

# *County of Adams*

## **CHANGE OF NAME OF AN ADULT**

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### **Disclaimer**

Court staff is not able to give you legal advice or help you fill out/complete these forms. The information in this packet is not a substitute for professional legal advice. The Court assumes no responsibility and accepts no liability for actions taken by users of these documents, including reliance on their contents. If you want to obtain the services of an attorney but do not know whom to contact, please call the Pennsylvania Lawyer Referral Service at 1-800-692-7375.

*Last Updated: November 29, 2011*

**INSTRUCTIONS  
PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF AN ADULT**

THIS FORM IS A GUIDELINE TO BE USED FOR THE FILING OF A PETITION FOR THE CHANGE OF NAME OF AN ADULT IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY. THIS FORM AND THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS PROVIDING LEGAL ADVICE. THE CHANGING OF ONE'S NAME IS AN IMPORTANT LEGAL MATTER. THEREFORE, YOU ARE ADVISED TO SEEK THE ASSISTANCE OF AN ATTORNEY BEFORE PROCEEDING TO FILE SUCH A PETITION.

One's right to petition the Court for a change of name is authorized by statute in Pennsylvania as set forth in 54 Pa. C.S.A. Section 701, et. seq., which can be located in the Adams County Law Library. The instructions below are not a complete explanation of the rights and responsibilities provided in the statute.

**Instructions for Completing the Petition:**

1. Paragraph 1 identifies the name and address of the petitioner. The Court can only consider the petition if the petitioner is a resident of Adams County.
2. Paragraph 2 identifies the name the petitioner wants to be known as if the request is granted by the Court.
3. Paragraph 3 requires the petitioner to list all addresses where he or she has lived over the past five years. The listing should include the street address, town/city, county and state, as well as the dates when the petitioner resided at those addresses.
4. Paragraph 4 reflects a statutory requirement that the petitioner present to the Court at the time of the hearing on the petition a certification of an official search of the proper offices of the county where the petitioner resides or resided for the past five years showing all judgments, decrees of record or similar matters against the petitioner. In Adams County, those records are kept in the Office of Prothonotary and the Office of the Recorder of Deeds. This paragraph is suggested as a way for the petitioner to begin accumulating the information. If the certification is current, it may be attached as an exhibit to the petition.
5. Paragraph 5 requires the petitioner to set forth the reason why the change of name is being requested.
6. Paragraph 6 is only to be used if the petitioner avers that the safety of the petitioner or his or her child would be jeopardized if notice for the hearing was given to another person by publication in a newspaper, mail or personal service. The petitioner must state why he/she believes there is a safety concern. If the request to waive notice is granted by the Court, the record shall be sealed by the Court.

**Miscellaneous Instructions:**

1. The petition must be typed or neatly printed on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper.
2. The caption of the Petition ("In Re: \_\_\_\_\_") must be in the current name of the petitioner.
3. A proposed order scheduling the hearing and a proposed final order need not be attached to the petition as the Court uses its own form for those purposes, however, a proposed final order may be presented to the Court for consideration at the time of the hearing.
4. An original and two copies of the petition must be filed with the Prothonotary of Adams County. The petitioner will be required to pay a filing fee at that time.
5. Upon the filing of the petition, the petitioner must submit a set of his/her fingerprints to the Prothonotary. Those fingerprints will be sent to the Pennsylvania State Police in order to obtain a criminal history report on the petitioner. A criminal record may, but will not necessarily, preclude the granting of the name change request.
6. A hearing will ordinarily be scheduled within 75 – 90 days after the filing of the petition.
7. The Court will ordinarily require the notice of the hearing be published in two newspapers of general circulation in Adams County, one of which may be the Adams County Legal Journal. The petitioner must arrange for that publication and at the hearing present to the Court a proof of publication which will be provided to the petitioner by the newspapers.
8. There are circumstances where a person may assume a different name without petitioning the Court. Those circumstances are more fully set forth in the statute.

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ADAMS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
CIVIL MATTER**

**IN RE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHANGE OF NAME**

**20\_\_-SU-\_\_\_\_\_**

**PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF AN ADULT**

AND NOW, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_, comes Petitioner

who avers as follows:

1. Petitioner is \_\_\_\_\_, who resides at \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Petitioner seeks to change his/her name to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Petitioner has resided at the following address(es) during the five (5) years preceding the filing of this Petition:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Petitioner does not have any outstanding judgments or decrees of record entered against him/her and is not involved in any pending legal actions except the following:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Petitioner requests the change of name for the following reasons:  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Petitioner requests the Court to waive the notice requirement in this matter because it is averred that such notice would jeopardize the safety of the Petitioner and/or his/her child(ren) in that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHEREFORE, for the reasons set forth herein Petitioner respectfully requests the Court to set a hearing in this matter and upon sufficient proof, to grant a change of his/her name from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Petitioner)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby verify that the facts set forth in the foregoing Petition are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief and that this statement is made subject to penalties of 18 Pa. C.S.A. §4909, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature