

Name and Gender Marker Change Checklist

Updated December, 2020

D) NAME CHANGE

Step 1: Name Change in a Court

Documents needed for a Name Change in the Courts:

- A certified copy of your birth certificate
- *If applicable: any previous name change*
- Name Petition Form ([download here](#))
- *If applicable: letter from spouse stating they are aware of the name change.*
- *If applicable: affidavit of indigency (Fee waiver: Eligible if you have medicaid, if you are below a certain income, etc.) ([download here](#))*

Note: If you are **not** eligible for a fee waiver, but the cost is a burden for you, MTPC has raised to support name and gender marker change fees, which you may be able to access. Funds can be requested through contacting Tre'Andre at TreAndreValentine@masstpc.org.

Step 2: Your Social Security Card

Documents needed for a Name Change with the Social Security Office:

- Fill out a Form SS-5 ([download here](#)), "Application for a Social Security Card." (This form is also available at SSA office)
- Proof of legal name change: A legal name change document, such as a court ordered name change or marriage certificate (if you changed your name through marriage). The document must have the old name and new name listed on it. If it does not have enough identifying information, SSA will request an identity document in your prior name and another in your new legal name in addition to the name change document. (Massachusetts issued court-ordered name changes list old and new name)
- *If you were born outside of the U.S., you also need to proof of your U.S. citizenship or current lawful, work-authorized immigration status.*
- If you are a U.S. citizen and have not previously established citizenship with SSA, you will need to present a birth certificate, U.S. passport, or other proof of citizenship.

Step 3: Your License or State ID

Documents needed for Name Change on MA State ID:

- Proof of legal name change – a court order showing name change
- Your Social Security Card with your new legal name
- Cash or debit or credit card for the RMV fee. (check RMV site [here](#) for current fees).
- Proof of address (ie. utility bill, bank statement, health insurance correspondence) Note: It is acceptable if this documentation has your previous legal name on it as long as your other documents such as your name change petition showing your previous and current legal name are in order)

Step 4: Your Passport

Documents needed for changing your Passport (if you have a *valid passport*, or a passport that is *less than one year old*):

- A completed Form DS-5504: Application for a U.S. Passport: Name Change, Data Correction, and Limited Passport Book Replacement Form ([download here](#))
- A certified copy of a marriage certificate or name change court decree to prove that your name has been legally changed
- Your current passport
- Two new photos
- Using the DS-5044 form, there is no fee, unless you need your passport immediately.

Using US Postal Service, mail this information to:

National Passport Processing

P.O. Box 13290 Philadelphia, PA 19101-3290

Documents needed for changing your Passport (if your passport is *older than one year*):

- A completed Form DS-82: Application for a U.S. Passport by Mail ([download here](#))
- A certified copy of a marriage certificate or name change court decree to prove that your name has been legally changed
- Your most current passport
- Two new photos
- You will need to pay the fees associated with getting a new passport

Note: Applications can be filled out in hard copies or online. It is recommended that you change your bank information first in order for your check, money order, debit card or credit card to be consistent with the name that will be appearing on your new or updated passport.

Step 5: Other Documents

A) School

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your School Information System:

- Contact your school's registrar regarding their name possible name change form.
- Name change petition (photo copy should be acceptable; does not have to be a certified)
- Photocopy of updated social security card

B) FAFSA

Changing Your Name With FAFSA:

NOTE: You will need your new social security card before you can change your FAFSA account.

- Log into your FSA ID at fsaid.edu.gov
- Click "Edit My FSA ID"
- Write your legally changed name in place of the name that your FAFSA was formerly under. Your social security number should still be the same, but if for any reason it is not, this can be edited here.

FAFSA will match your legal name to your social security number and you will receive an email within 1-3 business days confirming that your legal name and your social security number have been successfully matched.

Note: If you are still a student, your government loans have not been out sourced the name change is automatically going to be reflected in your student loans when your loans get assigned to a company upon your graduation-- even if you name was not yet legally changed when you first began school.

C) Student Loans (if you have graduated and a company is now in charge of your government loans)

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your Student Loan Company's System:

- Loan company ID number
- Photocopy of name change petition
- Photocopy of new social security card

Sample Letter to Enclose with Records

(edit as relevant to you, eg. if you are not in graduate school, just say that you are a customer who has recently had their name legally changed, etc.; The line about graduate school has only been included due to situations involving loan deferment for continuing education):

[Date]

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a [Year in your program] student at [graduate school], and a[n] [Undergraduate College/University] alum. As the company in charge of my undergraduate student loans, I am writing to you to notify you of the fact that my first and middle name have been legally changed through a court order in Massachusetts.

My [Student Loan Company] ID number is [ID Number- This can be found at the bottom of any emails that your student loan company has sent you]. The name that is currently on my student loan account is [Your former legal name], and my name has been legally changed to [Your name]. If [Student Loan Company] becomes the company responsible for my graduate school student loans upon my [Anticipated year of graduation] graduation—in addition to my undergraduate loans from [first year of undergraduate student loans]- [last year of undergraduate student loans] —I would further like to notify you that I have already changed this information regarding my legal name change with FAFSA.

