

***Legal Name Changes and  
Changes to Identity Documents  
in Pennsylvania***

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*The following is provided for informational and educational purposes only. Nothing contained herein should be construed as legal advice. Because each person's situation is unique and because laws, administrative regulations and court rules differ significantly from state to state, agency to agency and county to county, you should consult a lawyer licensed to practice in your state and familiar with the statutes, administrative regulations and court rules in your area to obtain legal advice appropriate to your situation.*

## Introduction

Legally changing your name and ensuring that your gender is correctly reflected on your government-issued identity documents is an important part of transitioning. This is especially true in the post-9/11 world in which one's identity documents are carefully scrutinized when traveling and when applying for employment.

There is no nationwide standard used to determine whether someone is legally "male" or "female". The standards applied differ from state to state and, even within a state, may differ depending on the government agency involved. Additionally, the standards applied within a particular agency and/or the supporting documentation required are subject to change.

It may be possible for you to legally change your name and to change your gender marker on identity documents without a lawyer. However, it is critical that, if you seek to make these changes without the help of an attorney, you conduct very careful research to determine the forms, supporting documentation, fees and procedures that apply to your situation. If any part of the process is unclear or if you simply do not wish to navigate the sometimes difficult waters of name and gender marker changes by yourself, you should seek the advice of a licensed, experienced attorney.

The following information is to be used as a guide only. Care should be taken to ensure that the forms, supporting documentation, fees and procedures for a given organization or agency are still in use at the time that the change to the particular identity document is sought.

This handbook covers the following topics (click the link to go directly to that section):

- [obtaining a court-ordered name change](#);
- [amending your birth certificate](#);
- [changing the name and gender marker on your passport](#);
- [changing the name on and the gender marker associated with your social security card](#);
- [changing the name and gender marker on your driver's license](#);
- [who should be notified of your legal name change](#);
- [insurance issues](#); and
- [registration with Selective Service](#).

## Court-Ordered Name Change

In Pennsylvania, a court-ordered name change may only be filed in the county where you reside.<sup>1</sup> Name change actions for adults are filed with the Civil Division of the Court of Common Pleas. Under Pennsylvania law, residents, other than certain individuals convicted of felonies,<sup>2</sup> who follow the proper name change procedure and submit the required documentation, are permitted to change their names. The reason for the name change is irrelevant, as long as the change is not being sought to commit fraud or to avoid financial obligations.<sup>3</sup> A Pennsylvania resident does not have to have completed gender confirmation surgery (sometimes referred to as sex reassignment surgery) or hormone therapy to change his or her name to a name usually associated with the “other” sex.<sup>4</sup>

The local rules and procedures to obtain a name change differ in each county in Pennsylvania. Thus, you must confirm the procedure to be followed in the particular county where the name change action will be filed. By way of example, the following describes the name change procedures for adults<sup>5</sup> in Philadelphia County.

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<sup>1</sup> 54 Pa.C.S. § 701(a.1)(1).

<sup>2</sup> With respect to convicted felons, 54 Pa.C.S. § 702 provides, in pertinent part:

(c) Convicted felons.—

(1) The court may order a change of name for a person convicted of a felony, subject to provisions of paragraph (2), if:

- (i) at least two calendar years have elapsed from the date of completion of a person’s sentence and that person is not subject to the probation or parole jurisdiction of any court, county probation agency or the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole; or
- (ii) the person has been pardoned.

(2) The court may not order a change of name for a person convicted of murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, statutory sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, robbery as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3701(a)(1)(i) (relating to robbery), aggravated assault as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. 2702(a)(1) or (2) (relating to aggravated assault), arson as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. 3301(a) (relating to arson and related offenses), kidnapping or robbery of a motor vehicle or criminal attempt, criminal conspiracy or criminal solicitation to commit any of the offenses listed above or an equivalent crime under the laws of this Commonwealth in effect at the time of the commission of that offense or an equivalent crime in another jurisdiction.

54 Pa.C.S. § 702(c).

<sup>3</sup> *In re McIntyre*, 715 A.2d 400, 402 (Pa. 1998).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 403.

<sup>5</sup> Name changes for trans minors should never be undertaken without representation by an attorney experienced with these types of cases.

