



# KNOW-HOW:

THE TRANS PERSON'S GUIDE TO GET OR CHANGE  
ALL OF THE LIFE DOCUMENTS AND ESSENTIAL PAPERWORK  
YOU'LL NEED TO MAKE YOUR WAY IN THE WORLD



Center for LGBT Education,  
Outreach, and Services



**Out** for  
**Health**

a Project of Planned Parenthood

**Hey. How are you? We're good.  
Thanks, for asking. So, here's the deal.**



**Out for  
Health**

a Project of Planned Parenthood

At our fabulous LGBT Health and Wellness Program, Out for Health, at Planned Parenthood in Ithaca, New York we're working hard to increase access to care, information, and support for transgender people in our community.

We were pretty amped to be the very first Planned Parenthood in New York to provide transgender hormone therapy and preventive health services in our Ithaca center in the beginning of 2013 and we've found that there's so much more that we can do for our transgender patients and community.

We get a ton of questions about the various legal and administrative paperwork processes in New York that many trans people want (and sometimes need) to do, and what we wanted to do with this nifty new booklet and webpage is get all that information together in one place and say, "here, jump in lovely trans person, go to whatever page and process you'd like to and get the information you need!" We're especially excited to be working with the Ithaca College Center for LGBT Education, Outreach, and Services on this project!

We know information changes so we'll be watching that closely and updating frequently; let us know if you find something we missed or could add to make it easier. Email us at [lgbt@ppsfl.org](mailto:lgbt@ppsfl.org) or send us a message at [outforhealth.tumblr.com](http://outforhealth.tumblr.com), our blog is called *QueerTips*. Our fancy new webpage with templates for letters and this booklet as a .pdf and an online resource is [PPSFL.ORG/transgender](http://PPSFL.ORG/transgender).

Good luck! The work and costs of these steps are an undue burden, we hope that having a roadmap might help ease the process even the littlest bit for you.

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# KNOW-HOW:

The trans person's guide to get or change all of the life documents and things you'll need to make your way in the world

*Yup, this is the disclaimer, you have to say this stuff, man. So yeah, just so you know, the following information is meant as a guide regarding some common questions that transgender people may have about paperwork and documents in New York State.*

*You're smart, you know this, but please note, this information does not serve as legal advice. If you have more questions or a complicated situation or a more nuanced "whaaaaat, how do I do this?" please seek personal legal advice. And please note, the information here may change (actually probably will, heck New York just added the ability to more easily change the gender marker on your birth certificate in July of 2014, so yeah, things change); please check in with the specific departments and offices listed with questions and the most up-to-date information.*

## **So. You're trans. Congrats!**

That's a huge thing to realize about yourself. It can signal the coming of a lot of possible changes for you; maybe hormones, or surgery, maybe a new shade of lipstick or a fabulous new pair of proper shoes? And maybe changes in your thoughts and emotions and family and relationships and social life. It's, well, a transition. And we're here to help.

Help with what? Things like a name change, an updated driver's license, passport, and other things you may not have even thought of yet, like registering with the Selective Service or requesting that your school diploma or transcript be updated. Changing your name and gender marker to match your authentic self on your documents may seem like a trivial thing in the face of what else is happening in your life, but having your identifying documents in order is crucial. Some of these changes can be your ticket to being able to do a lot of important and fun things in life that may depend on having basic identity documents that are congruent with you, your name, and your gender.

Things like applying for a job, opening a bank account, getting a drink at a bar, traveling by airplane, visiting another country for work, study, or play, marriage, adoption and child custody issues, renting an apartment, seeking a loan, applying to college, voting, obtaining a library card, etc. all require state or federally issued identification.

And come on — how awesome is it going to be to look at those documents and, for the first time, see them accurately reflect and identify you? Having documents that validate your most authentic self is a cause for celebration.

**The process of securing identity documents with your name and gender marker can be time consuming and expensive. It can all feel overwhelming. So, where do you start? How? What will you need?**

This handy booklet is chock-full of specific steps and how-to's to help transgender people manage the process of changing names, gender markers, and identity documents from driver's licenses to passports. You may want to make some of these changes, all of them, or none. This is one path to take. You will have to think about how or which parts work best for you, and also think through the possible benefits and complications each step might create for you.

If you decide, yeah, I totally want to do this! I want to change my name or gender marker on some official documents! Then here ya go, this booklet charts out a suggested route. You determine which is best for you.

