



**LYCOMING COUNTY
CHILD NAME CHANGE
SELF-HELP KIT**

REMEMBER

The law often changes. Each case is different. This self-help kit is meant to give you general information and not give you specific legal advice.

STEPS IN CHANGE OF NAME PROCESS

[This packet is for changing the name of a minor child. If you wish to change the name of an adult, you will need the Adult Name Change Self-Help Kit.]

Note - A petition to change a child's name may be filed by one or both parents. If only one parent files the petition, the other parent must either provide a written, notarized consent to the name change or be notified by certified and regular mail of the hearing date and time.

Detailed instructions are outlined in this packet, but here are the general steps in this process:

1. If the child is age 13 or older, go to the Prothonotary's office and get fingerprint cards.
2. Take the child (if age 13 or older) to the State Police barracks to have their fingerprints made.
3. Fill out Forms 1 through 3 according to the instructions in this packet.
4. Make copies.
5. Take the original forms 1 through 3 and the copies to the Prothonotary's office for filing. Also take the fingerprints (if you need them). The Prothonotary will file-stamp the documents and return a copy to you. They send the original to Court Scheduling for the scheduling of a hearing. They will send any fingerprints to the State Police in Harrisburg to do a criminal background check.
6. Once a hearing is scheduled, the Prothonotary will mail any copies back to you. When you get these papers back, fill out two Notices to be Published and take one to the Sun Gazette and one to the Lycoming Reporter (unless you asked for waiver of the publication requirement).
7. Unless the other parent has joined the petition, either obtain a written, notarized consent, or serve a copy of the petition and Scheduling Order on the child's other parent.
8. If the child is age 13 or older, just before the hearing, get a Judgment Certificate.
9. Attend the hearing. Take the documents as directed in the instructions in this packet.
10. After the hearing, you will get a copy of the Order in the mail and the child may thereafter use his or her new name.

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

PART ONE: INSTRUCTIONS

STEPS 1 & 2 - GET THE FINGERPRINT CARDS AND GET THE CHILD'S FINGERPRINTS MADE

If the child is age 13 or older, go to the Prothonotary's office on the first floor of the Lycoming County Courthouse, 48 West Third Street, Williamsport, PA. Tell them you are filing a name change petition and need fingerprint cards. There is no fee for this. Take the child and the fingerprint cards to the State Police barracks at 899 Cherry Street in Montoursville, PA. Tell them you need the fingerprints taken for a name change petition. They will make the child's fingerprints on the cards and give them back to you. Take the cards back to the Prothonotary's office when you file your petition, Step 5.

STEP 3 - FILLING OUT FORMS 1 THROUGH 3

1. FIRST FORM – MOTION COVER SHEET

Complete the caption (heading) by writing the child's initials on the first blank line (after "In re: Change of Name of") and writing your name on the line below that, after the word "by". Also write your name on Line 1 (name of filing party).

In box 6, write your name and address.

Leave the rest of the form blank—this is for the Court to fill out.

2. SECOND FORM – PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Again write the child's initials on the first blank line (after "In re: Change of Name of") and your name on the line below that, after the word "by".

For paragraph 1, write in your name and address, phone number and email address. Write the child's initials where indicated.

For paragraph 2, write in the child's age.

For paragraph 3, list the addresses where the child has lived for the past five years. Put the child's current address on the first line, with the dates (month and year) they lived there (under "to" write "present"), the address where the child lived before that on the next line, with the dates they lived there, etc., going back five years (or to birth if the child is less than 5 years of age).

For paragraph 5, write the initials of the name you wish the child's name to be changed to. Then check the line indicating whether the other parent consents to the change.

For paragraph 6, write all the reasons you wish to change the child's name. This can be a general statement; you will be asked at the hearing to give details.

There are two versions of the second page of this petition. If you believe that publication of notice of the hearing would jeopardize the child's safety, use the second page of the petition **with** Paragraph 7, and write on the blank lines the reasons why you believe that. If this is not an issue, use the second page of the petition **without** Paragraph 7.

At the end of the form, no matter which second page you use, sign your name and then sign again to verify that the statements are true and correct.

