

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

- [] The **Petition to Change Name**, form [PC 51](#), is completed and signed.
- [] An **Addendum to Protected Personal Identifying Information** [MC97a](#) 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.
- [] **Filing Fee** - \$185.00 (cash, check or money order), payable to the *Kent County Circuit Court*.
- [] **Certified Copy of Order to Change Name** - \$12.00 (cash, check or money order), payable to *Kent County Probate Court*. You may prepay for as many certified copies in advance as you would like (\$12.00 per copy).
- [] **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.
- [] **Publication Fee** – \$96.05 (subject to change), payable to the Grand Rapids Legal News. You will be billed by the Legal News at your address, as shown on the publication form. The Publication of Notice must be published once at least 14 days prior to the hearing.
- [] A **Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope**.

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 **not known**, then type or print the name of the non-custodial parent on the Publication form after the words: “TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS including.”
 - is **known**, then along with your Petition, provide the Court with a **stamped envelope addressed to the non-custodial parent** with the return address shown as: Kent County Probate Court, 180 Ottawa NW, Suite 2500, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. The Court will use the envelope to send copies of the Petition and Publication of Notice to the non-custodial parent. Note that if this envelope is returned to the Court as undeliverable, you will be required to publish a second time for the non-custodial parent, which will cause you to incur an **additional publication fee of \$96.05** and may also result in the delay of your hearing.
- [] **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** - The Court will give you a hearing date and time when you file your Petition, and will send the Publication of Notice of Hearing to the Legal News, if the person(s) for whom a name change is sought is under the age of 22.
- **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 will send copies of the Publication of Notice of Hearing to the petitioner (in the self-addressed stamped envelope previously provided) and to the Legal News.

Payment of Publication Fee: The petitioner will be billed by the Legal News at the address shown on the Publication form. You should pay the fee at least 7 days prior to the hearing to allow time for the Legal News to send the Proof of Publication to the Court. The Legal News will not send the Proof of Publication to the Court until the publication fee is paid. Failure to timely pay the fee to the Legal News may delay your hearing. The contact information for the Grand Rapids Legal News is: 1430 Monroe Ave NW, Suite 140, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, (616) 454-9293. If you have not received a bill for the publication fee from the Legal News 10 days prior to your hearing, please contact them.

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.

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

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/>