\*Please note, the information in this handy booklet is for people in New York state (not New York City, the City has its own set of unique rules and procedures for this stuff!).

*Good Luck!*

## NAME CHANGE

If you want to change your name, it's wise to make that your first step in your journey of Transgender Paperwork. After all, that's what you'll be altering on the rest of your documents, too.

### TO CHANGE YOUR NAME IN NEW YORK

**STATE** you'll have to follow a specific procedure in a specific order. It involves filling out some forms and taking these forms, in person, to the County Clerk's office in the county where you live (I know, right? Face to face contact? Is it still the 1800s?), and paying a fee.

You also need to be 18 years old. If you are under 18, your parent or guardian will need to take all these steps and fill out the forms on your behalf.

Before you do anything, look up your County Clerk's office online. Some offices have a lot of information online, or, failing that, at the Clerk's office itself, about the name change process in their county, which can be helpful if you want an overview of exactly what to expect. Some even have name change information packets with sample forms and other information. Find out



### YOU MAY BE ABLE TO USE NEW YORK STATE'S FREE DIY COMPUTER PROGRAM TO COMPLETE YOUR

**FORMS.** This free (hooray!) program will help you create the petition.

You can use this program if:

- You are 18 years old or older.
- You are not in prison, on probation or on parole.
- You do not need to keep your name change private for safety reasons.

[nycourt.gov/diy/namechange.html](http://nycourt.gov/diy/namechange.html)

if your local office provides these, either on their website or at the County Clerk's office.

### **YOU WILL NEED:**

Court papers asking for the name change, which you will have prepared ahead of time, because you're brilliant like that. What do those papers include?

- A name change petition – the petition must be filled out, signed, and notarized (by a notary public.) Don't know how to get something notarized? We've got you covered. Skip to page 30.
- a proposed order; you can find a sample form at PPSFL.ORG/transgender or from your County Clerk's office.
- a Request for Judicial Intervention (RJI).
- Proof of birth - the original or a certified copy of your birth certificate. How do you go about doing that? Skip to page 17.

And you'll need to pay a court fee, which is currently \$210 (Daaaaang.)

An overview of the process in New York State is available at:  
[nycourts.gov/forms/namechange.shtml](http://nycourts.gov/forms/namechange.shtml)

## ON A SIDE NOTE...

**Make copies of everything**, and have a designated, secure place to keep all of your documents and paperwork over the course of your transition. You never know when you might misplace something, so make copies if possible.

Remember to ask ahead of time if originals are necessary for any of the processes you are going through. Sometimes originals are required, other times, copies will be OK.

For some banks, for the Selective Service, and some other places, copies are totally fine, so why mail off your only copy of your official name change document? That would be silly.

New York State forms and info are available at:  
[nycourts.gov/courthelp/namechangeinfo.html](http://nycourts.gov/courthelp/namechangeinfo.html)

### **SO WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?**

Go to the County Clerk's office in the county where you live. (Unfortunately you can't do this online, you must go in person. Because it's still the dark ages.)

When it's your turn, tell the staff person that you would like to file for a name change. They will:

- look over your paperwork,
- ask for your proof of birth and return it to you,
- probably ask to see a form of photo ID like a driver's license,
- and ask you to pay the fee.

Different offices accept different forms of payment, not all offices will accept a debit or credit card. You'll probably want to check online (if your clerk's office website has a name change section that offers more details) or call ahead of time to ask. Some offices only accept checks, money orders, or sometimes cash, so it's important to be prepared ahead of time with a method of payment that will work. Otherwise you'll have to do this whole process over again, when you could be spending that time doing literally anything else. Check ahead.

Your request will be assigned a court number.  
Ask any questions you may have of the staff while you are there.



Then.

You go home and wait.

Usually it will take a few weeks before a judge reviews your request. Good news: in New York State you usually do not have to appear before the judge in court. Instead the judge reviews your request without you having to be there. If the judge has any questions they will contact you. Otherwise, after the review you will receive a letter stating your request has been approved pending your placing a small advertisement in the newspaper publicizing your name change request. (Newspapers! It is the 1800s!) The paperwork from the judge will tell you in which newspaper you must place your ad.

### **HOW DO YOU GET AN AD PLACED IN A NEWSPAPER?**

When you get your paperwork back from the judge, you will need to contact the advertising department of the newspaper the judge specified (it is usually a local newspaper, but since some communities have more than one newspaper you must place the ad in the paper the judge specifies). You may be able to call or email them. When you communicate with them, simply tell them you'd like to run a name change ad. The exact text of what your ad must contain is spelled out in your name change document.



