

KENT COUNTY PROBATE COURT INSTRUCTIONS FOR NAME CHANGES

All forms must be typed or clearly printed in ink. The Probate Court will not accept forms for filing unless they are accurate, complete, and legible. If you have legal questions about this procedure, or are unable to properly complete the following forms, you should seek assistance from a qualified attorney. Laws and rules regarding name changes are found at MCL 711.1 to 711.3, and in MCR 3.613.

CHECKLIST FOR PETITIONER

- [] Applicant has been a resident of Kent County for a minimum of 12 months immediately preceding the filing of the petition.
- [] The **Petition to Change Name**, form [PC 51](#), is completed and signed.
- [] An **Addendum to Protected Personal Identifying Information** [MC 97a](#) is completed with name and date of birth for each individual whose name is being changed.
- [] A **Publication of Notice of Hearing**, form [PC 50](#), is completed. Please leave the date and time of the hearing blank. The form must designate the Kent County newspaper you are selecting for publication.
- [] **Filing Fee** - \$187.00 (cash, check or money order), payable to the *Kent County Probate Court*. The filing fee includes the cost of one certified copy.
- [] **Additional Certified Copy of Order to Change Name (Optional)** - \$12.00 per copy (cash, check or money order), payable to *Kent County Probate Court*.
- [] **Fingerprint Card/Background Check** (Adults aged 22+) – Each law enforcement agency charges a unique fee, so the cost will vary depending on where a background check is obtained. (See additional instructions below).

ADDITIONAL CHECKLIST FOR MINORS

- [] **Birth Certificate** – A copy of the original birth certificate of the minor is attached.
- [] **Child Support Payment History** – If both parents have not signed the Petition and the custodial parent filing the Petition claims that a support order has been entered and the noncustodial parent has failed to substantially comply with the support order for a period of two years or more before the filing of the Petition, then a Child Support Payment History must be obtained from the Friend of the Court and filed along with the Petition.
- [] **Non-Custodial Parent** - If the non-custodial parent of a minor for whom name change is sought has not signed the consent portion of the Petition and if the address of the non-custodial parent:
 - is **known**, then along with your Petition, a Proof of Service ([PC 564](#)) indicating that a copy of the Petition for Name Change and Notice of Hearing was provided to the non-custodial parent.
 - is **not known**, and cannot be ascertained after diligent inquiry, then type or print the name of the non-custodial parent on the Publication form after the words: “TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including.”
- [] **Minor’s Consent to Name Change** – If the minor is 14 years or older at the time of the hearing, he or she must attend the hearing, and must sign the Minor’s Consent to Name Change, form [PC 51b](#), in the presence of the Judge or Probate Register during the hearing.



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT NAME CHANGES

Scheduling the Hearing: Hearings are generally scheduled at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

- **Under the Age of 22** - If the person(s) for whom a name change is sought is under the age of 22, the Court will provide a hearing date and time when you file your Petition. It is the Petitioner's responsibility to submit the Publication of Notice of Hearing to an appropriate newspaper as defined in MCR 2.106(F) for publication in Kent County.
- **Age 22 and Over** - The Court will not schedule a hearing until after it has received the necessary criminal history report(s) from the State Police if the person(s) for whom a name change is sought is age 22 years or older.

Criminal History Report: If the person who is seeking to change his or her name is age 22 years or older, the Court will provide a copy of the Petition to the petitioner after it is filed. The individual seeking to change his or her name must go to a local police agency and have his or her fingerprints taken. After fingerprints are taken, the individual must mail a copy of the Petition, the fingerprint card, and the appropriate fee to the Michigan State Police. The fee must be payable to the State of Michigan and mailed to: Michigan State Police, Criminal Justice Information Center – Criminal History, PO Box 30266, Lansing, MI 48909. When the Court receives the required criminal history reports back from the State Police, the Court will schedule the hearing and provide a copy of the Publication of Notice of Hearing to you.

Publication: Publication is required pursuant to MCL 711.1(1). It is the Petitioner's responsibility, once a hearing date has been provided (unless a Fee Waiver has been granted) to submit the Publication of Notice of Hearing to a newspaper as defined by MCR 2.106(F) for publication in Kent County. The Publication of Notice of Hearing should be immediately submitted to the publication of your choice and arrangements made for payment. A copy of the Affidavit of Publication must be received a minimum of 14 days prior to your scheduled hearing. Failure to timely pay the publication fee may result in cancellation or adjournment of your hearing.

For your convenience, contact information for two commonly used Kent County publications is being provided; however, you may utilize any newspaper meeting the requirements under MCR 2.106(F).

- [The Grand Rapids Press/Mlive](mailto:legalads@mlive.com) - (877) 222-5423. Publication of Notice of Hearing may be emailed to legalads@mlive.com.
- [Grand Rapids Legal News](mailto:outcountynotices@legalnews.com), 1430 Monroe Avenue NW, Suite 140, Grand Rapids, MI 49505; (616) 454-9293. Publication of Notice of Hearing may be emailed to outcountynotices@legalnews.com. Please indicate Kent County in the subject line.

Additional Certified Copies: One certified copy of the Order Following Hearing on Petition to Change Name will be provided to the petitioner. Additional certified copies may be requested in person at the Probate Court Clerk's office at Suite 2500 in the Courthouse, or requested online at the Probate Court's [Certified Record Request](#) page.

Obtaining a New Birth Certificate: If you were born in Michigan and wish to obtain a new birth certificate from the Michigan Vital Records department showing the new name, you must file an [Application to Correct or Change a Michigan Birth Record](#), (form DCH-0847). The current fee to obtain an amended birth certificate is \$50.00, payable to the State of Michigan. You will be required to send a certified copy of your Order along with the completed form and fee. If you were not born in Michigan, you will need to consult the specific requirements of the state in which you were born.

Kent County Probate Court
180 Ottawa NW, Suite 2500, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Phone: (616) 632-5440
Fax: (616) 632-5430
Email: probatecourt@kentcountymi.gov
<https://www.accesskent.com/Courts/Probate/>

Other agencies and organizations to contact after the Court issues a name change order:

- [Social Security Administration](#)
- [Michigan Secretary of State](#)
- Passport Office
- U.S. Post Office
- Internal Revenue Service
- Local clerk (voter registration)
- Employer(s)
- Banks, financial institutions and retirement plans
- Credit Card companies (or issuers)
- Doctors' and dentists' offices
- Insurance companies
- The Michigan State Tax Authority
- Municipal Tax Authority (if applicable)
- Clubs
- Memberships
- Academic institutions