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# INSTRUCTIONS FOR A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SEALED NAME CHANGE PETITION

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## In King County Superior Court

**These instructions are for informational purposes only and do not constitute legal advice. If you do not understand this information, please contact an attorney.**

### General Information

In Washington State, if you are eighteen or older, you can choose and use any name you want, as long as you are not trying to defraud (cheat) someone. Example: it is not legal to change names to avoid paying creditors or child support.

If you are a survivor of domestic violence and you want the name change record sealed due to a “reasonable fear” for your safety, you should petition the superior court to change your name *and/or* your child’s name. [RCW 4.24.130](#). **The court will seal the file if it believes that safety justifies the sealing. Once sealed, there is no public access to any court record of the name change filing, even if the court does not grant the name change.**

You can also ask for a name change for domestic violence survivors as part of a divorce or parentage case. It is the only time a superior court in a divorce action may change a child’s name. **The court in these cases will not seal the record.**

### How do I change my name by court order?

You must:

#### **1. Prepare a Petition and a Proposed Order for Sealed Name Change.**

The Petition must state:

- a. Your current legal name and the name you want;

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Disclaimer: This Guide is intended as general information only. Your case may have factors requiring different procedures or forms. The information and instructions are provided for use in the King County Superior Court. Please keep in mind that each court may have different requirements. If you need further assistance, consult a lawyer.

- b. Your birthdate and place of birth;
- c. The county you live in;
- d. That you are not a registered sex offender;
- e. If you are an offender under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections;
- f. That you are a survivor of domestic violence and have a reasonable fear for your safety;
- g. That you are not changing your name for fraudulent purposes; and
- h. That changing your name will not hurt anyone else's interests.

**2. File the Petition and Proposed Order in the superior court of the county where you live.** You must show photo ID when you file. If you are not low-income and anticipate paying the full filing fee, you must pay it to the clerk when you file. Call the clerk ahead of time to ask what the fees will be. They vary by county.

In King County, the Clerk's Office staff are available to assist you by phone (206-296-9300, TTY: 206-296-0100), via email ([DJA.CustomerServiceEmail@kingcounty.gov](mailto:DJA.CustomerServiceEmail@kingcounty.gov)) or at any public counter in one of the three [Clerk's Office locations](#).

The court assigns a case number when you file.

**3. Schedule a hearing date.** The clerk will schedule a date for you to appear before a judge. Each court has its own schedule and procedure for hearing these cases. You might be able to have a hearing on the same day you file your petition. You might have to come back another day.

## What happens at the name change hearing?

Name change hearings are usually quick and easy. The judge calls your name when it is your turn and asks you a few questions. The judge will ask if everything in the petition is true and correct and if you are trying to change your name for fraudulent purposes.

If you are requesting a fee waiver, the judge may ask you about your finances. If all goes well, the judge will then sign off on the name change and fee waiver, if applicable.

If the judge does not waive your fees, you may not be able to proceed until you pay the filing fee. Get legal help if the judge denied your fee waiver and you are unable to pay.

## What do I do after my name change hearing?

You should:

- File the signed Order in the clerk's office.
- Get certified copies of the signed order. (This is usually about \$5 per copy.)
- Send copies of the signed Order to all institutions or persons needing proof of the name change.
- Keep a certified copy for your files.
- If you were born in Washington State and want to change your birth certificate, send certified copies of all paperwork to Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, P.O. Box 9709, Olympia, WA 98507-9709.  
(See <http://www.doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/BirthDeathMarriageandDivorce/CourtOrderedNameChange> for more info.)
- If you were born outside of Washington State, look up that state's procedures for changing the name on a birth certificate.
- Record your Order. In some counties, the court records your Order with the Auditor. In others, you must send the Order to the Auditor yourself for filing. Each superior court's name change procedure is different. Ask your superior court clerk how to record your name change.

## I have changed my name. Now what?

You should notify:

- all creditors
- insurance companies
- banks
- employer(s)
- your children's daycare and/or schools, and the teachers
- any schools you attend, and the teachers
- doctors and dentists
- the Social Security Administration
- the IRS

You must also send the Department of Licensing (DOL) written notice to have your driver's license and car registration changed. If you have real estate deeds, mortgages, stocks, bonds, or other documents reflecting ownership of other assets, you must have your name changed on those through written notification.

Some of these entities will accept a letter or verbal statement that you have changed your name. Others will require a formal document as proof. **Examples:**

- a certified copy of your final divorce order, if you changed your name in a divorce
- sworn and notarized affidavit, if you used the common law method
- a certified copy of the court order, if you do a formal name change

## Social Security Number Change

For more information about how to change your social security number, visit your [local Social Security Administration Office](#) or read through their publication, [New Numbers for Domestic Violence Victims](#).