The newspaper will provide you with all the information you need in order to place the ad. You will have to pay for the cost of the ad – this price can vary depending on the newspaper, but could be as much as around \$50. Tell the newspaper that you will need them to mail you an Affidavit of Publication. This is the official document the

newspaper prepares that proves your ad has been published. It is a paper document and so it is mailed to your address after your ad has been published in the newspaper.

### **WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE AFFIDAVIT OF**

**PUBLICATION** in the mail, head back down in person to your County Clerk's office with it, and with all the paperwork the court sent you. The staff will look over your Affidavit and verify all is in order — which it will be, because you have this handy guide and also you're awesome — and then they will notarize and place a seal on your paperwork that shows it is complete.

Woo-Hoo.

You just leveled up.

Sweet.

### **This paperwork is your official name change**

**document!** You will probably want more than one official copy of this document, since you will use it to update everything else in your life. Tell the staff how many official copies you'd like – there is usually a fee for each copy (this is usually about \$5 per copy), and in some cases you will need to show these official originals (not just photocopies of the original).



So, how are you doing after step one? Throughout this process, you may want a buddy, or several, to help you through it. Whether it's bringing a friend with you to back you up, or having someone to help you organize and keep track of various paperwork, or if you're the kind of person who could use a friend to remind you to breathe while waiting in line because you get anxious talking to strangers, it's helpful to have a support network. Even (and especially) through the boring, standing-in-line parts.

### **POSSIBLE PRIVACY CONCERNS:**

Anyone can view name change applications because they are public records. And as you know, the court will require notice of your name change to be printed in a newspaper. But, if your safety is in danger you can have your name change request "sealed" so it cannot be found in the public records. But the newspaper ad will still be public. If the judge believes your safety is at risk they can decide you don't have to publish it, and they can seal your name change permanently.

► Be sure to talk to a lawyer or victim's services advocacy agency if you want to change your name because your safety is at risk.

HOORAY!

You changed your name! Now what?

You must update your name with Social Security!

### **NAME CHANGE WITH SOCIAL SECURITY**

To apply for a new Social Security card with your shiny, newly correct name, you will need to go in person to the nearest Social Security office. You cannot apply online. First, find out where the nearest office is by going online to [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov) to find it.

#### **You will need:**

- A filled out Form SS-5. You can print out this form from [ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf](http://ssa.gov/online/ss-5.pdf) or get a copy in a Social Security office.
- A certified copy of your name change order.
- Your birth certificate or certificate of naturalization or citizenship.
- A document showing your identifying information and photo (such as a passport, driver's license, US military ID card. See [www.ssa.gov/pubs/10513.html](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10513.html) for complete list).

- This document will have to show your old name. It's just used here to verify your identity, the staff person knows it won't match your newly changed name yet! (Unless you are a time traveler. Which would be awesome. And if so, could you please email us immediately, we have a couple requests about policy and legislation changes we'd like to have seen enacted in 1977. A Time Traveler could really help.)



So. Yes.

Here you are standing in another line.

When it is your turn, tell the staff person you've changed your name and need to update your Social Security records and obtain a new card. The staff person will look over your documents, return them to you, submit your request, and tell you approximately how long it will

take for you to receive your new card.

Your new card will arrive by mail.

There is no fee.

Hooray no fee!

### **CHANGING THE GENDER MARKER WITH SOCIAL SECURITY**

Social Security will accept any of the following for a gender marker change:

- A U.S. passport showing the correct gender,
- A birth certificate showing the correct gender,

### **ON A SIDE NOTE...**

You may decide to change your name and your gender marker with Social Security at the same time, or you may decide to do them at different visits depending on your circumstances.

- a court order recognizing the correct gender, or
- a signed letter from a doctor confirming that you have had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition.

If you use a letter from a doctor, it must be from a doctor who is licensed and you are their patient. The letter can be written by any doctor familiar with your care related to transition, for example, your general practitioner or a specialist. It must include the doctor's license number and be on the doctor's office letterhead.

A sample of a letter that meets all the Social Security requirements is online at [PPSFL.ORG/transgender](https://PPSFL.ORG/transgender). You should ask your doctor to use this letter and not give additional personal health information or any specific details of your treatment. Please go to [ssa.gov](https://ssa.gov) and search "change gender on my social security card" for detailed and up-to-date information.

