



COLORADO LEGAL NAME CHANGE PROCESS

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Before you continue, please take a minute to read this message:

This document is 11 pages (and growing). It can be intimidating for anyone who has just started considering this process. If so, you should skim through the following pages, get a rough idea of the steps, and absorb everything. Once you had some time to think it over, then you decide on your course of action. If you are already gung-ho like I was, jump right in!

Whatever your current reality is, please know that the following steps are very straightforward and easy to accomplish (with a little planned budgeting).

The hardest part of any of this might just be stepping out of the house as you. Everyone who reads this is at a different stage and level of comfort with being yourself in a world that, at times, can seem inhospitable and unwelcoming.

But please know, this resource was made with love and with you in mind. I've shared this with friends and colleagues. And they've shared a lot of constructive feedback. I want you to be one of my friends. I want you to feel at home here. And I want you to share your feedback to help both refine and expand this work. This document is community built and exists to make a seemingly scary and complicated process as straightforward as possible. I've crammed as much information as I could into this guide. I've also included updates and excerpts from my personal experience.

I've had very friendly, or, at the very least, very professional interactions, with every civil servant I've met. We have many allies in a lot of unexpected places, even if there are others out there who, to put it kindly, need some "workplace development" training.

If you haven't already, please reach out to friends or a local LGBT organization for support (a few are [here](#)). If you are a student, staff, or faculty member at UCCS, the [LGBT Resource Center](#), located in University Center 110, is an excellent place. Even if you aren't affiliated with the school, their door is always open to help in any way. Knowing that you are not alone and that you are supported is so so sooooo important. Most of us wouldn't be who or where we are without help from our community. Transmission, a transgender and gender non-conforming undergraduate student organization, is actively meeting at UCCS. We meet on Wednesdays in University Center room 110. I'm not aware of a trans student club existing at PPCC or Colorado College, but those could be in the works. (: The [Butler Center](#) at CC would be a great resource if you are a student there (or are nearby). Don't ever worry about reaching out to the wrong group. If they can't help, they will direct you to those who can.

Please feel free to email me at sadrian@uccs.edu with any and all questions.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sadrian".

*Thank you to my family and friends
for your love, support, and help
in both building this guide
and in enriching my life
in so many ways.*

A special thanks to:

Jessie Proffitt

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Ash Coyote, Queen of the Universe

Dara Hoffman-Fox





****The specific places I recommend in this document are ones where I have either had a 200% positive personal or professional experience or are locations specific to Colorado Springs.****

ε> This document should be considered to be a perpetual work-in-progress. If you encounter anything in here that should be fixed/updated - or anything that should be included, PLEASE email me! (I would love to credit you, if you wish to be.) It is up to us to hold our community close and to help one another as much as possible. I've tried to add links to as many resources and forms as I could find. <3

**** You must be considered a resident of Colorado to follow the steps in this guide. This means (according to Colorado.gov, you must "(1) own or operate a business in Colorado, (2) are gainfully employed in Colorado, or (3) reside in Colorado for 90 consecutive days." These requirements are separate from the [higher ed requirements for in-state tuition](#), fyi. If you've been in Colorado for 3 months, you qualify as a resident!****

My total time to completion of these steps, from the initiation of the background checks to getting my social security and dmv info updated, was a little over 5 weeks (Nov 11th – Dec 20th). Your timeframe could be different, as the holiday season probably factored into my experience. And, not to scare you, but my total estimated cost was ~\$400, (~\$600 with my passport expedited) Your costs might be different. Mine were fairly high because I wanted everything to be done asap. See the last page for a table of estimated costs for each step in this process.

A quick note for also changing your gender marker:

When you have your next HRT appointment with your healthcare provider, I would recommend contacting them prior to the appointment and requesting two different forms.

- You will need a physician's letter to change your gender marker at social security (a link to their requirements is [here](#)) and at the passport office. The passport office will keep a form. Changing a CO birth certificate requires a letter as well. I would recommend getting a couple of these. Each letter must be signed by your physician. They cannot be photocopies of an original letter.
- You will need [Form DR 2083](#) from your doc to change your gender marker at the DMV.

The National Center for Transgender Equality has a good [page](#) for information about this. A sample physician letter is located on that page and also directly [here](#). The wording of the letter much be specific. Your doc has probably done these letters before and knows the drill.

¹ *xkcd: Settling.* (2017). *Xkcd.com*. Retrieved 4 February 2017, from <https://xkcd.com/1768/>

UPDATE ALL THE THINGS!