3. THIRD FORM – CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FORM

On the first line above the words “Party name as displayed in case caption”, write “In re: Change of Name of” and put the child’s initials, then “by” and write your name. Leave the other line below that blank.

Leave the line for “Docket/Case No.” blank.

On the line above the word “Court”, write “Lycoming County”.

On the line after the words “This form is associated with the pleading titled”, write “Petition for Change of Name”, and after the word “dated”, write the date you are filling out the petition.

For the rest of the first page, you only need to fill out the first box in the first column. You do not need to write anything for “full name of adult.” Just write the child’s initials, full name, and date of birth where indicated.

On the second page, leave the small line at the top blank as you are not attaching any additional pages. Read the language below that and then sign above the words “Signature of Attorney or Unrepresented Party”. Write the date and print the additional information requested under your signature.

STEP 4 - COPIES

After you have completed forms #1 through 3, clip them together in order, with the Motion Cover Sheet on the front. You will then need to get copies made. If you do not have any other means of making copies, the Prothonotary can make them for you when you go there to file the petition. They charge \$.50 per page. If the other parent is joining the petition, or will sign a written, notarized statement indicating they consent to the name change, you need two copies. If neither of those is true, you need four copies.

STEP 5 – FILING THE PETITION

Take the original and the copies to the Prothonotary's office. This office is at the Courthouse at 48 West Third Street, Williamsport, PA on the first floor. It is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You will have to pay a filing fee of \$146.25 unless you are also filing a petition to proceed *in forma pauperis* and you are granted IFP status. (There is a separate self-help kit for this, available at the Law Library or online at www.lyco.org/Courts/LawLibraryforms (under "procedural". IFP status allows you to file something with the Court without having to pay the fee. You must qualify financially for this status. This petition should be filed at the same time as you file the Petition for Change of Name.)

The Prothonotary will file-stamp your original petition and the copies and will keep the original and all but one of the copies. Take one copy with you for your records. (After the court schedules the hearing, you will receive the remaining copies in the mail with the date and time of the hearing on the Cover Sheet.)

If you had fingerprints made, give the Prothonotary the fingerprints while you are filing the petition. The Prothonotary sends the cards to the State Police in Harrisburg where a background check is performed. (This takes about two weeks.) The State Police then sends a report of this background check to the Prothonotary and it is placed in the court file. You will also receive a copy of the report in the mail from the Prothonotary. Bring this report to the hearing.

STEP 6 – TAKE THE NOTICE TO BE PUBLISHED TO THE PUBLISHERS

Unless you asked the Court to waive the requirement that you publish notice of the hearing, you will have to publish notice of the hearing. (If you did ask for notice to be waived, and that request was granted by the Court, you may skip this step.)

After you get the copy of your petition back in the mail, fill out the two copies of Form #4. One will be taken to the Sun-Gazette and one will be taken to the Lycoming Reporter. Fill out both of them the same way.

FOURTH FORM – Notice to be Published

On these notices, you must write the names out, do not use initials.

First blank line - Fill in the Docket No. where it says NO._____.

Second blank line - Fill in the child's name after "In re: Name Change of" and write your name on the line below that, after the word "by".

Third blank line - Fill in the date you filed the Petition. This date is stamped on the first page of your petition.

Fourth and Fifth blank lines – Fill in the child's current name and then the name you want the Court to change the child's name to.

Sixth, seventh and eighth blank lines – Fill in the date, time and courtroom number. This information will appear on the cover sheet you got back from the Prothonotary.

Take one of the Notices to the **Sun-Gazette** at 252 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA and the other one to the **Lycoming Reporter** at 25 West Third Street, Suite 803, Williamsport, PA. You need to have the Notice published once in each of these publications. You will have to pay for the publication. You will receive a Proof of Publication from each place. Bring both of these to the hearing.

Be advised that you will need an appointment at the **Lycoming Law Association Office** to take your Notice to be published in the **Lycoming Reporter**. Call 570-323-8287 to make an appointment. Also be aware that they do not accept credit or debit cards. The fee is \$68.00 and you will need either exact change, a check or money order.