### **DRIVER'S LICENSE NAME CHANGE**

In New York State, you must visit a local DMV office in person to change your name on all DMV records and documents. (All this in person stuff. When are the robots finally going to take over?)

#### **You will need:**

- Filled out form MV-44 to change your name on your driver license, learner permit or non-driver photo ID card (the form is available online and at the DMV office).
- Your current New York State driver's license, or other proof of identity that displays your previous name and has a value of at least six points. (Please go to [dmv.ny.gov/idlicense.htm](https://dmv.ny.gov/idlicense.htm) for a list of the acceptable documents for this crazy

- point system you have to follow.)
- Your official name change document.
  - To pay a fee of \$12.50 for a new driver's license or learner permit; or \$5 for a new non-driver photo ID card. You can usually pay DMV fees with a credit card, cash, check, or money order.

So. Yes.

You guessed it, you are standing in another line. Wait your turn.

Tell the staff person you've changed your name and want to update your license (or learner's permit or nondriver ID card). Present all your information. The staff will look it over, take a new photo of you, and submit your request. Then they will return your court ordered name change document to you.

However, you will have to surrender your current driver's license to the staff, and in its place you will receive a temporary paper driver's license. Your new license or ID will be mailed to you.

All of this information is available at [dmv.ny.gov/addr-name.htm](http://dmv.ny.gov/addr-name.htm)

**If you own a vehicle — car, motorcycle, spaceship — you will also need to change your name on your vehicle registration and title.** To change your name on a registration document and a title certificate, you must bring the registration document

## ON A SIDE NOTE...

Surrendering your license can make it difficult to do things that require a photo ID, like being carded to buy alcohol or travel on a plane. Keep this in mind and plan accordingly!



And, Yup. You have to have your picture taken for your new license. So, haul out your cutest ensemble so you look appropriately smashing for the occasion.

and the title certificate that display your previous name. Requirements for Vehicle Registrations and Title Certificates can be found at: [dmv.ny.gov/idreg.htm](http://dmv.ny.gov/idreg.htm)

Use form MV-82 to change your name on your registration documents and title certificate. There is no fee to change your name on your registration documents and title certificate. The DMV office gives you new registration documents with your new name. A title certificate with your new name will be mailed to you.

Replacement title documents take a long time to arrive – usually several months – so prepare in advance if you plan to sell your car or do anything requiring updated title documents.

### **TO CHANGE THE GENDER MARKER ON YOUR NEW YORK STATE DRIVER’S LICENSE**

You will need to complete form MV-44 (Application for Driver License or Non-Driver ID Card). You can find this form online or at the DMV office.

Then bring the form MV-44, your current New York State license or non-driver’s ID card, and “proof of the sex change” to a DMV office in person.

### **ON A SIDE NOTE...**

You may decide to change your name and your gender marker with the DMV at the same time, or you may decide to do them at different visits depending on your circumstances.

“Proof of a sex change” for the DMV is a written statement from a physician, a psychologist, or a psychiatrist that is printed on letterhead. (See an example online at PPSFL.ORG/transgender). You should ask your physician to use this letter and not give additional personal health information that is not required. The statement must certify your gender — the new one you’re trying to adjust your documents to match, male or female. (Yes, ye olde binary. New York State still says your gender must be one or the other on your license.)

There is a fee of \$12.50 to make this change. The DMV office will issue you a temporary paper document that does not have a photo, and will not give your old license back to you. (This may make it difficult to travel by plane or buy alcohol or do any activity where an individual would be carded or needs a photo ID, plan accordingly.) Your new license will arrive by mail. For more information, please go to: [nysdmv.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/405/~/change-of-sex-or-gender-on-a-dmv-photodocument](https://nysdmv.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/405/~/change-of-sex-or-gender-on-a-dmv-photodocument)

You can also refer to a state by state guide about driver’s license gender marker change from The National Center for Transgender Equality: [transequality.org/Resources](https://transequality.org/Resources)

So, if you want to do anything with your birth certificate, you’ll need a copy of your existing one to even begin the process. Don’t have that? Can’t find it?

## **HOW TO GET A COPY OF YOUR EXISTING BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

In order to make many of these changes to your name or gender marker, you’ll need an “official” copy (not a photocopy, but an officially issued one with a raised seal or

other official mark) of your original birth certificate. If you don't have one, or don't know where it is, here's how to request one before you begin the process of changing your name or gender marker on it.

