/index.html>;
<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/circuit/family/index.html>
 - **Address:** Baltimore County Courts Building, 401 Bosley Avenue, Towson, MD 21204
 - **Phone:** 410-887-2614 (Civil Division)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to PO Box 6754, Towson, MD 21285-6754, Attn.: Family Division.
- **Filing Fees:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$185 with an attorney. They will accept cash, Visa, Mastercard, or money order/personal check. When filing your petition for a name and/or gender change, all checks or money orders should be made out to "Clerk of the Court."
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a "Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs" (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your birth certificate and another proof of identity (passport, driver's license, etc.) if your current legal name is different.
- **Publication Requirement:** To meet the publication requirement, notice of the name change must run once in one of these papers: *The Afro-American* (\$80), *The Daily Record* (\$85), *The Jeffersonian* (\$90), or any other generally circulated local publication of your choosing. Note that the Court will send the publication notice directly to *The Jeffersonian* by default. You are responsible for sending the notice yourself to any other publication. *The Jeffersonian* will send the Proof/Certificate of Publication directly to the Court. Approximately four to twelve weeks later, you should receive a single certified

copy of the Order for a Name Change in the mail, unless you have arranged in advance to have multiple certified copies sent. For *The Afro-American*: please bring the “Order for Notice by Publication” and the \$80 fee to either the Washington, DC office (Uline Arena Building, 1140 3rd St., 2nd Flr, NE) or the Baltimore, MD office (1531 S. Edgewood Street). To fulfill the requirement, the notice only needs to run once. The Afro-American will publish the notice by the Saturday of the week you submit (deadline to submit is Tuesday at close of business) and will send a notarized Certificate/Proof of Publication directly to you. You are then responsible for sending the Certificate/Proof of Publication to the Court to complete the notification process.

- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion to waive the publication requirement with the Clerk. If granted, the publication requirement is waived in its entirety. This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper. If you are interested in waiving the publication, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Baltimore City

- **Court Information:** <http://www.baltimorecitycourt.org/>;
<http://www.baltimorecitycourt.org/clerks-office/family-division/>
 - **Address:** Circuit Court for Baltimore City, Family Division, Room 109 Courthouse East, 111 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
 - **Phone:** 410-333-3709 (Family Division)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to Family Division, Room 109 Courthouse East, 111 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD 21202.
- **Filing Fee:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$185 with an attorney. They will accept exact cash, money order, or personal check (if you name matches your driver’s license). When filing your petition for a name and/or gender change, all checks or money orders should be made out to “Clerk of the Court.”
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a “Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs” (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** To meet the publication requirement, notice of the name change must be run once in either *The Afro-American* (\$80) or *The Daily Record* (\$85). For *The Afro-American*: please bring the “Order for Notice by Publication” (you receive this from the court) and the \$80 fee to either the Washington, DC office (Uline Arena Building, 1140 3rd St., 2nd Flr, NE) or the Baltimore, MD office (1531 S. Edgewood Street). *The Afro-American* will publish the notice by the Saturday of the week you submit (deadline to submit is Tuesday at close of business). *The Afro-American* will send a notarized Certificate/Proof of Publication directly to you. You are then responsible for sending the Certificate/Proof of Publication to the Court to complete the notification process. For *The Daily Record*: Please take the “Order for Notice by Publication” (you

get this from the court) in person to *The Daily Record*. *The Daily Record* (443-524-8188) will charge you \$85 and once the charge is paid, they will mail the Proof/Certificate of Publication directly to the Court. *The Daily Record* recommends that you bring in person the “Order for Notice by Publication” and pay them at the same time. Approximately four to twelve weeks later, you should receive a single certified copy of the Order for a Name Change in the mail, unless you have arranged in advance to have multiple certified copies sent.