Make sure you take these Notices to the publishers as soon as you get the papers back from the Prothonotary because notice must be published at least 20 days prior to the hearing. *The Lycoming Reporter publishes only on Fridays, and the Notice must be received in their office by 1:00 p.m. Tuesday to be published the following Friday.*

STEP 7 – OBTAIN WRITTEN NOTARIZED CONSENT or SERVE NOTICE ON THE OTHER PARENT

Unless the petition is being filed by both parents, either the other parent must sign a written, notarized consent, or you must serve notice of the hearing on the other parent.

If the other parent is willing to sign a consent, complete Form 5 as follows:

Complete the caption (heading) by writing the child's initials on the first blank line (after "In re: Change of Name of") and writing your name on the line below that, after the word "by". Write the docket number on the blank line next to the word "No.".

Leave the name and (mother/father) section on the first line blank, the other parent can write that information. Write the child's name on the blank line in the second line, your name and the filing date on the blank lines in the third line, and the child's new name on the blank line in the fourth line. Write out the names, do not use initials.

Leave the rest of the form blank. Give this to the other parent to sign and have notarized. Once you get the signed, notarized form back, bring it with you to the hearing. *Do not file this document.*

If the other parent is not willing to sign a consent, you must send notice of the hearing to him or her. This must be done by certified and regular mail.

Send a file-stamped copy of the name change petition with the hearing date on the motion cover sheet by **certified mail, with return receipt requested and restricted delivery** to the other parent's address. Request a "green card". At the same time, send another file-stamped copy of the name change petition with the hearing date on the motion cover sheet by **regular mail**. You should mail the petitions to the other parent as soon as possible after you receive them in the mail from the Prothonotary's Office.

When you receive the green card with the other parent's signature on it, complete a Certificate of Service and attach the white sender's receipt given to you by the Post Office at the time of mailing, and the green card, to the Certificate of Service. Or, if the certified mail is REFUSED by the other parent, you will get a notice from the Post Office saying it was refused. If the regular mail is not returned within fifteen (15) days from the date of mailing, service will be considered complete. Complete a Certificate of Service. Attach the white sender's receipt given to you by the Post Office at the time of mailing and the envelope with the "Refused" notation on it. You should bring the Certificate of Service to the Prothonotary's office for filing when you go in to get a Judgment Certificate (if you need one), or when you go to the hearing; you can file it just before the hearing. Have a copy made so you can bring it to the hearing.

If the certified mail is returned UNCLAIMED, service will need to be made another way, even if the regular mail is not returned. A constable or the Sheriff will be able to serve the other parent in that event, but there is a fee for this.

STEP 8 - GET A JUDGMENT CERTIFICATE

If the child is age 13 or older, the business day before the hearing (go on Friday if your hearing is Monday), go to the Prothonotary's Office and ask for a Judgment Certificate (this is a certificate stating that there are no judgments against the child). You will need to pay \$9.00 for this. They will get it for you while you wait, it takes only a minute. You will need to bring this Certificate to the hearing.

NOTE – if the child lived in another county during the last five years, you will have to get a Judgment Certificate from the Prothonotary in that county as well as Lycoming County.

STEP 9 – ATTEND HEARING

At the time of the hearing, take with you:

- (1) your copy of the petition with cover sheet that you got back from the Prothonotary
- (2) the Judgment Certificate(s), if you needed one
- (3) the background check report you got from the Prothonotary, if you needed one
- (4) the proofs of publication from the Sun-Gazette and the Lycoming Reporter (unless the publication requirement was waived)
- (5) if the other parent did not join the petition, either their signed, notarized consent, or a copy of the Certificate of Service.

At the hearing, the Judge will ask you why you want to change the child's name and you will be required to prove that changing the name is in the child's best interest. You will also be required to show the other parent either joined in the petition, consented to the name change, or was served with notice of the hearing. Finally, the judge will ask to see the Judgment Certificate (if the child is over age 13) and the Proofs of Publication. The Background Check report should be in the court file (if it was required) but if it is not, you can show the Court the one you got in the mail.

STEP 10 – AFTER THE HEARING

If your petition is granted, the Court will enter an Order changing the child's name. That order will be sent to the Prothonotary to be filed, and you will then get a copy of the file-stamped order in the mail. The child can then begin using his or her new name.

