



**LYCOMING COUNTY
ADULT 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 an adult. If you wish to change the name of a minor child, it is recommended that you seek the advice of an attorney as the process is much more involved.]

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

1. Fill out Forms 1 through 4 according to the instructions in this packet.
2. Make copies.
3. Take the original forms 1 through 4 and one copy of everything to the Prothonotary's office for filing.
4. When you file the petition, get fingerprint cards from the Prothonotary.
5. Go to the State Police barracks to have your fingerprints made.
6. Return the fingerprint cards to the Prothonotary.
7. When you get the papers back from the Prothonotary, fill out two Notices to be Published (Form #5) and take one to the Sun Gazette and one to the Lycoming Reporter.
8. Just before the hearing, get a Judgment Certificate.
9. Attend 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 you may thereafter use your new name.

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

PART ONE: INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1 - FILLING OUT FORMS 1 THROUGH 4

1. FIRST FORM – MOTION COVER SHEET

Complete the caption (heading) by writing your name in the first blank line (after “In re: Change of Name of”) and also 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 – ORDER SCHEDULING HEARING AND DIRECTING NOTICE

Unless you believe that publication of notice of the hearing would jeopardize your safety, you must publish notice of the hearing. Fill out this form whether or not you are asking the Court to waive the requirement of notice, in case the Court denies your request. Again write your name in the first blank line (after “In re: Change of Name of”).

Leave the rest of the form blank.

3. THIRD FORM – ORDER

Again write your name in the first blank line (after “In re: Change of Name of”).

Leave the rest of the form blank.

4. FOURTH FORM – PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Again write your name in the first blank line (after “In re: Change of Name of”).

For paragraph 1, write in your name and address.

For paragraph 2, write in your date of birth.

For paragraph 3, list the addresses where you have lived for the past five years. Put your current address on the first line, with the dates (month and year) you lived there (under “to” write “present”), the address where you lived before that on the next line, with the dates you lived there, etc., going back five years.

For paragraph 5, write the name you wish your name to be changed to.

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

If you believe that publication of notice of the hearing would jeopardize your 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..

STEP 2 - COPIES

After you have completed forms #1 through 4, clip them together in order, with the Motion Cover Sheet on the front. You will then need to get three copies made. You need one copy for yourself. Keep this at home just in case anything gets lost.



STEPS 3 AND 4 – FILING THE PETITION AND GETTING FINGERPRINT CARDS

Take the original and the other two copies to be filed, in 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 packet for this, available at the Law Library. 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 one copy. You will get back the second copy – you will need this later. (After the court schedules the hearing, you will receive the other copy in the mail with the date and time of the hearing on the Cover Sheet.)

While you are at the Prothonotary's Office, ask for a set of fingerprint cards. There is no fee for this.

STEPS 5 – 6 GET YOUR FINGERPRINTS MADE AND RETURN THEM

Take the fingerprint cards to the State Police barracks at 899 Cherry Street in Montoursville, PA. Tell them you need your fingerprints taken for a name change petition. They will make your fingerprints on the cards and give them back to you. Take the cards back to the Prothonotary's office. You must also take with you your birth certificate, social security card and a photo ID (such as driver's license) and the second copy of your petition. The Prothonotary sends the cards with the copy of your petition 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 7 – 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, the “Order Scheduling Hearing and Directing Notice by Publication” will not be signed by the judge, or the part directing notice will be crossed out. If this is the case, you may skip this step.)

After you get the copy of your petition back in the mail, fill out the two copies of Form #5. 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.

FIFTH FORM – Notice to be Published

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

Second blank line - Fill in your name after “In re: Name Change of”.

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 your current name and then the name you want the Court to change your 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.

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.

STEP 8 - GET A JUDGMENT CERTIFICATE

The business day before the hearing (go on Friday if your hearing is Monday), ask for a Judgment Certificate (this is a certificate stating that there are no judgments against you). 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 you 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)
- (3) the Background check report you got from the Prothonotary
- (4) the proofs of publication from the Sun-Gazette and the Lycoming Reporter (unless this requirement was waived).

At the hearing, the Judge will ask you why you want to change your name and will ask to see the Judgement Certificate and the Proofs of Publication. The Background Check report should be in the court file but if it is not, you can show the Court the one you got in the mail.

If your petition is granted, the Court will sign the order you included with your petition. 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. You can then begin using your new name.

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

PART TWO: FORMS

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____ : NO.
:
: Civil Action - Law

ORDER SCHEDULING HEARING AND DIRECTING NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

And Now, this _____ day of _____, 20____, upon motion for the Petitioner, it is Ordered that a hearing on the Petition for Change of Name is hereby fixed for _____, 20____, at _____ .m. in Courtroom number _____ of the Lycoming County Courthouse, 48 West Third Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.

The Petitioner is directed to give notice of the filing of the Petition and of the date of the hearing by publication in two newspapers of general circulation in the County, one of which may be the official paper for the publication of legal notices in this County.

BY THE COURT:

J.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____ : NO.
:
: Civil Action – Law

ORDER

AND NOW, this _____ day of _____, 20____, after a hearing on the Petition for Name Change filed by _____, and upon presentation of proof that there are no judgments or decrees of record or any other matter of like character against _____, upon finding there is no lawful objection to the name change, upon finding that there has been full compliance with the fingerprint requirements of 54 Pa.C.S. Section 702, upon good cause shown, it is Ordered and Decreed that the Petition is GRANTED.

The name of _____ shall be and is hereby changed to:
_____.

BY THE COURT:

J.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

In re: Change of Name of _____ : NO.
:
: Civil Action - Law

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME

The Petitioner respectfully represents the following:

1. The Petitioner is _____, who resides at _____
_____.

2. The Petitioner was born on _____, and is over the age of eighteen years.

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

Address:	Dates of residence: (from) - (to)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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

5. The Petitioner requests that his/her name be changed to: _____.

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 Petitioner's name as requested herein.

Respectfully Submitted,

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 Petitioner's name as requested herein.

Respectfully Submitted,

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: _____

NOTICE TO BE PUBLISHED

INTENTION TO CHANGE NAME

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

NO. _____

In re: Name Change of _____

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 _____

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.