

NAME CHANGES FOR MINORS IN Iowa



What are the legal requirements?

The parent(s) of a minor child may file a petition requesting a name change on behalf of a minor child. *Iowa Code* § 674.1. If the petition is filed on behalf of a minor 14 years of age or older, the minor's written consent for the name change is required. *Iowa Code* § 674.6

Where should I file the petition and what is the process?

You can file a petition for name change of a minor in the district court of the county in which the minor lives. *Iowa Code* § 674.2

You can find a list of the appropriate district courts at:
<https://www.iowacourts.gov/iowa-courts/district-court/>

You must complete and file a Petition for Change of Name of a Minor Child and file it with the clerk of the district court in your jurisdiction. If you are in an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) county you may be able to use the eForm Petition for Change of Name of a Minor Child. You will need to pay a filing fee. After the petition is filed, a name change may be granted after 30 days. *Iowa Code* § 674.4

You may want to request more than one certified copy of the name change order, since certified copies may be required to update the minor's legal name with other agencies.

What forms should I use?

You can find the Petition for Change of Name of a Minor Child at:
http://www.iowacourts.gov/For_the_Public/Representing_Yourself_in_Court/Name_Change

Does the process require parental consent?

This process generally requires the written consent of both parents if the child is under the age of 14. If one of the parents does not consent to the name change, a hearing will be set by the court after 20 days' notice is given to the non-consenting parent. At the hearing the court may waive the requirement of consent from both parents if the court finds the other parent: (1) has abandoned the child; (2) has been ordered to contribute to the support of the child or to financially aid in the child's birth and has failed to do so; or (3) does not object to the name change after having been given notice. *Iowa Code* § 674.6

Does the process require publication?

National Center for Transgender Equality

transequality.org | ncte@transequality.org | 202-642-4542

Publication of the name change is not required.

What will the judge consider?

Judges have a lot of discretion in granting name changes. Some may have lots of questions and want to see lots of evidence regarding the name change of the child, others may grant a name change as long as there are no objections. The judge will generally consider the best interests of the minor child. They typically evaluate the best interest of the child by looking at a variety of factors, which may include the child's preference (taking into consideration their age and experience), the length of time a child has used that name, the difficulties, harassment, or embarrassment a child may experience from the present or proposed name, and the motives or interests of the parent.

To demonstrate that the name change is in the best interests of the child, along with the name change petition you may want to submit evidence showing the judge why this is in the child's best interest. Examples of such evidence would be letters from teachers, family, or friends confirming their use of preferred name, letters from providers confirming the child's gender identity, etc.