

## 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. <u>SECOND FORM – PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME</u>

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.

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#### 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 <a href="https://www.lyco.org/Courts/LawLibraryforms">www.lyco.org/Courts/LawLibraryforms</a> (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 \$65.00 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** 

## LYCOMING COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS MOTION COVER SHEET

by	<ul> <li>Case Assigned to Judge</li> <li>□ None</li> <li>□ Family Court Hearing Officer</li> </ul>
Name of Filing Party:	
The following is/are requested: Argumentx Evidentiary HearingCourt ConferenceRule to Show CauseEntry of Uncontested Order	Name and addresses of all counsel of record and unrepresented parties:
Time Required:	Continued on a Separate Sheet.
	Continued on a Separate Sheet.  ORDER
Time Required:	
Time Required:	ORDER
Time Required:	ORDER  ourt conference is scheduled for
1 An argument _x_ factual hearing co	ORDER  Dourt conference is scheduled for
1 An argument _x_ factual hearing co at o'clock M., in courtroom No 2 Briefs are to be filed by the following dates: Filing Party Responding party (ies)	ORDER  Dourt conference is scheduled for
1 An argument _x_ factual hearing co at o'clock M., in courtroom No 2 Briefs are to be filed by the following dates: Filing Party Responding party (ies)	ORDER  Ourt conference is scheduled for
1 An argument _x_ factual hearing co at o'clock M., in courtroom No  2 Briefs are to be filed by the following dates: Filing Party  Responding party (ies)  3 A rule is issued upon Respondent to show ca	ORDER  Ourt conference is scheduled for
1 An argument _x_ factual hearing co at o'clock M., in courtroom No  2 Briefs are to be filed by the following dates:     Filing Party     Responding party (ies)  3 A rule is issued upon Respondent to show ca 4 A response to the Motion/Petition shall be file.	ORDER  Ourt conference is scheduled for

**NOTICE:** The parties are directed to confer for the purpose of resolving any issue raised in the motion/petition. If a resolution is reached prior to the scheduled date, the moving party shall immediately notify the court scheduling technician, the judge or hearing officer assigned to hear the matter, and all counsel of record or parties if unrepresented. Such notice may be in writing or by email.

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

In re: Change of Name of	, a minor	: 1	No
by		:	
		:	Civil Action - Law

## **PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

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 the locations:	his Petition, the minor has resided at the following			
	Address:	Dates of residence: (from) - (to)			
4.	There are no judgments or decrees pending again	st the minor.			
5.	The Petitioner requests that the minor's name be	changed to:			
The child's other parentdoesdoes not consent to this change.					
6.	The reasons for this requested change of name are	e:			

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

## APPELLATE/TRIAL COURT CASE RECORDS

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

www.pacourts.us/public-records

(D 4 1' 1 1' 4' \		D 1 4/G N
(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
be available to the parties, counsel of record, the unrepresented parties and counsel of record.	y a filing where confidential information is <b>r</b> of a matter. This form, and any additional parts	equired by law, ordered by the court, or ages, shall remain confidential, except that it shall
This Information Pertains to:	Confidential Information	References in Filing:
(6.11)	Social Security Number (SSN):	Alternative Reference: SSN 1
(full name of adult) OR	Financial Account Number (FAN):	Alternative Reference:
This information pertains to a minor with the	Driver's License Number (DLN):	Alternative Reference:
initials of and the full name of	State of Issuance:	DLN 1
(full name of minor)	State Identification Number (SID):	
And date of birth:		Alternative Reference: SID 1
-	Social Security Number (SSN):	Alternative Reference: SSN 2
(full name of adult) OR	Financial Account Number (FAN):	Alternative Reference: FAN 2
This information pertains to a minor with the	Driver's License Number (DLN):	Alternative Reference:
initials ofand the full name of	State of Issuance:	DLN 2
	State Identification Number (SID):	-
(full name of minor)		Alternative Reference: SID 2
And date of birth		

## THIS FORM IS CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION FORM



## APPELLATE/TRIAL COURT CASE RECORDS

Additional page(s) attached	total pages are attached to this filing.
	sions of the Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Trial Courts that require filing confidential information and documents
differently than non-confidential information and doc	
C' (A)	
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**

N	NO	
In re: Name Change of	, a minor, by	
Notice is hereby given that on	(date), a Per	tition was filed in the
above-named Court, praying for a decr	ree 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 t	the time and place for the hearing	on said petition, when
and where all persons interested may a	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

NO			
In re: Name Change of	, a minor, by		
Notice is hereby given that on	(date), a Pe	tition was filed in the	
above-named Court, praying for a decree	e changing the name of		
to	_·		
The Court has fixed	(date) at	(time) in	
Courtroom number of the Ly	ycoming County Courthouse, 48	West Third Street,	
Williamsport. Pennsylvania 17701 as the	e time and place for the hearing	on said petition, when	
and where all persons interested may app	pear and show cause, if any they	have, why the prayer of	
the petitioner should not be granted.			

In re: Change of Name of		: No
by		: : Civil Action - Law
	CONSENT TO NAM	IE CHANGE
Ι,	(name),	(mother/father) of the minor child,
, do here	eby consent to the name	change request being made in the petition filed by
(petit	ioner's name) on	(date). I understand the child's name is to be
changed to	and do he	ereby consent to that change.
Date:		(signature)
		(print name)
		(address)
		(address)
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA	SS	
COUNTY OF LYCOMING		
On ,, 20 and State, personally appeared subscribed to the within instrument, with the control of the control o	and acknowledged that	ersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County, known to me to be the person whose name is he/she executed the same.
Notary Public in and for said County and State		
My Commission Expires(Seal)		

	of Name of		: NO.		
ву_			: Civil Ac	ction – Law	
<u>AFFID</u>	AVIT OF SI	ERVICE BY CE	RTIFIED MAIL A	AND REGULAR MA	<u>L</u>
I,				(name), certify that	
on	(date	e of mailing), I ma	ailed a true and corr	rect copy of the Petition	n
for Char	nge of Name a	and Motion Cover	Sheet with hearing	date and time to the	
other pa	rent. These do	ocuments were se	nt by certified mail,	restricted delivery,	
return re	ceipt requeste	ed, to:			
	(oth	ner parent's name)			
	(oth	ner parent's address line 1)			
	(oth	ner parent's address line 2)			
I also m	ailed a true an	nd correct copy of	these documents by	y regular	
mail to the othe	r parent at the	same address on	(date m	nailed).	
		ent received the do urn receipt are att			. Sender's
	The other pare and refusal are		tified mail, and the	sender's receipt	
	The regular m	ail has not been re	eturned as undeliver	rable.	
				that false statements hours answorn falsification to	
Date:	_	Petitione	r's Signature:		