**IF YOU WERE BORN IN NEW YORK STATE** you'll need to find the city or county clerk's office in the place where you were born. Check their website for information about requesting an official copy of your birth certificate, or call them to ask what is needed to obtain an official copy.

You will need to fill out the form "Application to Local Registrar for Copy of Birth Record." Fill out the form, provide a copy of a valid photo id or other proofs of name and address that are listed on the form, include the required fee (it is usually about \$10 - check with the office about what forms of payment are accepted, in some places only cash or a money order are accepted, while in others cash is not accepted but a check or sometimes a credit card are also accepted) and mail or bring it to the office.

**IF YOU WERE BORN IN NEW YORK CITY**, you can request an official copy online, by mail, or in person. Visit <http://www1.nyc.gov/nyc-resources/service/1209/birth-certificate> for more information.

**IF YOU WERE BORN IN A STATE OTHER THAN NEW YORK, OR IN ANOTHER COUNTRY** you'll need to check with your state department of health or vital records, or other government office that oversees birth certificates in the place where you were born, to find out what information is required and to request an official copy of your birth certificate. The amazing people at Lambda Legal ([lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org)) have an overview of what is required in each state and in New York City.

**IF YOU ARE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN BORN OVERSEAS TO AMERICAN PARENTS**, visit the United States State Department website, [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov), for information about how to have a replacement Consular Report of Birth Abroad (FS-240) issued to you.

## **NAME AND GENDER MARKER CHANGE ON BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

Good news! If you were born in New York State (but not New York City), you can now change your gender on your birth certificate much easier than in the past! You can also update your name at the same time, if you have changed your name too.

### **Here's what to do:**

Make your request in writing to the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Records, along with the following documents that you will have to prepare in advance:

- A completed Application for Correction of Certificate of Birth (DOH-297). You can request this form by emailing the department and asking for the paperwork you'll need. If you have also changed your name, you can use this form to have that updated on your birth certificate, too.
- A certified copy of your current birth certificate or a notarized affidavit from you confirming that you are 18 years of age or older.
- A Notarized Affidavit of Gender Error, attesting that you have been living in your correct gender immediately preceding the application. You can email the Department and ask for the forms and paperwork you will need to do this, and they will provide you with a sample example document.

and EITHER:

- A notarized affidavit from a physician (MD or DO) or nurse practitioner or

physician assistant, confirming that surgical procedures have been performed on the applicant to complete sex reassignment.

OR

- A notarized affidavit on professional letterhead from a physician (MD or DO) or nurse practitioner or physician assistant, licensed in the United States that have treated, or reviewed and evaluated, the gender-related medical history of the applicant. The notarized affidavit must include a statement noting that the provider is making their findings upon independent and unbiased review and evaluation and is not related to the applicant. The letter must include:
  - The physician (MD or DO) or nurse practitioner or physician assistant's license number;
  - Language stating that the applicant has undergone appropriate clinical treatment for a person diagnosed with Gender Dysphoria as defined in the most current edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* or language stating that the applicant has undergone appropriate clinical treatment for a person diagnosed with Transsexualism as defined in the most current edition of *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems*; or as these diagnoses may be referred to in future editions.

If you are also requesting that your name be changed on your birth certificate, your written request must also include an original or certified copy of your legal name change order from the court.

The order must have the court seal and be certified by the clerk of the court. You must

also have a proof of publication in the newspaper of your new name (a copy of your Affidavit of Publication that you obtained during your name change process. A copy of the actual newspaper ad may also sometimes be accepted.) A sample letter that meets these requirements is online at PPSFL.ORG/transgender and you should ask your physician to use the specific language suggested.

As soon as all documentation is submitted, your request will be reviewed and processed. Processing takes approximately three months. When approved, the Department will issue a new birth certificate reflecting the requested change(s).

The new certificate will not indicate that there was a change in the original sex item designation or name. (In other words: stealth.)

When a birth certificate is amended to reflect a change in the gender designation, and, if applicable, a change in name, the original birth certificate and all other documents relating to the change in the gender marker will be kept in a sealed file.

The registrar will make a copy of the new certificate for the local record and keep the contents of the original local record confidential. The original state record and the local record will not be released or otherwise divulged except by a relevant court order.

