

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NAME CHANGE OF AN ADULT

Instructions Summary

Step 1:	Complete the <i>General Civil Case Filing Information Form</i> and <i>General Civil Case Final Disposition Form</i> .
Step 2:	Complete the <i>Petition to Change Name of Adult</i> .
Step 3:	Complete the <i>Verification</i> form.
Step 4:	Complete the <i>Notice of Petition to Change Name</i> .
Step 5:	Complete the caption of the <i>Final Order</i> .
Step 6:	Make one copy of all the forms after they are completely filled out.
Step 7:	Take the original and copy of the documents to the Superior Court Clerk's Office and pay the Filing Fee. Keep the file-stamped copy for your records.
Step 8:	Within seven (7) days of filing your papers, publish the <i>Notice of Petition to Change Name</i> in the official legal newspaper of your county.
Step 9:	Provide proof of publication as required by Georgia law (an <i>Affidavit of Publication</i> from the newspaper is sufficient).
Step 10:	Schedule and attend the court hearing.
Step 11:	File the <i>Final Order</i> and get a certified copy of it. [Note: the Judge may have the <i>Final Order</i> filed.]
Step 12:	(Optional) Amend your birth certificate and important records.

Detailed Instructions

Please type or print neatly all forms in black ink.

Step 1: Complete the *General Civil Case Filing Information Form* and *General Civil Case Final Disposition Form*.

These forms are required by Georgia Law O.C.G.A. § 9-11-133. They help the Clerk of Court keep statistical information about the number and types of cases decided in our local courts. The clerks use this information to prepare case management reports for the Chief Judge of each circuit and for the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. In short, having this information helps us run the court system more efficiently for you.

The General Civil Case Filing Information Form

- In the top line, fill in the county where you are filing and the date filed.
- On the left under the word “Court,” check the box beside the word “Superior.”
- In the second line under “Plaintiff(s)”, fill in the Petitioner’s name.
- Where it says “Plaintiff/Petitioner’s Attorney,” check the box which says *Pro Se* if you are representing yourself without an attorney.
- In the bottom left-hand box labeled “Check Primary Type (Check only ONE),” check where it says “Other General Civil Specify” (at the bottom of the box). In the blank provided, write “name change for adult.”

The General Civil Case Final Disposition Form

The purpose of this form is to tell how your case ends. Since your case is far from over, you should NOT fill in the information in the four boxes at the bottom of the page. At this point, we do not know how the case will end.

- In the top line, fill in only the county where you are filing.
- Leave the blank beside “Date Disposed” blank.
- Leave the blank beside “Docket #” blank. The clerk will assign this number.
- Fill in your name where it says “Reporting Party.”
- Fill in the Petitioner’s name where it says “Name of Plaintiff/Petitioner(s).”
- Where it says “Plaintiff/Petitioner’s Attorney,” check the box which says *Pro Se* if you are representing yourself. You will not fill in the Bar #.
- Leave the four boxes at the bottom of the page blank.

Step 2: Complete the *Petition to Change Name of Adult*.

Caption (Heading)

- Type or print the name of the county in which you are filing.
- In the blank below “In Re: the name change of” fill in your current legal name.

Opening

- Type or print your name in the first blank after Petitioner.

Paragraph (1)

- Type or print your address in the first blank.
- Type or print your county of residence in the second blank.

Paragraph (2)

- Fill in your year of birth in the blank following “in the year .”

Paragraph (3)

- Write or type your current legal name in the first blank, and write or type the name you wish to change it to in the second blank.

Paragraph (4)

- Type or print neatly the reason(s) for the name change.

Paragraph (5)

- This sentence explains that you are not changing your name in order to deceive or defraud anyone. By signing the Petition, you affirm that this is indeed the case.

Prayer for Relief

- Write your current legal name in the first blank, and write the name you wish to change it to in the second blank.

Date Line

- Write in the date on which you will file the petition (e.g. 15th day of April, 2017).

Signature and Address

- Sign your name on the line above “Petitioner *pro se*.” You do not need a notary public to witness this signature.
- Write down your address on the next lines.
- Write down your telephone number(s) on the last line.

Step 3: Complete the *Verification* form.

Caption (Heading)

- Type or print the name of the county in which you are filing.
- Type or print your current legal name in the blank provided under “In Re: the name change of.”
- Sign your name in the presence of a notary public. He or she will check your photo ID and sign and stamp the document after you sign.
- Print or type your name on the line below your signature.

Step 4: Complete the *Notice of Petition to Change Name*.