In the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, a petition for name change for an adult, and the documents that must accompany the petition, must be filed electronically with the Civil Division.<sup>6</sup>

The Court's Electronic Filing System ("EFS") can be accessed through the Court's website. Once you sign up as a user of EFS you will be able to log on to the system. Once you have logged in and have entered some basic information such as your name and address, you can indicate that the nature of the filing is a petition for an adult name change. The EFS will then present several screens requesting additional information about you and about the reason for the name change. Based on the information entered, the EFS will automatically generate a petition, a verification and civil cover sheet. You must upload a .pdf file containing an order for publication, a notice of name change and a proposed final decree. Examples of these documents can be found on the court's website. If the boilerplate language in the EFS-generated petition is not sufficient for your needs,<sup>7</sup> you can upload a .pdf of a petition that is tailored to your needs.

The information that must be provided in the petition is straightforward. Although it is customary to include an averment in the petition regarding the reason for the name change (and, if proceeding with electronic filing, the EFS requests the reason for the name change), it is not usually necessary to go into great detail in the petition about why you are seeking a name change; indeed, there is no statutory requirement that any reason for a name change be given. If you choose to state a reason in order to show that the name change is not sought to commit fraud, stating a reason such as "the requested name is more consistent with my personality and appearance" is sufficient.

Payment of \$333.48 for the filing fee may be made online if paying by credit card; this amount includes a \$5.00 "convenience fee" for using a credit card for payment. Alternatively, payment of \$328.48 may be made in person at the office of the Prothonotary in Room 296 of City Hall; accepted forms of payment include certified check, cashier's check or money order payable to "Prothonotary".<sup>8</sup> The filing fee will be waived if you qualify for *in forma pauperis* status. Instructions for petitioning to proceed in forma pauperis may be found on the court's website.

Within ten days of filing of the name change action, you must submit your original fingerprint card and photocopies of your social security card and photo ID to the court at City Hall Room 691. In Philadelphia, fingerprint cards can be obtained through a private company,

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<sup>6</sup> The Civil Division of the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas requires that all civil filings, including petitions for name change, be filed electronically. The complete process and requirements for electronic filing are beyond the scope of this document. However, information can be found on the court's website.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, if you wish to request waiver of publication and sealing of the record, discussed below.

<sup>8</sup> If payment is made in person at the office of the Prothonotary, the petition will not be deemed "filed" until payment is made.

such as Passport Photo Service or Rosa Photo Van. Outside of Philadelphia, fingerprinting must be done by the police department that serves the city, borough or township where you live. You may go to a Pennsylvania State Police barracks for this purpose only if your municipality is not served by a local police department.

If it is not possible to file your name change petition online, a paper copy of the petition may be filed with the Prothonotary. If filed as a paper copy, you must also file a verification, a civil cover sheet, an order for publication, a notice of name change and a proposed final decree. The Prothonotary will scan these documents to create electronic documents and will then return the hard copies to you. The filing fee is \$328.48 plus a surcharge for filing hard copies of \$1.00 per page. Accepted forms of payment include certified check, cashier's check or money order payable to "Prothonotary". The original fingerprint card and photocopies of your social security card and photo identification may be submitted to the Prothonotary at this time or may be submitted within ten days to City Hall Room 691.

Once the name change action has been successfully filed with the Prothonotary and the original fingerprint card is submitted to the court, the court will forward the fingerprint card to the state police in Harrisburg, who will use the fingerprints to check your criminal history. The state police must complete this search and notify the court of the results within 60 days. The court must schedule a hearing within 90 days of receiving the results. Once scheduled, the court will issue an order for publication and a notice of name change.

The information contained in the notice of name change must be advertised once in the legal notices section of two newspapers of general circulation. In Philadelphia, the advertisements must be placed in the *Legal Intelligencer* and another newspaper of general circulation, such as the *Daily News* or the *Philadelphia Gay News*. You can order legal advertising directly or you can hire a legal advertising company to do so. The cost of advertising is approximately \$600.00 to \$800.00.<sup>9</sup> Once the notice of hearing has been published, the newspapers (or the legal advertising company) will return proofs of publication to you. These original proofs of publication must be submitted to the court at your name change hearing.

In certain instances, the publication of a notice of name change may put a trans person at risk of abuse or violence. The Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County has, in appropriate circumstances, waived the publication requirement for trans petitioners and has sealed the name change records for those petitioners.<sup>10</sup> In order to request this waiver of publication and sealing of court records, the petition for name change must contain credible

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<sup>9</sup> Absent court permission to waive publication, discussed below, the fees for publication must be paid even if you qualify for in forma pauperis status.

<sup>10</sup> The Pennsylvania statute providing for court-ordered name changes is 54 Pa.C.S. § 701. That statute provides, in pertinent part:

(iii) If the court finds that the notice required in subparagraph (ii) would jeopardize the safety of the person seeking the name change or his or her child or ward, the notice required shall be waived by order of the court. Upon granting the request to waive any notice requirement, the

allegations that publication would jeopardize your safety and/or the safety of your child. In addition, a proposed order regarding waiver of publication and sealing of the record must be filed with the court. The court will hold a hearing, usually in chambers, to decide whether to grant the request to waive publication and seal the record.

Within thirty days prior to the name change hearing date, Certified Judgment Searches must be obtained for all counties in which you have lived during the five years prior to filing the petition. You can obtain these Certified Judgment Searches yourself; alternatively, there are companies that you can hire to obtain these for you. In Philadelphia, a Certified Judgment Search may be obtained in City Hall Room 262; the fee for this service is \$121.26, payable by certified check, cashier's check or money order made payable to "Prothonotary."<sup>11</sup>

A Family Support Lien/Judgment Certification must also be obtained within thirty days of the name change hearing date. The Family Support Lien/Judgment Certification need only be obtained from the county where you reside. You can obtain the Family Support Lien/Judgment Certification yourself; alternatively, there are private companies that can be hired to obtain this certification. In Philadelphia, Family Support Lien/Judgment Certifications can be obtained at the Family Court, 1501 Arch Street. The fee is \$20.00, payable to "Prothonotary," and can be paid by certified check, cashier's check or money order.<sup>12</sup>

Original Certified Judgment Searches and the original Family Support Lien/Judgment Certification must be submitted at the name change hearing.

Typically, if there is no opposition to the name change, the name change hearing is fairly straightforward. You simply provide the court with the required original proofs of publication (if publication is not waived), the original Certified Judgment Search, and the original Family Support Lien/Judgment Certification. You then testify regarding the matters contained in the name change petition. If the name change is granted, the signed decree will be entered within one to two weeks after the hearing date. If you have filed electronically, you will be notified by email of the entry of the decree. Certified copies of the final decree may be requested in person or by writing to the Prothonotary in City Hall Room 269. There is a fee of \$41.58 per certified copy.

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court shall seal the file. In all cases filed under this paragraph, whether or not the name change petition is granted, there shall be no public access to any court record of the name change petition, proceeding or order, unless the name change is granted but the file is not sealed. The records shall only be opened by order of the court in which the petition was granted based upon a showing of good cause or at the applicant's request.

54 Pa.C.S. § 701(a.1)(3)(iii).

<sup>11</sup> This fee will be waived if you qualify for in forma pauperis status. Examples of the documents that must be filed to request in forma pauperis status may be found on the court's website.

<sup>12</sup> This fee will be waived if you qualify for in forma pauperis status. See footnote 11.

## Pennsylvania Birth Certificate

All states, including Pennsylvania, permit the name on a birth certificate to be changed following a court-ordered name change and will issue a new or amended birth certificate reflecting the new name. Generally, this can be accomplished by submitting the appropriate form, a fee (when required) and a certified copy of the court order.

Amending birth certificates to reflect a change of gender is a more difficult task. Certain states, such as Tennessee, Idaho and Ohio, do not permit a change of gender marker on birth certificates. However, the majority of states and the District of Columbia do permit the gender marker on a birth certificate to be changed and will issue a new or amended birth certificate reflecting the new gender marker. The requirements to obtain changes to gender markers vary by state; some states only require a letter from the individual's physician or sex reassignment surgeon, while others require that the individual seeking the change obtain a court order to effect the change.

If you were born in a state other than Pennsylvania, contact the department of vital records in the state where you were born to find out the regulations and procedures for amending birth certificates in that state.

The process to change a Pennsylvania birth certificate differs depending on the age of the person for whom the change is sought.