The local Social Security Office closest to the Public Law Library of King County, downtown Seattle location:

SUITE 901

**Address:** 915 2ND AVE  
SEATTLE, WA 98174

**Phone:** 1-800-772-1213

**TTY:** 1-800-325-0778

**Hours:**

<b>Monday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
<b>Thursday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Friday</b>	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
<b>Saturday</b>	Closed
<b>Sunday</b>	Closed

[Office Closings](#)

[Show Special Instructions](#)

## National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

## Washington 2-1-1

<http://crisisclinic.org/find-help/2-1-1-resources-and-information/>



### SEARCH

Find resources  
24/7



### DIAL 2-1-1

To speak with a  
resource specialist  
M-F, 8am-6pm



### EMAIL

24/7



### CHAT

M-F, 10am-4pm

## Confidential Address Program

The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) provides participants with a legal substitute address and a mail-forwarding service. Survivors use the substitute address on public records. Participants may also use the substitute address for personal use, just like any new address. Participant mail is sent to the substitute address and routed to the ACP. The ACP team will forward participant mail to the actual address.

To be eligible for Washington's Address Confidentiality Program, participants must be:

- An adult, parent or guardian acting on behalf of minor, or a guardian acting on behalf of an incapacitated person; and
- Be a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking or a certain criminal justice employee who has been the target of felony harassment; and
- Reside in Washington; and
- Relocate in a place unknown to the perpetrator; and
- Reside in an address not currently documented in public record.

Applications for a confidential address are only accepted through approved Application Assistant programs (<https://www.sos.wa.gov/acp/apply.aspx>).

To learn more:

- Website: <https://www.sos.wa.gov/acp/>.
- Toll free (WA only): 1-800-822-1065
- Local: (360) 753-2972
- Mailing: PO Box 257, Olympia, WA 98507-0257

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**SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
FOR KING COUNTY**

In re the petition of: )  
 )  
 ) No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 )  
Current name: )  
 ) PETITION FOR **SEALED** NAME  
 ) CHANGE  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
 ) (First, middle, last)  
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\_\_\_\_\_ )

Comes now \_\_\_\_\_ [current legal name],  
petitioning the Court for an order *sealing* the name change to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [full new name], pursuant to RCW 4.24.130. I make  
the following statements under penalty of perjury.

1. My current legal name is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. [legibly print current full legal name; First, Middle, Last]
2. I am applying for a court order which will seal and change my current name to:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
[legibly print full new name; First, Middle, and Last]
3. Are you currently a resident of King County, Washington? Yes  No
4. Are you required to register as a sex offender? Yes  No   
**[Petitioner’s failure to provide required notice to the King County Sheriff  
and Washington State Patrol is a crime. RCW 9A.44.130(8).]**

1 5. Are you an offender under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections?  
2 Yes  No

3 **[Petitioner's failure to provide required notice to DOC is a crime. RCW  
4.24.130.]**

4 6. Have you had a name change prior to this petition? If yes, please explain. (Date,  
5 place, and reason):

6 \_\_\_\_\_  
7 \_\_\_\_\_  
8 \_\_\_\_\_

7 7. I request a *sealed* change of name for the following reason(s). Please explain:  
8 a. I am a survivor of domestic violence and I have a reasonable fear for my  
9 safety.

10 b. \_\_\_\_\_  
11 \_\_\_\_\_  
12 \_\_\_\_\_  
13 \_\_\_\_\_  
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13 8. I declare that this name change petition is not made for any illegal or fraudulent  
14 purpose.

15 9. I declare that my name change will not be detrimental to the interests of anyone  
16 else.

16 **I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE  
17 OF WASHINGTON THAT THE FOREGOING STATEMENTS IN THIS PETITION ARE  
18 TRUE AND CORRECT.**

18 Signed at \_\_\_\_\_, Washington, on \_\_\_\_\_.  
19 City Date

20 \_\_\_\_\_  
21 Petitioner's Signature

22 \_\_\_\_\_  
23 Petitioner's Street Address

23 \_\_\_\_\_  
24 Petitioner's City, State, Zip Code

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**SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
FOR KING COUNTY**

In re the petition of: )  
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 ) **No.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 )  
Current name: ) **ORDER FOR SEALED NAME**  
 ) **CHANGE**  
 )  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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(First, middle, last) )  
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\_\_\_\_\_ )

**ORDER FOR SEALED NAME CHANGE**

- 1. The Petitioner made a *Motion for Order for Sealed Name Change*, pursuant to RCW 4.24.130. A hearing on the *Motion* was held on (*date*):\_\_\_\_\_.
- 2. The Court has considered the *Motion* and any supporting documents, other documents from the court record identified by the court, if any, and any testimony or argument.
- 3. The court finds good cause to approve this Order.

