



## Name Change Instructions

**Court Address**

2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 711, Detroit, MI 48226

**Telephone**

313-224-6639

**Note:**

- These instructions apply to any person filing a Petition to Change Name for anyone who has been a resident(s) of Michigan and Wayne County for at least one year.
- A name change cannot be processed for a child under 1 year of age.
- When the instructions say “**applicants**,” they mean the individuals requesting a name change, even if one or more of these family members are not individually completing the Petition.
- **Please read through all instructions first before proceeding.**
- These instructions have been updated to reflect the current filing options. As filing options can sometimes change, you can obtain the latest instructions by visiting the Court’s website at [Family Domestic/FOC Filing Instructions](#).

**Instructions:**

1. The Applicant must complete either the (1) Petition For Change Name form ([SCAO form PC 51](#)) or (2) Petition For Name Change and Ex Parte Request For Nonpublication and Confidential Record ([SCAO Form PC 51c](#)), and complete and file an Addendum to Protected Personal Identifying Information ([SCAO form MC 97a](#)). (**PLEASE NOTE:** Three (3) copies of the Petition must be completed if applicant is filing in person.)
  - a. Write all information on the Petition clearly.
    - i. Include an **e-mail address, address, and a working phone number** where the applicant and custodial parent(s) can be contacted about the Petition.
  - b. Include the applicant’s middle name if it is to be included in the name change.
  - c. Ensure that box #9 is completed and that if the petitioner, spouse and/or minor children have a criminal record, that the criminal record is detailed on the Petition.
  - d. Sign the Petition:
    - i. If the applicant is under 18 years of age, both parents **must** sign the Petition, **except:**
      1. If one parent is deceased, the other parent must sign the Petition.
      2. If both parents are deceased, the applicant’s guardian must sign the Petition.
      3. If only one legal parent is legally available to give consent, that parent must sign the Petition.
      4. If either parent has been declared mentally incompetent, the petition may be signed by the guardian for that parent.
    - ii. If the applicant is 14 years of age or older, then **he or she must also sign the Petition, in the presence of the Judge.**
    - iii. If the Petition is also for the spouse of the applicant, the spouse must sign the Petition.
  - e. If the non-custodial parent does not consent to the name change, the name of an applicant under 18 years of age cannot be changed, unless after notice to the noncustodial parent, the custodial parent can prove during a hearing that:
    - i. **Both of the following are true:**
      1. **The other parent**, having the ability to support or assist in supporting the child, has **failed or neglected to provide regular and substantial support** for the child or, if a support order has been entered, has failed to substantially comply with the order, **for 2 years or more before the filing** of the petition; **and 2. The other parent**, having the ability to visit, contact, or communicate with the child, has regularly and substantially failed or neglected to do so for **2 years or more before the filing of the petition.**
      2. **OR The other parent**, has been convicted of a violation of section 136b, 520b, 520c, 520d, 520e, or 520g of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL

750.136b, 750.316, 750.317, 750.520b to 750.520e, and 750.520g, and the child or a sibling of the child is a victim of the crime.

2. Check box #12 on the Petition to have the State Registrar create a new birth certificate.
  - a. If the applicant was born in Michigan, the application to change the birth certificate is located on the Michigan Department of Human and Health Services' website, available at: [MDHHS - Correct A Birth Record \(michigan.gov\)](#).
  - b. If the applicant was born outside of Michigan, contact the appropriate agency in the jurisdiction where the applicant was born to create a new birth certificate. That state/country may have different requirements than Michigan to change a name on a birth certificate.
3. File the Petition with the Wayne County Clerk's Office:
  - a. The Petition's filing fee is **\$175.00** and is payable to "**Wayne County Clerk.**" Go to [Family Division/FOC Filing Instructions](#) located on the Court's website under "Filing Fees" to see detailed instructions on submitting filing fees to the Court and/or under "Fee Waivers" to see detailed instructions on requesting a Fee Waiver.
  - b. Applicants shall file the Petition with the Wayne County Clerk's Office. Go to [Family Division/FOC Filing Instructions](#) to review detailed instructions on how to file new Petitions with the Court.

**Note:** Pursuant to the Michigan Supreme Court Order in ADM No. 2013-12, Name Change Petitions are to be resolved within 126 days (about 4 months) from the date of filing. The remaining steps of this Petition must be completed within the time period or the Petition may be dismissed. It will not be reinstated and the entire process will need to be started over—including paying all filing fees again.