For persons over the age of 18:

Send a letter requesting a change of name and gender marker<sup>14</sup> to the Corrections Unit of the Division of Vital Records. The request must be accompanied by:

- Either of the following:
  - a legible copy of your government-issued photo identification<sup>15</sup> (or, if someone is requesting the changes on your behalf, a legible copy of the government-issued photo identification of the person making the request); or
  - two documents establishing your identity such as a utility bill, pay stub, bank statement, income tax return, W2, auto registration, lease/rental agreement or credit card statement;
- A certified copy of the court order changing your name;

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<sup>14</sup> The following requirements apply to the first time a gender marker on an adult's Pennsylvania birth certificate is changed. All subsequent requests to change the gender marker require a court order.

<sup>15</sup> The gender marker on the photo identification will not impact the request to change the gender marker on the birth certificate.



- Either of the following:
  - your existing birth certificate with the section "Corrections Desired" on the reverse side of the birth certificate completed and notarized; or
  - a completed and notarized Vital Records correction form.
- A completed Form H105.102; and
- An original letter from your physician. The physician letter must state that the physician has a doctor/patient relationship with you, that you have completed or are in the process of completing appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to the new gender; the letter must also state: "I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the forgoing is true and correct." See a sample physician's letter at Appendix A.

For persons under the age of 18:

The parents of the child may send a letter requesting a change of name and gender marker to the Corrections Unit of the Division of Vital Records. The request must be accompanied by:

- Either of the following:
  - a legible copy of the parents' government-issued photo identification; or
  - two documents establishing the parents' identities such as a utility bill, pay stub, bank statement, income tax return, W2, auto registration, lease/rental agreement or credit card statement;
- Either of the following:
  - the child's existing birth certificate with the section "Corrections Desired" on the reverse side of the birth certificate completed and notarized; or
  - a completed and notarized Vital Records correction form.
- A completed Form H105.102; and
- Either of the following:
  - a certified copy of the court order changing the child's name; or
  - for a child who is at least 7 years old but no more than 14 years old, documents or official records demonstrating actual use of the name by the child during at least half of the child's lifetime.

There is a \$20.00 fee to amend or correct a Pennsylvania birth certificate. Payment may be made by check or money order payable to "Vital Records." There is no fee for the service if the request is made on behalf of a current or former member of the Armed Forces or on behalf of a dependent of a current or former member of the Armed Forces. A self-addressed, stamped envelope and a request that the original documents be returned should be included with the request.

The address for Vital Records Corrections Unit is:

Division of Vital Records  
Attn: Corrections Unit  
101 S. Mercer Street, Room 401  
P.O. Box 1528  
New Castle, PA 16101

## Passport

United States passports can be changed to reflect a legal change of name and a change of gender. The particular Department of State form(s) that must be completed and the fees that must be paid vary according to your circumstances and according to how quickly you need the corrected passport to be issued.

### Change of Name Only

If you have never had a passport, you must file Form DS-11, Application for a U.S. Passport, to apply for a passport. Form DS-11 must be submitted in person to a Passport Acceptance Facility or Passport Agency. Although Form DS-11 may be completed prior to submitting the document, the form must not be signed until you are in the presence of the authorized agent who is accepting the application. In addition to a passport photo, proof of citizenship documents, proof of identity documents<sup>16</sup> and the appropriate fee, you must present a certified copy of your name change decree.

If you already have a valid passport, if the passport is in your possession and is undamaged, if the passport was issued when you were age 16 or over, and if the passport was issued more than one year ago, you can change the name on the passport by filing Form DS-82, U.S. Passport Renewal Application for Eligible Individuals. Form DS-82 may be submitted in person to a Passport Acceptance Facility or Passport Agency or may be mailed to the National Passport Processing Center in Philadelphia. Form DS-82 must be accompanied by a passport photo, the existing passport, the appropriate fee, and a certified copy of the name change decree.

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<sup>16</sup> The Instruction Sheet for Form DS-11 sets forth a list of citizenship and identity documents required to be submitted with the passport application.

If you have possession of an undamaged, valid passport that was issued when you were age 16 or over and was issued less than one year ago, you can change the name on the passport by filing Form DS-5504, Application for a U.S. Passport – Name Change, Data Correction and Limited Passport Book Replacement. Form DS-5504 may be submitted in person to a Passport Acceptance Facility or Passport Agency or may be mailed to the National Passport Processing Center in Philadelphia. Form DS-5504 must be accompanied by a passport photo, the existing passport, the appropriate fee, and a certified copy of the name change decree.

