

NJ MINOR NAME CHANGE

The following is a brief overview of the process for having your child's name changed by a court. The details follow. There are three basic steps that you must take to have your child's name changed by the court:

1. You must fill out forms to send to the court with a filing fee. (If you are changing the names of multiple family members, there is only one fee.) The forms are contained in this packet and include a complaint, an order fixing the date of hearing, a final judgment and a case information statement.
2. When the court returns the complaint and the order fixing the date of hearing to you, the forms will contain a docket number and will tell you in what newspaper you must publish the date of hearing. You must contact the newspaper to have the order fixing the date for the hearing published at least two weeks before the hearing date, and you must notify other interested parties. You will have to provide the court with proof that the appropriate parties have been notified of your intent to change your child's name.
3. After you appear in court at the hearing, you will have to publish the final judgment in the newspaper and send copies of the certified final judgment to the Department of Treasury and the Registrar of Vital Statistics. If your child has a driver's license, you will have to notify the Division of Motor Vehicles as well.

DEFINITIONS OF WORDS USED IN THIS PACKET

Affidavit of Publication - An affidavit of publication is a sworn statement made by a newspaper stating that the newspaper has published the information regarding your name change.

Certification - A certification is a written statement you make when you file your papers with the court in which you state that all the information contained in the papers is true to the best of your knowledge.

Civil Case Information Statement (CIS) The CIS is a form that summarizes your case for the court. Court rules require that a CIS be filed with a verified complaint.

Docket Number - A docket number is the number the court assigns to your case so that it may be identified and located easily. Once you have a docket number, you must include it on all your communications with the court.

File - To file means to give the appropriate forms and fee to the court to begin the court's consideration of your case.

Final Judgment - The final judgment is a document signed by the judge which orders the name to be changed.

Order Fixing Date of Hearing - An order fixing the date of hearing is a signed paper from the judge indicating the date when you must come to court on your case and stating the name of the newspaper in which you will have to publish your hearing