Caption (Heading)

- Type or print the name of the county in which you are filing.
- Type or print your current legal name on the blank below the phrase “In Re: the name change of.”

Body of the Document

- Fill out the name of the county in which you are filing your petition.
- Fill in your name.
- Fill in the name of the county where you are filing.
- Fill in the date on which you filed the petition (e.g. the 17th day of April, 2017).
- Fill in your current legal name and the name you wish to change it to.
- Fill in today’s date (e.g. the 17th day of April, 2017).
- Sign and print your name, mailing address and telephone number in the space provided.

Step 5: Complete the *Final Order*.

- Type or print the name of the county in which you are filing.
- Type or print your current legal name on the blank below the phrase “In Re: the name change of.”
- Fill in your current legal name and the proposed new name.
- Fill in your current legal name on the blank provided at the bottom of the page, above “Petitioner *pro se*.”

Step 6: Make copies of all the forms.

- Make at least one extra copy for yourself.

Step 7: File the forms.

File the forms at the Superior Court Clerk’s Office and pay the Filing Fee. The Clerk’s Office will file stamp all copies of your papers. The Clerk will keep the original and will give you back a personal copy.

Step 8: Publish the *Notice of Petition to Change Name*

Within 7 days after you file the Petition, publish the *Notice of Petition to Change Name* in the official legal newspaper of your county. Call your county’s legal newspaper and ask how to publish the *Notice of Petition to Change Name*. The newspaper will charge a fee for this service.

Step 9: Provide proof of publication

As the newspaper ads are published, it is recommended that you retain the full page, showing the date, on which your notice appears. In addition, get an *Affidavit of Publication* from the newspaper.

You will file the *Affidavit of Publication* with the Clerk of Court in order to prove that you published the notice as required by Georgia law.

Step 10: Schedule and attend the court hearing.

No sooner than 31 days after filing your petition, contact the assistant for the Judge assigned to your case. You will not be able to schedule your final hearing until your notice has been published four (4) consecutive weeks. Make sure you have your court papers (including the Case Number) in front of you when you make the call so that you can answer any questions that he or she may have about your case. Schedule your final hearing.

When you come to the court for your hearing, bring with you all of your court papers, including:

- *Petition to Change Name of Adult*
- *Verification*
- *Notice of Petition to Change Name of Adult*
- *Publisher's Affidavit of Publication* (obtained from the newspaper)
- *Final Order Changing Name of Adult*
- *General Civil Case Final Disposition Information Form*

When you get to the Judge's office, tell the staff that you are there for a name change hearing. The staff may ask you for your *Final Order* form. When you go to the Judge's office, the Judge will have you swear to the truth of what you are about to say. Then, be prepared to tell the Judge the following information:

Your name;

The county where you live;

That you are asking the Judge to grant a name change for you from your current legal name to your proposed new name;

The reasons you want to change your name.

If you didn't already give the *Final Order* form to the Judge's staff, offer it to the Judge now. The Judge may ask you some additional questions. Then, if the Judge approves the name change, he or she will sign the *Final Order* form. Review the order to make sure that it is correct.

Step 11: File the *Final Order* and get a certified copy of it.

Take the signed *Final Order* to the Clerk's Office and file it. Ask for a certified copy of the Order. There is a charge for the certified copy. This is proof that the name has been legally changed. [Note: not all Judges will allow *pro se* Petitioners to file their *Final Order*. In that case the Judge will file it and send you a copy.]

Step 12: (Optional): Change your birth certificate and other important records.

Birth Certificate

If you were born in the state of Georgia, you may have the birth certificate changed to show the new name. The new birth certificate will be marked "amended."

To change the birth certificate, take or mail the following documents to the Georgia Bureau of Vital Records, 1680 Phoenix Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30349; telephone (404) 679-4702:

- Certified copy of Final Order
- Copy of your current birth certificate
- Money order made out to "Vital Records Services."

Tell the Vital Records staff that you have legally changed your name and want to amend your birth certificate. If you do it by mail, be sure to provide them with your name and address so they can send you the amended birth certificate.

Important Records

Some of the agencies and companies you may need to notify about your name change may include:

- Your bank
- Social Security Administration
- Department of Family and Children's Services
- Your creditors (such as your landlord, mortgage company, credit card companies, etc.)
- Child Support Enforcement/Family Support Registry
- Department of Motor Vehicles (driver's license)

Contact these places to find out the steps you must take to give them proper notice of your new name. Some may charge a fee; most will want a copy of your final order.

Your Name Change of an Adult is complete!