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

PART TWO: FORMS

In re: Change of Name of _____, a minor, : No. _____
by _____ :
 :
 : Case Assigned to Judge _____
 : ☐ None
 : ☐ Family Court Hearing Officer

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>4. The following is/are requested:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Argument</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evidentiary Hearing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Court Conference</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rule to Show Cause</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Entry of Uncontested Order
(attach supporting documentation)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expedited Consideration. State the basis: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Video conferencing requested. Request form has been submitted. See Lyc. Co. R.G.C.B. L8.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attach this cover sheet to original motion previously filed on: _____</p> <p>5. Time Required: _____</p> | <p>6. Name and addresses of all counsel of record and unrepresented parties:</p>

<p>_____ Continued on a Separate Sheet.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

1. ☐ An ☒ argument ☒ factual hearing ☐ court conference is scheduled for _____
at _____ o'clock _____. M., in courtroom No. _____, Lycoming County Courthouse, Williamsport, PA.
2. _____ Briefs are to be filed by the following dates:
Filing Party _____.
Responding party (ies) _____.
3. _____ A rule is issued upon Respondent to show cause why the Petitioner is not entitled to the relief requested.
4. _____ A response to the Motion/Petition shall be filed as follows: _____.
5. ☒ See order attached. ☐ See separate order issued this date.
6. _____ Other: _____.

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IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____, a minor
by _____

: No. _____
:
: Civil Action – Law

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

The Petitioner respectfully represents the following:

1. The Petitioner is _____, who resides at _____

Petitioner's phone number is _____ and email address is _____.

Petitioner is filing this petition on behalf of _____, a minor.

2. The minor is _____ years of age.

3. During the five (5) years preceding the filing of this Petition, the minor has resided at the following locations:

Address:

Dates of residence: (from) - (to)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. There are no judgments or decrees pending against the minor.

5. The Petitioner requests that the minor's name be changed to: _____.

The child's other parent ___does ___does not consent to this change.

6. The reasons for this requested change of name are:

7. Petitioner requests the Court waive the requirement of publication of notice because notice would jeopardize Petitioner’s safety for the following reasons:

WHEREFORE, the Petitioner requests the Court schedule a hearing on this petition, waive the requirement that notice be given, and enter an Order changing the minor’s name as requested herein.

Respectfully Submitted,

Petitioner’s Signature:_____

I verify the statements made in this Petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. §4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Petitioner’s Signature:_____

WHEREFORE, the Petitioner requests the Court schedule a hearing on this petition, direct that notice be given, and enter an Order changing the minor's name as requested herein.

Respectfully Submitted,

Petitioner's Signature: _____

I verify the statements made in this Petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. §4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Petitioner's Signature: _____

**CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION
FORM**



*Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of
Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial
Courts*
204 Pa. Code § 213.81

**APPELLATE/TRIAL COURT
CASE RECORDS**

www.pacourts.us/public-records

(Party name as displayed in case caption)

Docket/Case No.

Vs.

(Party name as displayed in case caption)

Court

This form is associated with the pleading titled _____, dated _____.

Pursuant to *the Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania : Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts*, the Confidential Information Form shall accompany a filing where confidential information is **required by law, ordered by the court, or otherwise necessary to effect the disposition of a matter**. This form, and any additional pages, shall remain confidential, except that it shall be available to the parties, counsel of record, the court, and the custodian. This form, and any additional pages, must be served on all unrepresented parties and counsel of record.

