

How to Get a Name Change Court Order

1

Make sure you qualify

Make sure you meet the requirements to change your name, including being 18 or older and completing any felony sentence before applying.

2

Fill out your petition and get your filing fee ready

Fill out the Petition for Name Change and get the required filing fee ready (usually \$300-\$500, depending on your parish).

3

File your petition with the Court

Take your completed paperwork and filing fee to the Clerk of Court in the correct parish.

4

Serve the District Attorney (DA)

Provide a copy of your filed petition to the District Attorney so they can review your request and complete a background check.

5

Wait for review

Wait while the District Attorney and court review your case, which may take several weeks depending on processing times.

6

Judge makes a decision

The judge will either approve or deny your name change - often without a hearing but may schedule one if needed.

7

Get your court order

Get your official court order and use it to update your name on your identification and important records.

Need help finding a lawyer?

Our resource database can help you find free civil legal services based on your legal issue, income, and location.



Scan to find legal help programs!

If you don't qualify for free legal help, you may still find affordable options through the LSBA's Modest Means Directory. Some private lawyers also offer payment plans, sliding scale fees, or "unbundled" legal services, so be sure to ask if you don't qualify for free or reduced-cost services.

FAMILY

Adult Name Change

Learn what you need to know about the name change process and the steps to officially change your name through the court.



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The Basics

What is a legal name change?

A legal name change is when a judge approves your request to use a new name. You will receive a court order that makes your new name official.

Who can change their name?

- Adults (18+) can apply on their own
- Children can change their name with parent/legal consent
- If you have a felony, you must complete your sentence first.

Do I need a lawyer?

No. You can do the process yourself. A lawyer can help if your situation is complicated.



Where do I file for a name change?

You can file in:

- The parish where you live
- The parish where you were born
- Orleans Parish (Vital Records Registry)

What information do I need in my petition?

You must include:

- Your current name
- The name you want
- Why you want the change
- Background information (including criminal history)

How much does it cost?

- Usually \$300 - \$500 filing fee
- Costs vary by parish
- You may request to proceed "In Forma Pauperis" if you are unable to pay court costs upfront and you qualify.

How long does it take?

It can take a few weeks to several months, depending on:

- Court processing time
- Background check by the District Attorney

Will I have to go to court?

Usually no. Most name changes are approved based on the petition with the paperwork alone. You may have a hearing if there are issues. The court will let you know about any hearing date or time in advance.

What happens after my name is approved?

You will get a court order. Then you may use your court order document to update other identification and name documents such as your driver's license, Social Security information, Passport, Bank Accounts and other records.



Good to Know

Can I change my name during a divorce?

Yes. You can ask the court to restore your former name in your divorce case.

What if I have a criminal record?

- You must finish your sentence first
- Violent felonies may limit your ability to get a name change

What if my name change is denied?

You can appeal within 30 days of the decision.

Learn More!

This brochure only covers the basics.



Be sure to check out LouisianaLegalNavigator.org for the full guide, self-help tools, and referrals for help!