- **Alternative to Publication:** Motions to post at the Sheriff’s office instead of in a newspaper are likely to be granted. If granted, the Sheriff’s Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by cash, money order, or personal check, made out to “Baltimore City Sheriff’s Office”). This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper. If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Charles County

- **Court Information:** <https://mdcourts.gov/clerks/charles/general>
 - Address: 200 Charles Street, La Plata, MD 20646
 - Phone: 301-932-3215 (Civil Clerk)
 - Hours: 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to P.O. Box 970, 200 Charles Street, La Plata, MD 20646. Approximately one week later the Clerk will mail you notice that the case has been initiated.
- **Filing Fee:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney. They will accept cash, money order, personal check, and debit cards, but no credit cards. When filing your petition for a name and/or gender change, all checks or money orders should be made out to “Clerk of the Court.”
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a “Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs” (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your current ID and a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once (before the expiration date listed in your Court paperwork) in *The Maryland Independent*. The paper charges \$70 and can be reached at 301-764-2815, fax 301-932-4059. You must arrange for publication. This paper publishes every Wednesday and Friday and the deadline to submit your paperwork is Monday at 12pm and Wednesday at 12pm respectively. This paper will accept a faxed copy of the notice but they require prepayment, so you must contact them first and arrange for payment over the phone. After publication is complete, the paper will mail the Proof/Certificate of Publication/“Printer’s Certificate” directly to the Court. You may also want to mail the Court a clipping as additional verification. A judge

will review and should issue the Order for a Name Change. You will receive one certified copy of the Order in the mail, though you may request additional copies.

- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion to waive the publication requirement with the Clerk. Motions to waive are available from the Clerk's office. If granted, the Sheriff's Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by cash, money order, or personal check, made out to "Charles County Sheriff's Office"). If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition. This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper, but allowing this is at the discretion of the court. **As of February 2020, we have not yet seen a case in Charles County where the court allowed the publication requirement to be waived or replaced by posting at the courthouse – but it is worth to try. Please let us know if you have success with this.**
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Frederick County

- **Court Information:** <https://www.courts.state.md.us/clerks/frederick>
 - **Address:** 100 West Patrick Street, Frederick, MD 21701
 - **Phone:** 301-600-1976 (Civil Clerk)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to 100 West Patrick St., Frederick, MD 21701, Attn: Clerk of the Circuit Court/ Family.
- **Filing Fee:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney. The fee can be paid with cash, credit card, check, or money order made payable to the "Clerk of the Circuit Court for Frederick County."
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a "Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs" (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your current ID and a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once in *The Frederick News Post*. The Court will send the publication notice directly to the newspaper, which will bill you based on the length of the notice (a typical fee is \$82 and above). The paper will send the Proof/Certificate of Publication to both you and the Court. Approximately four to ten weeks later, you should receive a single uncertified (though sealed) copy of the Order for a Name Change in the mail, unless you have arranged in advance and paid to have multiple certified copies sent.
- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion to waive the publication requirement with the Clerk. Motions to waive are available from the Clerk's office but the form available is specified for minors; adults should cross off minors from the form. If granted, the Sheriff's Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by personal check or money order, made out to "Frederick County Sheriff's Office"). This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a

newspaper. If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.

- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Howard County

- **Court Information:** <https://www.courts.state.md.us/clerks/howard>
 - **Address:** 8360 Court Avenue, Ellicott City, MD 21043
 - **Phone:** 410-313-3844 (Civil Clerk)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to 8360 Court Avenue, Ellicott City, MD 21043, Attn: Civil Division.
- **Filing fees:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney. They will accept cash, money order, personal check, Mastercard, or Visa.
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a “Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs” (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your current ID and a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once in *The Howard County Times*. The Court will send the order of publication directly to the paper which will then bill the client for the \$90 fee and mail the Proof/ Certificate of Publication directly to the Court. The entire process should take four to five weeks, after which you should receive a single certified copy of the Order for a Name Change in the mail, unless you have arranged in advance to have multiple certified copies sent.
- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion to waive the publication requirement with the Clerk. However, the Clerk’s office does not have a form available so you will need to draft your own. If granted, the Sheriff’s Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by personal check or money order, made out to “Howard County Sheriff’s Office”), though the fee may be made waivable when the Judge grants the motion – check with the Clerk. This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper. If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Montgomery County