One certified copy of your birth certificate will be provided to you at no charge. Additional copies are \$30.00 each.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Guy Warner, Director, Bureau of Vital Records

(518) 474-5245

vr@health.state.ny.us

## **ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THIS PROCESS IN SUPER LEGAL LANGUAGE BECAUSE, IT'S IMPORTANT LEGAL STUFF TO KNOW ABOUT.**

If you are incarcerated pursuant to a state sentence of imprisonment, the application for correction of certificate of birth must first be submitted through the appropriate state judicial or legal process, then through the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Records. If an incarcerated applicant's criminal history includes one or more felony convictions enumerated in Article 6 of the Civil Rights Law or its equivalent, if committed in another jurisdiction, the application shall for each such conviction specify such felony conviction, the date of such conviction or convictions, and the court in which such conviction or convictions were entered. At the same time that the application is submitted for consideration, the applicant shall serve, in like manner as a notice of a motion upon an attorney in an action, a copy of the application upon the district attorney of every county (or comparable jurisdiction) in which such person has been convicted of such felony and upon the court or courts in which the sentence for such felony was entered.

If you are under community supervision, you must submit a letter from your department of correction and community supervision (or comparable entities), on official letterhead to the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Record , with knowledge of the applicant's history certifying that there are no public safety concerns with your application.

## **SELECTIVE SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS**

**American citizens and noncitizen immigrants age 18-25 who were assigned male at birth** are required to register with the Selective Service System. All citizens whose birth-assigned sex was male need to register within thirty days of their

eighteenth birthday. This is really important because a lot of things require you to be registered, like, federal financial aid for college, jobs with the federal government, citizenship and a lot of other government benefits. Transgender people are uniquely impacted by their Selective Service registration status. Want more information on what Selective Service is? Go to [sss.gov](http://sss.gov).

**People registered for Selective Service who are assigned male at birth** also need to tell Selective Service of any legal name change or change in other records like their address, until their twenty-sixth birthday. Interesting note, this rule doesn't actually include letting them know about a change of gender because their policy is based on birth-assigned sex.

**For transwomen and others who were assigned male at birth** if you have registered with the Selective Service, you legally have to notify them of your name change within ten days.

To update your records, fill out the Change of Information Form attached to the Registration Acknowledgement Card with your new name. Or, you can fill out a Change of Information Form called SSS Form 2, which you can get at any Post Office or U.S. Embassy or Consulate abroad. You can also change your information with the Selective Service by sending them a letter; you'll need to include your full name, Social Security Number, Selective Service Number, date of birth, current mailing address and new name.

For all of these, you need to attach official documentation of your name change and mail it to the Selective Service.

People who were assigned female at birth don't have to register with the Selective Service, no matter what their current gender marker is or where they might be in their transition. But, an important note, if you're applying for federal financial aid, grants, and loans as a man, you might need to show that you are exempt with a special letter.

To request a Status Information Letter (SIL) that shows you are exempt, you can download a request form from the Selective Service website ([sss.gov/PDFs/SilForm\\_Instructions.pdf](https://sss.gov/PDFs/SilForm_Instructions.pdf)) and fill it out and mail it in along with the required documentation. Weird as it may seem, you can call them and talk to a real person at 1-888-655-1825 and ask questions to help you fill out your request form.

Two cool things, getting a SIL is free and the letter won't say why you're exempt and out you as a transgender person. Small successes, eah?

But, here's a catch, the Selective Service does require a copy of your birth certificate showing your birth assigned sex. If the sex on your birth certificate has been changed, attach documentation that shows you have done that. Once you get your SIL, keep it in your file of very important things, which you have been keeping in a specified, secure place like we suggested because you're clever like that.

If you're FTM and transitioned before your eighteenth birthday and changed your birth certificate, you can register with the service. But, no one can register after their twenty-sixth birthday. Also, an important note, even though Selective Service materials refer to transgender people as "people who have had a sex change," their policies apply to people who have transitioned (name change and/or gender marker) no matter what their surgical history is.

Please see the following PDF for more information:  
[transequality.org/Resources/Selective\\_Service\\_only.pdf](https://transequality.org/Resources/Selective_Service_only.pdf)

## **NAME CHANGE ON PASSPORTS**

The process and cost to change your name on your passport depends on if you have ever had a passport before, and if so how long it has been since your passport was issued. You can find the online guide at <https://pptform.state.gov/> to help you with this process. If you already have a passport and less than one year has passed since your passport was issued:

- You will not have to pay any passport or processing fees.
- Submit Form DS-5504 by mail with your current passport, your name change document (original or certified copy), and a color passport photo. You may use the online guide to fill and print out the form, or download it and fill it out by hand.

If more than one year has passed since your passport was issued, and you are eligible to use Form DS-82\*:

- Submit Form DS-82 by mail with your current passport, your name change document (original or certified copy), a color passport photo, and all applicable fees. (At time of printing, the fee is \$110.) You may use the online guide to fill out and print Form DS-82 or fill it out by hand.

If more than one year has passed since your passport was issued, and you are not eligible to use Form DS-82\*:

- You must submit Form DS-11 in person at an Acceptance Facility or a Passport Agency, along with your evidence of U.S. citizenship, your name change document (original or certified copy), a valid ID and photocopy of that ID, a

color passport photo, and all applicable fees. The fee is currently \$110 plus an additional separate \$25 execution fee. Be sure to check ahead of time about methods of payment that are accepted for each fee. You may:

- Use the online guide to fill out and print Form DS-11; or print Form DS-11 and complete by hand.

### **\*Form DS-82 Eligibility**

- You can submit your most recently issued passport;
- You were at least 16 years old when your most recent passport was issued;
- Your most recent passport was issued less than 15 years ago;
- Your most recent passport has not been lost, stolen, damaged, or mutilated; and
- You use the same name as on your most recent passport, or have had your name changed by marriage or court order, and can submit proper documentation to reflect the name change.

Your awesome shiny new passport will be mailed to you, and the time this takes can vary. The average wait is four to six weeks. Any documents you provided with your application will also be mailed back to you, separately from your new passport.

For more details, consult the State Department's website:

<http://travel.state.gov>

**IF YOU HAVE NEVER HAD A PASSPORT BEFORE**, you must apply in person. In person applications are accepted at authorized facilities or agencies. These usually include many US Post offices and County Clerk offices and regional passport agencies. Find the full list of offices where you can apply at <http://travel.state.gov>

If you are under 16 years of age you will need your parents' consent as part of the application process, and they will need to accompany you in person when you apply. Please check out details at <http://travel.state.gov> for further information.

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO APPLY FOR YOUR FIRST PASSPORT

- Completed Form DS-11: *Application For A U.S. Passport* - you can find this form at <http://travel.state.gov>
- Evidence of U.S. Citizenship
- Present Identification (yup, there are specific things that count as acceptable documents, check online for that list!)
- Be sure to have your official name change court order with you for this step, as well as other required identification and proof of citizenship.
- Submit a photocopy of the identification document(s) presented
- Pay the fee, which is currently \$110 plus an additional separate \$25 execution fee. Be sure to check ahead of time about methods of payment that are accepted for each fee.
- Provide one passport photo that meets passport photo requirements.

Your new passport will be mailed to you, and the time this takes can vary, 4-6 weeks is the average wait. Any documents you provided with your application will also be mailed back to you, separately from your new passport.

## ON A SIDE NOTE...



Yup. You have to have your picture taken and it has to be the right size and shape to be used in your passport application. So, haul out your cutest ensemble so you look appropriately smashing for the occasion.

## **TO CHANGE THE GENDER MARKER ON YOUR PASSPORT**

To change the gender marker on your passport, you will need to apply in person, even if you already have a passport. Apply at an authorized Passport Application Acceptance Facility or Passport Agency. These usually include many US Post offices and County Clerk offices and regional passport agencies. Find the full list of offices online.

In order to have the passport issued in your new gender, you must submit a physician certificate with your application that validates whether your gender transition is "in process" or "complete." You can see a template of this letter at [PPSFL.ORG/transgender](http://PPSFL.ORG/transgender). You should ask your physician to use this letter and not give additional personal health information that is not included on the template.

The requirements to apply for a passport (besides changing your gender marker) still apply, including evidence of legal name change.

Please see:

[travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/information/gender.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/passports/information/gender.html)  
for complete information.

**NOTE: Transgender people can also now obtain a limited validity two year passport if your transition is in process.**

## **HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE OR CHANGE YOUR NAME AND GENDER MARKER WITH VOTER REGISTRATION**

Cool thing.

If you live in New York and are already changing your name or gender at the DMV, New York makes it simple for you to register to vote, or update your voter registration information.



