

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF A MINOR
Instructions for Completing DOM REL 62

Introduction:

The minor must be a resident of the County in which you are filing for a name change. You may not use these forms to change a name in connection with an adoption. For more information, read Maryland Rule 15-901.

NOTE: Changing the name of a child will not change an existing child support obligation.

General:

In order to complete your petition, you must provide the Court with both names of the biological parents of the child.

Child Less Than 1 Year Old: If the child is less than one-year old, you may be able to change the child's name without a court order. Read MD. HEALTH GEN. CODE ANN. § 4-214.

Child Aged 1 Year or Older: To change a child's name you, as his/her parent or guardian, may file a Petition for Change of Name. Ordinarily the court will look at whether all parents, guardians and custodians, as well as the child, are in agreement with the name change. The request to have the name changed must also be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which you are filing the Petition. You will need to check with the Clerk of Court regarding publication of the Notice. In some jurisdictions publication arrangements are the responsibility of the party asking for publication. In other jurisdictions the Clerk of Court will arrange to have the Notice published. After the notice has been published, other persons are given the opportunity to object. If someone objects, they must file this objection and serve you a copy. You will have 15 days to respond to the objection by filing a written response with the Court.

Instructions:

> STEP 1 — Securing Consent of Parents, Guardians or Custodians

It is usually preferable to submit the Petition with signed consents from all parents, guardians and custodians. Before preparing the Petition for Change of Name, contact each parent, guardian, or custodian. Ask that person to sign a Consent form. File this consent form with your petition. If one of the parents, guardians or custodians are deceased, please provide a copy of the Death Certificate.

> STEP 2 — Completion of the Petition for Change of Name (Minor), Notice and Order for Change of Name

- A. Fill out the Petition for Change of Name, as indicated.
- B. Sign the Petition.
- C. Fill out the top section and first paragraph of the Notice for Publication. Leave the second paragraph blank.
- D. Fill out the proposed Order for Change of Name, except for the date and Judge's signature.

>STEP 3 — Attachment of Consent Forms and Birth Certificate

Attach to the documents to be filed with the court, each signed consent, and a copy of the child's birth certificate or other document reflecting the child's *current name* (the one you want it changed *from*).

>STEP 4 — Filing of Documents

File the above documents with the Clerk of the court at the circuit court for the county in which you reside. Pay the filing fee. You will need to check with the Clerk of Court regarding publication of the Notice. In some jurisdictions publication arrangements are the responsibility of the party asking for publication. In other jurisdictions the Clerk of Court will arrange to have the Notice published.

>STEP 5 — Service

If you have not obtained the consent of each parent, guardian and custodian of the child, you will need to serve each person who has not consented with the following papers which you have filed or which have been provided by the Court. *See General Instructions.*

- 1. Petition for Change of Name
- 2. Notice
- 3. Order for Change of Name
- 4. All attachments you filed with these documents
- 5. Writ of Summons (This will be given to you after you file your documents)

>STEP 6 — Pay for the Publication of the Notice

The newspaper will send you an invoice to have the Notice published. You are required to pay this invoice. Publication can be expensive. After the Notice has been published, you and the Clerk will be sent a confirmation from the newspaper. In some jurisdictions, the notice is only sent to you, not the Clerk. You will need to check with the Clerk of the Court in your jurisdiction to determine if you need to send the Clerk a copy yourself.

>STEP 7 — Consideration of Petition and Issuance of Order

After the Clerk receives the confirmation from the newspaper, they will send your

Petition to a judge. The judge will review all of the information.

If someone has contested the name change, if you have not secured the consent of all parents, guardians or custodians, or if the judge has any questions about your petition, a hearing may be scheduled. (Remember to Respond to any objection within 15 days after you receive it and include a Request for Hearing or Proceeding, DOM REL 59, if you want the court to hold a hearing on the objection).

If no one has contested the change, and everything has been done properly, then the judge may sign the proposed Order for Name Change. You will receive a certified copy of the signed Order in the mail, and, for a small fee, you may obtain additional certified copies of the Order from the Clerk. You will need to use a certified copy of the Order for Name Change to change the child's name at the Motor Vehicle Administration (you may need other identification for this), the Bureau of Vital Statistics, the Social Security Administration, with creditors, or at the child's school.