I have enclosed a photocopy of my court order name change petition form and a photocopy of my updated social security card for your reference and records. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

D) Employer and W-2s

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your Work Information System/On Your W-2s:

- Contact your employer's Human Resources Department. They may have a Name Change Form for you to fill out and submit.
- A copy of the name change petition (a photo copy should be acceptable; does not have to be a certified)
- Photocopy of updated social security card

E) Bank Information

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your Bank Information System:

- Certified name change petition
- Updated social security card
- Photo ID (state ID, license, passport)—*birth name/former legal name acceptable with certified name change petition*
- **Note:** If you have a joint account, the other person on your account *will need to sign off* on paperwork consenting to the name change on the account.
- Your bank will automatically order you a new *debit card*.
- If your *credit card* is through a different company (eg. Cardmember services and not actually Eastern Bank), your bank can help you get in touch with your credit card company, who will send you the necessary forms with a list of necessary documents to change the name on your credit card.
- **Good Information to Know:** A bank can make photocopies of your certified name change petition and use their seal and signature to certify the photocopy.

F) Health Insurance (Mass Health Confirmed, Private Insurers May Vary)

Documents needed for a Name Change on Your Health Insurance (Mass Health Confirmed, Private Health Insurers May Vary):

- A Mass Health renewal form consists of boxes on the left-hand side, and boxes on the right that are to be filled out for any information, as provided on the left, that has changed; this includes name.
- Name change petition (photo copy should be acceptable; does not have to be a certified copy)
- Photocopy of updated social security card

G) Wills, Estates, etc.-- Your Own and for Which You are a Beneficiary

Documents needed for a Name Change on a Will, Estate, etc. (Your Own or for Which You are a Beneficiary):

Note: If you are a **beneficiary** and your trust has **not** yet been placed in an account for you, therefore the current trust is **in the name of your grantor** but you are **receiving checks**, you **can** receive checks made out to your legally changed name **without** submitting documents. The following documents are **only required** to change the name on your **account** that has been **created by the estate/trust**.

- Certified of name change petition (A photocopy may be sufficient. Contact the attorney in charge of the estate to confirm if the certified name change petition is necessary/if the photocopy of the name change petition is necessary).
- Photocopy of updated social security card

H) Notifying Utilities

Documents needed for a Name Change on Your Utilities:

Utility companies' policies may vary. MTPC suggests calling your companies and double checking with them.

- Certified copy of name change petition (some companies may accept a photocopy; call your company to clarify)

- Provide your account number “I am a customer and I have recently legally changed my name. My account number is _____. I have enclosed a [certified copy or photocopy] of my legal name change petition as proof of my legal name change.”
- Some companies may ask you to fill out forms regarding your name change.

I) Birth Certificate

Please note that you should obtain a court order for your name change **before** changing any information on your birth certificate as MA only allows you to amend any portion of your Birth Certificate once.

i) Your Own

Documents needed for a Name Change on Your Birth Certificate:

- [Applicant Affidavit](#) (effectively an application)
- Certified copy of name change petition
- Check or money order payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as follows:
 - \$50.00 amendment fee, plus *either*:
 - By mail: \$32.00 per certified copy for _____ copies
 - Or, in-person: \$20.00 per certified copy for _____ copies

Note: There is **not** an affidavit of indigency (fee waiver) for birth certificates. **However**, the money that MTPC has raised to support name and gender marker change fees can be requested for support for amending birth certificates. Funds can be requested through contacting Tre’Andre at TreAndreValentine@masstpc.org.

ii) Your Child(ren)’s

Documents needed for a Name Change on Your Child(ren)’s Birth Certificate(s) :

Unfortunately, there is not currently much information regarding updating your child(ren)’s birth certificate(s) to reflect your legal name change.

MTPC plans to update as more information becomes available.

If you are seeking to change your own name on your child(ren)’s birth certificate(s), and you are experiencing problems doing so, please contact the [Trans ID Project](#) or contact Tre’Andre at TreAndreValentine@masstpc.org.

J) Veterans Administration (Military ID, Discharge Papers)

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your Veterans Administration Information:

- Two forms of government issued ID (State ID, Passport, Driver’s License)
- Name change petition

K) Post Office

Documents needed for a Name Change with Your Local Post Office:

- Post Office’s Address Change Form can also be used to update your legal name change
- Updated form of ID (State ID, Passport, License)

II) GENDER MARKER CHANGE

Step 1: State ID/ Driver's License

Documents needed for to change a Gender Marker on a Massachusetts ID:

- A new license or ID application
- A Gender Designation Change Form ([download here](#)), signed by:
 1. You **and**
 2. A medical provider attending to the gender that you identify as (a medical provider should be a licensed physician, a licensed therapist or counselor, or psychiatric social worker)
- If your current state issued ID/license has a name you do not use anymore, or has not been updated since you have legally changed your name, you must also bring:
- Your court ordered name change document
- Fees:
 - If you are amending an ID/license: \$25
 - If you do not have an ID/license: \$50