4. All name changes **must** be published in the local newspaper unless an Applicant files a Petition For Name Change and Ex Parte Request For Nonpublication and Confidential Record ([SCAO Form PC 51c](#)) [See Step #5].
  - a. **The Publication of Notice of Hearing must be published at least 14 days before the name change hearing.**
    - i. To publish in the local newspaper, take the Publication of Notice of Hearing form ([SCAO form PC 50](#)) to the Detroit Legal News, which may be contacted at phone number (313) 409-6398 or e-mail at [wayneprobate@legalnews.com](mailto:wayneprobate@legalnews.com).
    - ii. **The current Detroit Legal News' publication fee can be found on the Court's website.** Go to <https://www.3rdcc.org/forms/family-domestic>, and click on the document titled, "Name Change Costs."
    - iii. **For those with a valid Fee Waiver on file**, provide a copy of your Fee Waiver to the Detroit Legal News along with your Publication of Notice of Hearing form ([SCAO form PC 50](#)). Your publication fees will be paid by the Court in accordance with MCR 3.613(B).
  - b. File the original Publication of Notice of Hearing and the Affidavit of Publication that you received from the newspaper as a receipt for the publication with the Wayne County Clerk's Office. Go to [Family Division/FOC Filing Instructions](#) to review detailed instructions on how to submit documents with the Court.
  - c. You must submit a copy of the Affidavit of Publication to the Assigned Judge's general courtroom e-mail prior to your hearing. The e-mails are listed online at [www.3rdcc.org/zoom/family-division-domestic](http://www.3rdcc.org/zoom/family-division-domestic).
5. If an Applicant has "good cause" not to publish notice of the name change proceeding, [SCAO Form PC 51c](#), Petition for Name Change and Ex Parte Request for Nonpublication and Confidential Record must be used to ask the Court for permission not to publish a notice about the name change and to keep the record confidential.
  - a. **An Applicant may show "good cause" not to publish notice of their name change proceeding if they can show that publication or availability of a record of the proceeding could place the petitioner or another individual in physical danger, such as evidence that the petitioner or another individual has been the victim of stalking or an assaultive crime.**

- i. The Applicant or endangered individual must provide a statement included in SCAO Form PC 51c stating the reason(s) supporting “good cause” for nonpublication.
6. If you are a custodial parent who is filing the Petition for an applicant under 18 years of age, **and the non-custodial parent will not sign the Petition, you must serve the non-custodial parent** with a copy of the Petition. If the non-custodial parent signs the Petition, then you do not have to serve him or her. Go to [Name Change Petitions - Service of Process Instructions](#) for instructions on serving the non-custodial parent with a copy of the Petition and a Notice of Hearing.

**Note: If the non-custodial parent is not properly served before the hearing, the Petition will be dismissed. It will not be reinstated and the applicant will need to start the entire process over—including paying all filing fees again.**

7. Pay a **\$10.00** Entry of Order fee by going to [AllPaid](#) and using the Pay Your Location Code (PLC) 6223. Go to [Family Division/FOC Filing Instructions](#) on the Court’s website under “Filing Fees” to review further instructions on submitting fees to the Court.
  - a. Pay the Entry of Order fee before the hearing begins.
  - b. Send a copy of the receipt to the assigned judge’s email listed on the Zoom Virtual Meetings and Family Division-Domestic tabs on the Court’s [website](#).
  - c. PLEASE NOTE: This fee will be waived if a valid Fee Waiver is on file.
8. The Court may enter the name change order with or without a hearing. If the Court decides to proceed with a hearing, you shall receive a notice with the date and time of the hearing.
  - a. The Domestic Relations Division is conducting all name change court proceedings by Zoom video conferencing **except as otherwise ordered by the Judge**.
  - b. On the date of the hearing, go to the Assigned Judge’s Zoom courtroom link by clicking on the Zoom Virtual Meetings and Family Division-Domestic-tabs on the Court’s [website](#).
  - c. If you fail to appear for your scheduled hearing, your case may be dismissed.
  - d. **All applicants must appear at the hearing, unless excused by the Court.**
9. If the judge **grants** the Petition, the applicant may request a certified copy of the Order to Change Name by following the instructions listed on the [Wayne County Clerk Records Division’s website](#) under “How to find Civil & Domestic Court Records.” A certified copy of the Order to Change Name may be obtained for **\$10.00 for certification and \$1.00 per page**. If the judge **denies** the Petition, the applicant may request the Court to enter an Order to refund the Entry of Order fee.

**PLEASE BE ADVISED:** The Court may require driver’s license and/or birth certificates at the time of the hearing to verify a party’s identity. Make sure you have these documents with you to avoid an adjournment of your hearing.

**Note: If the Petition is DISMISSED for any reason, it will not be reinstated. If the applicant wishes to file another Petition, he or she will have to start the process over—including paying all filing fees again.**