### Change of Gender Marker

Under the current policy, a passport will be issued with a new gender marker if you are able to provide a proper medical certification.<sup>17</sup> Proof of genital gender confirmation surgery is not currently required.<sup>18</sup>

If you have completed gender transition, *regardless of whether you have undergone a particular medical treatment or surgical procedure*, you can receive a full validity U.S. passport reflecting your new gender marker. To receive a full validity passport with the new gender marker, you must submit an original medical certification of gender transition. This certification must be “a signed original statement, on office letterhead, from a licensed physician who has treated the applicant for his/her gender-related care or reviewed and evaluated the gender-related medical history of the applicant. . . . [The physician must declare under penalty of perjury] that applicant has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to the new gender of either male or female.”<sup>19</sup> See Appendix B for a sample physician letter.

If you have started but have not yet completed your transition, you can receive a limited validity passport reflecting your new gender marker. To receive a limited validity passport with the new gender marker, your physician need only declare under penalty of perjury that you are “in the process of gender transition to the new gender *of either* male or female.”<sup>20</sup> See Appendix B for a sample physician letter. It is possible to extend a limited passport book to the full ten-year validity book with no additional fee by submitting Form DS-5504 within two (2) years of the passport issue date.

Regardless of whether you already have a valid passport or are applying for a passport for the first time, you must submit Form DS-11, Application for a U.S. Passport, in order to receive a full validity passport (if you have completed transition) or a limited validity passport (if you are still transitioning) with a new gender marker. Form DS-11 must be submitted in person to a Passport Acceptance Facility or Passport Agency. Although Form DS-11 may be completed

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<sup>17</sup> See U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual – Volume 7 Consular Affairs, 7 FAM 1322, Appendix M.

<sup>18</sup> This policy could be changed by the Trump administration.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at paragraph b.(1). (emphasis in original).

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at paragraph b.(2) (emphasis in original).

prior to submitting the document, the form must not be signed until you are in the presence of the authorized agent who is accepting the application. In addition to a passport photo, proof of citizenship documents, proof of identity documents<sup>21</sup> and the appropriate fee, you must submit the appropriate physician certification.<sup>22</sup>

#### Social Security Administration

In order to change your name and/or gender marker with the Social Security Administration, you must submit [Form SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card](#), along with the appropriate supporting documentation. You may submit the form and documentation in person or by mail at any [Social Security Office](#). There is no fee for this service.

To change your name, Form SS-5 must be accompanied by a certified copy of your name change decree and proof of citizenship and identity.<sup>23</sup>

To change the gender marker associated with your social security number, Form SS-5 must be accompanied by proof of citizenship and identity as well as any one of the following:

- a full-validity U.S. passport with a new gender marker;
- a state-issued amended birth certificate with a new gender marker;
- a court order directing legal recognition of your change of sex/gender; or
- an original letter from your licensed physician stating under penalty of perjury that you have had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition and stating the new gender. See a sample physician letter at [Appendix C](#).

If Form SS-5 is submitted by mail, you may request that your original documents be returned to you (include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for this purpose). You may also submit Form SS-5 in person at any Social Security office.

#### Pennsylvania Driver's License or Pennsylvania Non-Driver Identification Card

If you have had a legal name change, you may change the name on your Pennsylvania Driver's License or Pennsylvania Non-Driver Identification Card.

If you have a Pennsylvania driver's license or identity card that will not expire in the next six months, the name contained on the document can be changed by submitting a completed

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<sup>23</sup> The instructions accompanying Form SS-5 list citizenship and identity documents that must accompany the form when it is submitted.

PennDOT Form DL-80, Non-Commercial Driver's License Application for Change/Correction/Replacement, with a certified copy of your name change decree.

There is a processing fee of \$27.50 if you wish to have a new photo appear on the license or identity card. If you do not wish to have a new photo appear on the license or identity card, there is no fee; however, PennDOT will not issue a new driver's license or identity card, but will issue only an "update card" with your new name that you must carry with your existing driver's license or identity card.

If your existing license or identity card is due to expire in the next 6 months, you may not use Form DL-80. Rather, you must use PennDOT Form DL-143, Non-Commercial Driver's License Application for Renewal, accompanied by a certified copy of your name change decree. There is a processing fee of \$29.50.