Step 2: Social Security

Documents needed for Gender Marker Change with Social Security

- Proof of Gender Transition. You will need one of the following:
 - A US Passport with your new gender marker
 - A birth certificate that has been change to show your new gender marker
 - A signed letter from a doctor saying that you have had “appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition (see “i. Doctor’s Letter” below)
- Completed form SS-5 “Application for Social Security Card” ([download here](#))
- Proof of identity: driver’s license, passport, state-issued ID. These identity documents must show your current legal name.
- Proof of Citizenship:
 - If you are a U.S. citizen and have not previously established citizenship with SSA, you will need to present a birth certificate, U.S. passport, or other proof of citizenship. Note: your birth certificate or other document establishing citizenship does not need to show your current name or gender. However, you will need to show proof that you are the same person, such as with a court order for legal name change.
 - If you are a non-citizen, you will need to show documents proving your immigration status and work eligibility, such as: Form I-551; I-94 with unexpired foreign passport; and/or work permit card (I-766 or I-688B). Because there are many types and combinations of qualifying documents for non-citizens, you should call SSA (1-800-772-1213) to confirm that your documents qualify

a. Doctor’s Letter

For many people, getting a doctor’s letter is the easiest option. The doctor you use **MUST** be a licensed physician like a psychiatrist, general practitioner, endocrinologist, etc. You can’t use a letter from someone who isn’t a doctor, like a counselor who doesn’t have a medical degree. The doctor who writes your letter does not need to be treating you for gender transition.

“Appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition” does *not* mean that you need to have surgery or hormones. You may have already had these changes, you may be planning for them in the future, or you may have decided that these changes aren’t for you. In any case, “appropriate clinical treatment” just means that you

have done what you and your doctor feel is right for *you* at this point in time. To see an example of an acceptable doctor's letter, visit page 2 of "[Transgender People and the Social Security Administration.](#)"

Step 3: Passport

Documents needed for Gender Marker Change on a Passport:

- Proof of citizenship and proof of identity (example: a driver's license or birth certificate)
- A photo that is a good likeness of current appearance (2x2 inches in size with white or off-white background).
 - These photos can be taken for \$15 at acceptance facilities, such as designated Post Offices; photos can also be taken at CVS for about \$13.99.
- A fee of \$75 to have a new passport issued (an additional \$25 is required for processing in-person applications. No credit cards accepted by mail or in person (bring cash, a check, or a money order)
- Annotate the application with the words "gender transition," as required by the [State Department regulations](#). The regulations are unclear at this time about where this annotation is required to be placed or how. Until this requirement is clarified, we recommend that you ensure the words "gender transition" are somewhere visible and easily seen on the application.
- Attending physician's letter stating that you've had "appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition," or are "in the process of gender transition." This policy recognizes that people's medical needs vary and that appropriate clinical treatment may be different for one person than for another. [Here is a sample letter](#). According to the law, this letter must contain:
 - Identification of the physician as an internist, endocrinologist, gynecologist, urologist, or psychiatrist
 - Physician's full name
 - Medical license or certificate number
 - Issuing state or other jurisdiction of medical license/certificate
 - Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration number (if physician does not have DEA number, for example if he or she practices in a foreign country, then further clarification or verification of the physician's bona fides must also be submitted)
 - Address and telephone number of physician
 - Statement that physician has a doctor/patient relationship with you
 - Language stating that the applicant "has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to male/female/nonbinary (gender you identify as)" or "is in the process of gender transition to male/female/nonbinary." Note: If the letter states you are "in the process," the passport agency will issue a two-year limited validity passport.
 - Statement: "I declare under penalty or perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct."

Step 4: Birth Certificate

Documents needed for a Gender Marker Change on Your Birth Certificate:

- [Applicant Affidavit](#) (effectively an application)
- Notarized statement from your physician
- Certified copy of name change petition
- Check or money order payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as follows:
 - \$50.00 amendment fee, plus *either*:
 - By mail: \$32.00 per certified copy
 - Or, in-person: \$20.00 per certified copy

Note: There is **not** an affidavit of indigency (fee waiver) for birth certificates. **However**, the money that MTPC has raised to support name and gender marker change fees can be requested for support for amending birth certificates. Funds can be requested through contacting Tre'Andre at TreAndreValentine@masstpc.org.

Step 5: Other Documents to Consider Changing

A. Veterans Administration (Military ID, Discharge Papers)

Documents needed for a Name Change in Your Veterans Administration Information

- Two forms of government issued ID (State ID, Passport, Driver's License)
- Name change petition
 - Physician's full name
 - Medical license or certificate number
 - Issuing state or other jurisdiction of medical license/certificate
 - DEA registration number assigned to the physician
 - Address and telephone number of the physician

A signed statement, on office letterhead, from a licensed physician. The statement must include the following information:

- Language stating that the physician is your physician and has a doctor/patient relationship with you
- Language stating you have had the appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition
- Language stating "I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct."