



In English law – it is not actually necessary to take any formal steps legally to be known by a new name. You simply call yourself by the new name. However this will usually cause difficulties in ‘proving’ the change to your name as you may be asked in your daily life to provide proof of that change of name. This is why in most other cases; changes of name are effected by written document – whether by Deed or statutory declaration

A child’s forename may be changed within 12 months of the birth being registered – but documentary proof will be required that the new name was either given in baptism or by regular use. The name on a birth certificate can otherwise be amended by the issue of a new birth certificate under the following circumstances:

- following the issue of a gender recognition certificate, to accord with your new gender
- by re-registering the child’s birth, to include the birth father and acquire his surname

A Change of Name carried out bona fide (for lawful purpose) as evidenced by a Change of Name Deed is effective for all purposes in Law. However, please note that you may have to produce the original, or a certified copy, Change of Name Deed for a number of statutory purposes.

1. When applying for a passport.
2. When altering the name of a homeowner recorded at the Land Registry.
3. When changing the name on your driving licence and vehicle logbook with the DVLA.
4. Dealing with shares, premium bonds and other investments.
5. Notifying other persons of your change of name, including: -
  - Employer
  - Inland Revenue
  - DWP or other similar agency
  - Building societies, banks and mortgagees
  - Doctor and dentist
  - Dentist
  - Credit and store charge card companies
  - Finance loan companies
  - Pension company
  - Insurance companies (motor, medical, life, property, contents, travel etc)
  - Mail order catalogues
  - Professional institutes and bodies
  - Clubs, societies, charities and associations

- Electoral roll
- Internet service provider (if your e-mail address includes your previous name you may wish to change it).

(Purely for information purposes, in order that you might have complete information about the general legal position, please note that those covered by the provisions of the Sex Offenders Act 1997, would have to advise the police of any Change of Name. There is a period of grace of three days only, and notification has to be given in person or in writing at any local police station. Failure to comply, for those covered by this Act, can result in a fine or imprisonment).

#### **Change of name for a child:**

A child or young person under 18 can only have their change of name recorded by deed by all persons who have parental responsibility. However, if they are over 16, this can only be done with their consent. With a child or young person under 16 their consent does not have to be given for their name to be changed.

In very rare cases however, if the child did object to their name being changed, they could apply for a court order to prevent the change, provided the court is satisfied that they have sufficient understanding of what is involved. This would be under section 8 of the Children Act 1989.

*Dunn & Baker – Here to help you*

*Disclaimer: The material contained in this fact sheet is for general guidance only. It is specific to the law of England and Wales, and represents a brief outline of the law current as at the date of the fact sheet. It is not intended to constitute, or to be a substitute for, legal advice specific to your case. Dunn and Baker will be responsible only for advice specifically given to you.*