You may submit Form DL-80 or Form DL-143, along with the required supporting documentation and fee, by mail to:

PennDOT  
Bureau of Driver Licensing,  
P.O. Box 68272  
Harrisburg, PA 17106-8272

If the applicable form is submitted by mail, you may request that your original documents be returned; a self-addressed, stamped envelope must be provided for the return of the original documents. Alternatively, you may submit the applicable form, documentation and payment in person at any PennDOT Driver License Center.

To change your gender marker on a Pennsylvania driver's license or identification card, both you and your licensed physician, therapist/counselor or social worker must complete PennDOT Form DL-32, Request for Gender Change on Driver's License/Identification Card. Your physician, therapist/counselor or social worker must certify, under penalty of law, that your "gender identity is [male or female] and can reasonably be expected to continue as such for the foreseeable future." You must certify, under penalty of law that the "request for the selected gender designation to appear on [your] Driver's License/ID Card accurately reflects [your] gender identity and is not for any fraudulent or other unlawful purpose."

If your existing driver's license or identity card is due to expire in the next 6 months, you must submit PennDOT Form DL-143 in addition to Form DL-32. A fee of \$27.50 must be paid by check or money order payable to "PennDOT" to process Form DL-32. Form DL-32 must be submitted in person at a PennDOT Driver License Center.

## **Who should be notified of your legal name change?**

The following is a partial list of the types of companies and agencies which should be notified of your court ordered name change as well as accounts and documents which should be changed to reflect your name change:

- Credit Cards Companies
- Utilities
- Deed to Real Estate (corrective deed may be required) and/or Lease
- Insurance Companies (auto, home, life, disability, medical)
- Loan Companies (student, auto, personal, mortgage)
- Banks
- Retirement Accounts
- Professional Licenses
- College/High School Transcripts and Diplomas
- Car Title, Driver's License
- Voter Registration
- Credit Reporting Agencies
- Selective Service (if born male)
- Vital Records in state of birth (for new birth certificate)
- U.S. Department of State (for new passport)
- Social Security Administration

Generally, it is not necessary to provide documentation of gender change – most companies will simply start using “Mr.” or “Ms.” when they start using your new name.

Attached at Appendix D is a sample cover letter that may be used for this purpose. Generally, the only documentation that must accompany a letter requesting the change is a copy of the court decree changing your name. Occasionally you may be asked for a certified copy of your name change decree, a copy of your new driver's license and/or a copy of your new social security card.

### **Insurance Companies**

It is beyond the scope of this handbook to discuss all of the implications of changing the gender marker on insurance policies. However, it is important to know that a change of gender marker may have an impact on these policies. For example, the change may result in an increase or decrease of insurance premiums (for instance, with some auto insurance policies). It is also possible that, even though the gender marker is changed on an insurance policy, the insurance company may continue to treat you as if you were still your former gender for purposes of determining premiums (this may happen, for instance, with some life insurance companies).

Changing the gender marker on health insurance policies is a concern for many trans people. Many people are under the impression that, if their health insurance companies find out that they are trans, they will be denied coverage for all medical care. This concern is

understandable given that some health insurance policies will not cover the cost of medical or surgical treatment if the sole purpose of that treatment is transition-related.<sup>24</sup> However, these plans do not exclude trans *people*. Medically necessary care that is not transition-related is covered, even if the patient/insured person receiving that care is trans.

Once you notify your health insurance company that you have transitioned and that you are now male or female, you may find that bills for certain (usually) sex-specific medical care are initially denied by the insurer. For example, a transman who has changed his health insurance policy so that he is now identified as a male may initially be denied coverage for a medically necessary gynecological test, service or procedure. The denial may not be based on any sort of discrimination or animus against the insured trans person; it will most likely be denied because the insurance billing code used by the doctor's office is associated with female patients only and, therefore, the insurance company's computer system may automatically flag and reject all bills for such services performed on a male patient. If the medical test, service or procedure would have been covered for a female with the same insurance policy, a transman who has been denied coverage (or his doctor) should appeal the denial of coverage. With some perseverance and with careful attention to the insurance company's dispute procedures, such denials of coverage for medically necessary tests, services and procedures are almost always reversed.