Other findings (*if any*): \_\_\_\_\_  
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1 **4. The Court Orders:**

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14 **Ordered.**

15 \_\_\_\_\_ ⇒ \_\_\_\_\_

16 *Date* *Judge or Commissioner*

17 This order is presented by me.

18 \_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner's Signature

19 \_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

20 \_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner's Street Address

21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 \_\_\_\_\_  
23 Petitioner's City, State, Zip Code

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
FOR KING COUNTY**

In re the petition of:	)	No. _____
_____	)	
For the Change of Name of:	)	PETITION FOR <b>SEALED</b> NAME
_____	)	CHANGE OF A MINOR
A Minor. (First, middle, last)	)	
_____	)	

Comes now \_\_\_\_\_ [current legal name],  
petitioning the Court for an order *sealing* the name change of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [current legal name] his, her, their **(circle one)**  
son, daughter, child/ward **(circle one)**, to the name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [full new name], pursuant to RCW 4.24.130. I make the  
following statements under penalty of perjury.

- The child is \_\_\_\_\_ years of age and was born on \_\_\_\_\_  
[date of birth], at \_\_\_\_\_ [place of birth – city and state].
- Is the child a resident of King County, Washington? Yes  No
- Is the child required to register as a sex offender? Yes  No   
**[Failure to provide required notice to the King County Sheriff and  
Washington State Patrol is a crime. RCW 9A.44.130(8).]**

Petition for <b>Sealed</b> Name Change of Minor	Name: _____
	Address: _____
	Phone Number: _____

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4. Is the child an offender under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections?  
Yes  No

**[Failure to provide required notice to DOC is a crime. RCW 4.24.130.]**

5. Is the petitioner the parent of the child? Yes  No

6. If not the parent, is the petitioner the child's legal guardian and have the legal authority to submit this petition? Yes  No

7. The child's other parent:

a. Has given consent to this name change and signed the petition.

Yes  No

b. Has not been located and has had no contact with petitioner. Yes  No

Date of last contact with other parent: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Has the child ever had a name change prior to this petition? Yes  No

If yes, please explain. (Date, place, and reason):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. I request a *sealed* change of name for the following reason(s). Please explain:

a. I am a survivor of domestic violence and I have a reasonable fear for my safety and the safety of the minor child listed in this petition.

b. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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10. I declare that this name change petition is not made for any illegal or fraudulent purpose.

11. I declare that my name change will not be detrimental to the interests of anyone else.

12. I declare that any child named in this petition who is age 14 or older joins in the petition and has signed the petition.

**I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON THAT THE FOREGOING STATEMENTS IN THIS PETITION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.**

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_, Washington, on \_\_\_\_\_.  
City Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minor's Signature (if 14 years of age or older)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minor's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner's Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner's City, State, Zip Code

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Court Clerk

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**SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
FOR KING COUNTY**

	)	
In re the petition of:	)	No. _____
	)	
For the Change of Name of:	)	ORDER FOR <b>SEALED</b> NAME
	)	CHANGE OF A MINOR
A Minor. (First, middle, last)	)	
	)	

**ORDER FOR SEALED NAME CHANGE OF A MINOR**

1. The Petitioner made a *Motion for Order for Sealed Name Change of a Minor* pursuant to RCW 4.24.130. A hearing on the *Motion* was held on (*date*):  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Court has considered the *Motion* and any supporting documents, other documents from the court record identified by the court, if any, and any testimony or argument.
3. The court finds good cause to approve this Order.

Other findings (*if any*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Order for <b>Sealed</b> Name Change of a Minor Page 1 of 2	Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Number: _____
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1 **4. The Court Orders:**

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14 **Ordered.**

15 \_\_\_\_\_ ⇒ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Date* *Judge or Commissioner*

16 This order is presented by me.

17 \_\_\_\_\_

18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Petitioner Parent/Guardian Signature      Petitioner Parent/Guardian Printed Name

19 \_\_\_\_\_

20 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Minor's Signature (if 14 years of age or older)      Minor's Printed Name

21 \_\_\_\_\_

22 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Petitioner's Street Address

23 \_\_\_\_\_

24 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Petitioner's City, State, Zip Code

Order for **Sealed** Name Change of a Minor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_