Simply fill out page 3 of the form for the DMV, the one that at the top of the page says New York State Voter Registration Application, it's form MV-44 and is the section about registering to vote, and it will be done automatically for you when you turn this form in at the DMV.

You can also visit [elections.ny.gov](https://elections.ny.gov) to see your additional options, which include:

- Download the New York voter form, print it, complete it, sign it, and mail it in to the Board of Elections.
- Registering in person at your county Board of Elections.
- Registering at any New York State Agency-Based voter registration center.
- And you can also request to have a New York State Voter Registration Form mailed to you by calling the 1-800-FOR-VOTE hotline.

## HOW TO GET SOMETHING NOTARIZED

Some of the documents we have talked about in the booklet must be "notarized."



What does that mean? Getting a document notarized means that you sign the document in front of a person who is officially designated as a "notary public," and that you have shown them proof of who you are, and also that you are signing voluntarily. Getting something notarized is so the notary can verify that the person who signed a document is who they say they are.

If you need to have a document notarized, do not sign it first.

You must sign it in front of the notary.

### Where can you find a notary public?

You can find a notary public in banks and credit unions, some libraries, town and county clerks office and courts, legal offices, many schools, colleges and universities, some post offices and mailing and shipping service offices, and by searching online. It's a good idea to call ahead or contact to ask if an appointment is needed, and what hours the notary is available.

### How much does it cost to have something notarized?

A notary public may charge a fee of a few dollars, but sometimes notary services are free. For instance many banks and credit unions provide notary services to their customers at no cost, and each county clerk has a notary in the office to serve the public at no cost.

### What to bring to the notary:

- Bring the documents you need notarized, and proof of your identity.

- **Do not sign the documents until the notary tells you to.** This is super important because it cannot be an official notarized document unless they actually watch you sign it in front of them.
- The notary needs to check your identity and make sure that you are signing the document of your own free will.
- You can use a driver's license or state issued non-driver I.D., passport, or other government-issued photo I.D. to prove your identity.

#### **WHERE ELSE YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHANGE YOUR NAME OR GENDER MARKER?**

If you changed your name or your gender marker on other documents, you will also want to update this with your:

- Bank accounts
- Credit cards
- Workplace or school
- Student loan
- Leases or mortgages
- Voter registration
- Car loan or other loans
- Medical offices
- Post office boxes
- Library card
- Other companies, organizations, and offices with which you interact

Each of these will have a separate process, so you will have to contact each to ask what they require in order to update your records.

It will take time until all your records and all your accounts reflect your name and gender. Some people find it helpful to keep track using a list or spreadsheet or elaborate color-coded bulletin board to help chart your progress and keep track of what each company or organization has requested, when you provided it to them, and when you hear back from them that they have updated your information in their systems.

**THERE ARE A COUPLE EXCELLENT PLACES ONLINE TO GATHER  
MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES ABOUT TRANSGENDER RIGHTS**

Lambda Legal  
[lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org)

The National Center for Transgender Equality  
[transequality.org](http://transequality.org)

The Empire State Pride Agenda  
[prideagenda.org](http://prideagenda.org)

So, hey.

We really hope some of this information was useful to you.

If you have a question or suggestion about what we could add or how we could make the information easier to understand please let us know! This stuff is a big work in progress and as things change and more people go through the various processes we can share that information and make it more helpful for the next people trying to do the same thing!

Email us with ideas and thoughts at [lgbt@ppsfl.org](mailto:lgbt@ppsfl.org).

*Thanks!*

## ON A SIDE NOTE...

So, did you do this? Did you successfully change your name or gender marker or paperwork or ID? If you did and you're reading this, email us at [lgbt@ppsfl.org](mailto:lgbt@ppsfl.org) and say "hey, I'm an awesome trans person and I did some important stuff!" and give us a mailing address and we'll send you a prize.

Seriously. We're that cool.

**Notes!** *Or anything you wish, really. Why? Well, when you print a booklet it has to have an even number of pages, so yeah, here they are. Two extra pages! We could add stuff about other things like what to do if people are jerks to you or what's up with ENDA or something like that but two pages is just enough to make you think "oh, we should add more!" and then come to terms with the reality of two pages really being not that much space after all and knowing that people will go to [transequality.org](http://transequality.org) for links and other important stuff, right? Right.*





Planned Parenthood  
of the Southern Finger Lakes



Center for LGBT Education,  
Outreach, and Services

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