This Information Pertains to:	Confidential Information	References in Filing:
<div> <div>_____</div> <div>(full name of adult)</div> </div> <div>OR</div> <div> <div>This information pertains to a minor with the</div> <div>initials of _____ and the full name of</div> <div>_____</div> <div>(full name of minor)</div> </div> <div>And date of birth: _____</div>	<div>Social Security Number (SSN): _____</div> <div>Financial Account Number (FAN): _____</div> <div>Driver's License Number (DLN): _____</div> <div>State of Issuance: _____</div> <div>State Identification Number (SID): _____</div>	<div>Alternative Reference: SSN 1</div> <div>Alternative Reference: FAN 1</div> <div>Alternative Reference: DLN 1</div> <div>Alternative Reference: SID 1</div>
<div> <div>_____</div> <div>(full name of adult)</div> </div> <div>OR</div> <div> <div>This information pertains to a minor with the</div> <div>initials of _____ and the full name of</div> <div>_____</div> <div>(full name of minor)</div> </div> <div>And date of birth _____</div>	<div>Social Security Number (SSN): _____</div> <div>Financial Account Number (FAN): _____</div> <div>Driver's License Number (DLN): _____</div> <div>State of Issuance: _____</div> <div>State Identification Number (SID): _____</div>	<div>Alternative Reference: SSN 2</div> <div>Alternative Reference: FAN 2</div> <div>Alternative Reference: DLN 2</div> <div>Alternative Reference: SID 2</div>

THIS FORM IS CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION
FORM**

**APPELLATE/TRIAL COURT
CASE RECORDS**



Additional page(s) attached. _____ total pages are attached to this filing.

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania: Case Records of the Appellate and Trial Courts* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

Signature of Attorney or Unrepresented Party

Date

Name: _____

Attorney Number: (if applicable) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

NOTE: Parties and attorney of record in a case will have access to this Confidential Information Form.

Confidentiality of this information must be maintained.

THIS FORM IS CONFIDENTIAL

NOTICE TO BE PUBLISHED

INTENTION TO CHANGE NAME

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF
LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

NO. _____

In re: Name Change of _____, **a minor, by** _____

Notice is hereby given that on _____ (date), a Petition was filed in the
above-named Court, praying for a decree changing the name of _____
to _____.

The Court has fixed _____ (date) at _____ (time) in
Courtroom number _____ of the Lycoming County Courthouse, 48 West Third Street,
Williamsport. Pennsylvania 17701 as the time and place for the hearing on said petition, when
and where all persons interested may appear and show cause, if any they have, why the prayer of
the petitioner should not be granted.

NOTICE TO BE PUBLISHED

INTENTION TO CHANGE NAME

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF
LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

NO. _____

In re: Name Change of _____, **a minor, by** _____

Notice is hereby given that on _____ (date), a Petition was filed in the above-named Court, praying for a decree changing the name of _____ to _____.

The Court has fixed _____ (date) at _____ (time) in Courtroom number _____ of the Lycoming County Courthouse, 48 West Third Street, Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701 as the time and place for the hearing on said petition, when and where all persons interested may appear and show cause, if any they have, why the prayer of the petitioner should not be granted.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____, a minor
by _____

: No. _____
:
: Civil Action - Law

CONSENT TO NAME CHANGE

I, _____ (name), _____ (mother/father) of the minor child,
_____, do hereby consent to the name change request being made in the petition filed by
_____ (petitioner's name) on _____ (date). I understand the child's name is to be
changed to _____ and do hereby consent to that change.

Date: _____

(signature)

(print name)

(address)

(address)

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

ss

COUNTY OF LYCOMING

On , _____, 20____, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County
and State, personally appeared _____, known to me to be the person whose name is
subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged that he/she executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Notary Public in and for
said County and State

My Commission Expires _____
(Seal)

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____, a minor
By _____

: NO.
:
: Civil Action – Law

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE BY CERTIFIED MAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

I, _____ (name), certify that
on _____ (date of mailing), I mailed a true and correct copy of the Petition
for Change of Name and Motion Cover Sheet with hearing date and time to the
other parent. These documents were sent by certified mail, restricted delivery,
return receipt requested, to:

(other parent's name)

(other parent's address line 1)

(other parent's address line 2)

I also mailed a true and correct copy of these documents by regular
mail to the other parent at the same address on _____ (date mailed).

- ☐ The other parent received the documents on _____. Sender's receipt and return receipt are attached.
- ☐ The other parent refused the certified mail, and the sender's receipt and refusal are attached.
- ☐ The regular mail has not been returned as undeliverable.

I verify that the foregoing is true and correct. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. §4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Date: _____

Petitioner's Signature: _____