- **Court Information:** <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/cct/>
 - **Address:** 50 Maryland Ave., Circuit Court, Family Department, Rockville, MD 20850
 - **Phone:** 240-777-9426 (Family Department)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday

- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to 50 Maryland Ave., Circuit Court, Rockville, MD 20850, Attn: Family Department. Approximately one week after the Court receives the petition, you will receive notice in the mail that the case has been initiated and will be assigned a case number.
- **Filing Fee:** The filing fee is \$165. When filing in person they will accept cash, money order, or personal check; when filing by mail they accept only check or money order. When filing your petition for a name and/or gender change, all checks or money orders should be made out to "Clerk of the Montgomery County Circuit Court."
- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a "Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs" (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver. We also recommend that you attach proof, if you have it. Please note: this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs, and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once in one of the following papers: *The Daily Record* (\$85), *The Washington Post* (name changes published on Thursdays, \$200-250), or *Washington Jewish Week* (\$50). You must indicate which newspaper you plan to publish your notice in and the Court will send the publication notice to the paper you select. The paper will bill you directly and then you must pay this bill before the notice is published. Some newspapers (including *The Daily Record*, and *Washington Jewish Week*) will mail the Proof/Certificate of Publication directly to the Court once publication is complete, and others (*The Washington Post*) will mail it to you. If the Proof/Certificate is mailed to you, you must send it to the Court. Approximately four to twelve weeks later, you should receive one plain and one certified copy of the Order for a Name Change in the mail, unless you have arranged in advance to have multiple certified copies sent.
- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a motion a "Motion for Notice by Posting in Lieu of Publication" to request posting at the courthouse. If you file in person, you can ask the Clerk to allow posting by Sheriff without filing a Motion. If granted, the Sheriff's Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by personal check or money order, made out to "Montgomery County Sheriff's Office"). This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper. If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

Prince George's County

- **Court Information:** <https://www.princegeorgescourts.org/>
 - **Address:** 14735 Main Street, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
 - **Phone:** 301-952-3323 (Civil Clerk)
 - **Hours:** 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail:** You may file by mail, addressing your materials to Clerk of the Circuit Court, Courthouse, 14735 Main Street, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772, Attn: D-1033.
- **Filing Fee:** The fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney. If filing in person, they will accept cash, money order, personal check, or credit/debit card (not

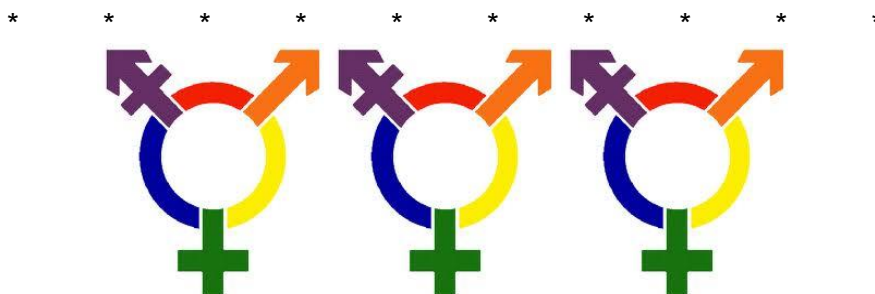
American Express). When filing your petition for a name and/or gender marker change, all checks or money orders should be made out to "Clerk of the Prince George's County Circuit Court."