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<sup>24</sup> Section 1557 of the ACA prohibits covered entities from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. As of July 18, 2016, a federal rule implementing Section 1557 of the ACA went into effect. This rule prohibits discrimination against LGBTQ individuals, including transgender and gender non-conforming people. Thus, covered medical providers cannot refuse to treat trans people or refuse to recognize an individual's gender identity with respect to pronoun usage and room placement. Covered insurers cannot categorically exclude coverage for specific health services related to gender transition.

Covered entities include:

- entities operating a health program or activity, any part of which receives funding from HHS;
- federal and state health insurance marketplaces; and
- employee health benefit programs that receive HHS funding.

If the new administration repeals the ACA, these protections will likely be lost and trans people will again face increased difficulty accessing mental health care, hormone therapy, and surgical treatment.

## Selective Service

Transwomen are required to register with Selective Service within thirty days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, regardless of whether their transition occurred before or after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Until the age of 26, registered individuals are required to update Selective Service with a change to their name or address within ten days of the change. You may update this information by any of the following methods:

- Using the change form at the bottom of you Registration Acknowledgment;
- Completing SSS Form 2, Selective Change of Information Form, which can be obtained at any U.S. Post Office, U.S. Embassy or Consular Office;
- Completing the online change of address form; or
- Calling Selective Service at 1-847-688-6888.

Transmen are not required (or, technically, permitted) to register with the Selective Service, regardless of their current sex or transition status. However, transmen may be required to show that they are exempt from registration in order to apply for certain student loans or government aid. An individual may obtain a status information letter documenting his exemption from registration by completing a Request for Status Information Letter, available online.<sup>25</sup> Alternatively, many transmen who are 18 to 25 simply register with Selective Service.

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<sup>25</sup> Although the Selective Service System's policies appear to limit the request for status information letters to those who are age 26 and older, transmen who are under the age of 26 have been able to receive such letters when they have explained their trans status and need for the letter to Selective Service.



Appendix A

Physician Letter for Pennsylvania Birth Certificate

*Must be printed on physician's letterhead which includes physician's address and telephone number.*

[DATE]

Re: Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is to certify that I am Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_'s attending physician and I have a doctor/patient relationship with Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_. Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ has completed appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to [male/female].  
OR Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ is in the process of appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to [male/female].

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the forgoing is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Physician

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Full Name of Physician

Appendix B

Physician Letter for Passport

*Must be printed on physician's letterhead which includes physician's address and telephone number.*

[DATE]

Re: Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom it May Concern:

I, [physician's full name], [physician's medical license or certificate number], [issuing U.S. State/Foreign Country of medical license/certificate], [DEA Registration number or comparable foreign designation], am the attending physician of Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, with whom I have a doctor/patient relationship.

I have treated Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_'s for his/her gender-related care. OR I have reviewed and evaluated the gender-related medical history of Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to the new gender [specify new gender male or female]. OR Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ is in the process of gender transition to the new gender [specify new gender male or female].

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the forgoing is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Physician

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Full Name of Physician

Appendix C

Physician's Letter for Social Security Administration

*Must be printed on the physician's letterhead which includes physician's address and telephone number.*

[DATE]

Re: Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

To Whom it May Concern:

I, [physician's full name], [physician's medical license or certificate number], [issuing U.S. State/Foreign Country of medical license/certificate], am the physician of Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, with whom I have a doctor/patient relationship and whom I have treated [or with whom I have a doctor/patient relationship and whose medical history I have reviewed and evaluated].

Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to the new gender [specify new gender male or female].

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the forgoing is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Physician

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Full Name of Physician

Appendix D

Letter Notifying Companies of Name Change

[YOUR ADDRESS]

[DATE]

[NAME/ADDRESS OF COMPANY]

Re: Name Change  
Account/Insurance Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to request that my above-referenced account/insurance policy be updated to reflect my name change pursuant to court decree entered on \_\_\_\_\_ [date of decree]. A copy of this decree is enclosed with this letter.

The current name on my account/ insurance policy is:\_\_\_\_\_. My new name is::\_\_\_\_\_.

[When necessary:] Please issue a new card for this account/insurance policy in my new name.

If you need any additional information or documentation to process this request, please contact me at my home address:\_\_\_\_\_ or by telephone at: \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

[Sign full new legal name]

[Print full new legal name]