- **Fee Waiver:** To request to waive filing costs, submit a "Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs" (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents:** Include a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement:** Notice of the name change must run once in one of the following papers: *The Prince George's Post* (\$50), *The Enquirer-Gazette* (\$50), *The Afro-American* (\$80), or any other generally circulated local publication of your choosing. If you select either *The Prince George's Post* or *The Enquirer-Gazette*, the Court will send the publication notice to the paper you select. You must indicate which newspaper you plan to publish your notice in and the Court will send the publication notice to the paper you select. The paper will then send you an invoice, which you must pay. After receipt of payment, *The PG Post* will hand deliver the Proof/Certificate of Publication to the Court directly, while *The Enquirer-Gazette* will send you a Proof/Certificate of Publication. If you receive the Proof/ Certificate of Publication, you must send it or hand deliver it to the Clerk's office. For all other newspapers (including *The Afro-American*), you are responsible for delivering the "Order for Notice by Publication" (you get this from the court) to the newspaper. For *The Afro-American*: please bring the "Order for Notice by Publication" and the \$80 fee to either the Washington, DC office (Uline Arena Building, 1140 3rd St., 2nd Flr, NE) or the Baltimore, MD office (1531 S. Edgewood Street). To fulfill the requirement, the notice only needs to run once. *The Afro-American* will publish the notice by the Saturday of the week you submit (deadline to submit is Tuesday at close of business) and will send a notarized Certificate/Proof of Publication directly to you. You are then responsible for sending the Certificate/Proof of Publication to the Court to complete the notification process. Once approved, you will receive three certified copies of the Order for a Name Change in the mail. The entire process can take up to three months until approval.
- **Alternative to Publication:** You may file a Motion to waive publication or allow posting by Sheriff with the Clerk. The Clerk's office does not have a form available so you will need to draft your own. We recommend that you include an Affidavit with specific examples of harm or harassment/discrimination you have faced or fear if your name change is published. If granted, the Sheriff's Office will post the name change notice at the courthouse for \$40 (payable by personal check or money order, made out to "Prince George's County Sheriff's Office"). This is a more private option as opposed to publishing the name change notice in a newspaper. If you are interested in posting at the courthouse, please ask the Clerk for this option when you file your name change petition.
- **Additional Copies:** Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).

St. Mary's County

- **Court Information:** <https://www.courts.state.md.us/clerks/stmarys>

- Address: 41605 Courthouse Drive, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650
- Phone: 301-475-7844, Ext. 4562 (Civil Clerk)
- Hours: 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday
- **File by Mail**: You may file by mail, addressing your materials to Clerk of the Circuit Court, PO Box 676, Leonardtown, MD 20650.
- **Filing Fees**: The filing fee is \$165 without an attorney and \$175 with an attorney, payable by cash, check, or money order. When filing your petition for a name and/or gender change, all checks or money orders should be made out to “Clerk of the St. Mary’s County Circuit Court.”
- **Fee Waiver**: To request to waive filing costs, submit a “Request for Waiver of Prepaid Costs” (CC-DC-089) form: <https://mdcourts.gov/sites/default/files/court-forms/courtforms/joint/ccdc089.pdf/ccdc089.pdf>. If you receive Medicaid, TANF, SNAP and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or if you are experiencing homelessness, please list this on the fee waiver (you may also attach proof, if you have it). Note that this form is a waiver of *prepaid* costs and you may have to pay the costs at the end, unless you file a final waiver (which you may request from the Clerk at the conclusion of your name change).
- **Supporting Documents**: Include a copy of your birth certificate.
- **Publication Requirement**: Once approved, you will receive one copy of the Notification of Publication in the mail and you must immediately fulfill the time-sensitive publication requirement (15 days). The St. Mary’s County Civil Clerk does not assist with the publication requirement and you must arrange for publication in either *The Enterprise* or *The County Times*. The publication of choice will bill you directly (*The Enterprise* charges \$65 and *The County Times* charges \$50) and you must pay this bill before the ad is run. *The Enterprise* and *The County Times* will automatically send a Proof/Certificate of Publication to the Court once publication is complete. Approximately 45 days to three months later, you should receive an Order for a Name Change in the mail if approved.
- **Alternative to Publication**: May not be available, but the Clerk who handles name changes can connect you to Annapolis attorneys who have suggestions for an “individualized process.” However, the Clerk has not seen a successful publication waiver for at least many years.
- **Additional Copies**: Available from the Court for \$5.50 per copy (\$5 for the certification and \$0.50 per page).



If you have any questions about the steps described in this guide,
please contact us at the numbers listed below.

Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services Program
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