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PART ONE: GETTING YOUR BACKGROUND CHECKS

You need to get two background checks to initiate legal name change petition with the courthouse. **You need the physical (hardcopy) background result of each check to take to the courthouse. You have 90 days to complete both checks or the court will reject your petition.**

1. FBI Background Check – can be done at a law enforcement location or with a private company. If you get your fingerprint card mailed to the FBI expect at least a 4 week turnaround time. If you go to a private company in Denver called Denver Fingerprinting, they will create an electronic fingerprint card and will electronically transmit it to the FBI. This electronic method will take up to five business days in turn around (essentially over the weekend). They transmitted mine to the FBI on a Friday; I received my electronic results about 4 hours later and my hardcopy three business days later in the mail. This hardcopy you will take to the courthouse.
2. CBI Background Check – can be done also at a law enforcement location or with a private company. Denver Fingerprinting will also create your fingerprint card (for a bundled price if you get the FBI as well). DF will offer to mail it to the CBI headquarters in Denver or you can physically deliver it yourself. Colorado Bureau of Investigation's address is 690 Kipling St. Suite 3000 in Lakewood, CO 80215. Depending on their workload and the proximity to holidays, the return time for them is 1-2 weeks. (I dropped mine off on Dec 14th, it was completed on the 17th, and mailed out on the 27th. So maybe Thanksgiving factored into my experience.)

You will receive a hardcopy of both of your background checks in the mail. These will both be signed and originals. **DO NOT LOSE THESE. YOU NEED THE PHYSICAL, SIGNED RESULT FORMS.**

[Denver Fingerprinting](#), located at 110 16th Street, 8th floor in downtown Denver, is phenomenal. They are trans-friendly, accept walk in's, and have an amazing powerpoint slide of all the steps to an a legal name change. A copy of their pdf is located online [here](#) and also in the same UCCS website directory as this document.

² Apologies to Allie Brosh of *Hyberbole & A Half*

PART TWO: FILING YOUR LEGAL NAME CHANGE PETITION

The next part of this process is to fill out four documents that you will submit to the court, alongside your two background check results, to initiate a legal name change petition.

Because I live in the Springs, I went to the [El Paso Combined Courts](#) (EPCC), located at 270 S. Tejon in downtown. All instructions and documentation can be accessed [here](#). The Clerk's Office phone number is 719-452-5000 extension 6 and is open 7:30am to 4:30pm M-F. This is nice if you have to work at 8am.

You will need the following items:

- Form 433 – Petition for Change of Name – Adult (on item #7 of this document, do not lie about your reason for a name change. If you do, the judge reviewing these documents could request a court date for your case. You will have to go in front of them and explain your reasons. Write "I am transgender and am currently transitioning from _____ to _____," and put male or female in the correct boxes. The court sees these petitions all the time and will not ask for a court date if you do this.)
- Form 426 – Order for Publication for Change of Name
- Form 427 – Public Notice of Petition for Change of Name (Minor/Adult)
- Form 448 – Final Decree for Change of Name
- FBI Background Check Results Hardcopy
- CBI Background Check Results Hardcopy
- Payment of \$100 for the petition (the court has card readers)
- Current ID (driver's works just fine)

Fill out all four documents (433, 426, 427, 448). See the sample highlighted forms for guidance.

DO NOT SIGN THEM! YOU WILL SIGN THESE FORMS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE COURT CLERK.

1. Take all of the above listed items to the EPCC.
2. Dress however you like. Don't feel like you need to dress to support your petition's validity.
3. Do not bring any weapons with you. This includes knives, pocket knives, pepper spray, and, obviously, firearms.
4. You will go through a basic metal detector. The officers here are very professional and will treat you with respect.
5. Go to the Office of the Court Clerk, S101, on the main floor of the courthouse.
6. When called, provide all documents to the clerk. (The clerk will keep all of the paper you submit.)
7. Sign the forms when prompted by the clerk.
8. It's that easy. ^_^
9. **I would highly recommend that you also:**
 - a. **Write down your case number**
 - b. **Ask the clerk which division of the court is handling your petition**
 - c. **Ask the clerk for the number of the division**

This last step will allow you to contact the court at a later date to check on the status of your petition. The forms will make their way to a judge or magistrate who will review them and sign off. Then Forms 426 and 427 will be mailed to you. (I submitted my petition on Dec 2nd, I called the Clerk's Office on Dec 9th and was told the judge signed my forms on the 8th, but didn't receive anything in the mail. So I called my division and left them a message. I received a call the next morning on Dec 9th saying that I could go to the Records Department and retrieve the forms myself.)

If you call and get confirmation that the judge signed off on your petition, ask if you can go to the Records Department and retrieve your forms yourself. The Records Department is in the Courthouse in S003 (in the basement). You can take an elevator in the south tower to the basement. You need a copy each of Forms 426 and 427. Each copy costs 25 cents. (I decided to go this route as I hate waiting for someone to do some and would much rather do it myself).

PART THREE: PUBLISHING YOUR LEGAL NAME CHANGE PETITION

The court clerk will tell you where you can take your 426 and 427 forms to get your name change published. This step seems to me to be an archaic remnant from the days without the internet and electronic record keeping. You can take your forms to the Colorado Springs Gazette. You need to get your intent published three times in a period of 21 days. The nice thing about the Gazette is that they publish daily (including on the weekends). If you can get your forms to them by 1:30pm, your name change intent will be published in the next day's issue. The Gazette will run your ad in print for three days and online for seven days.

The Gazette is located at 30 E. Pikes Peak Avenue, just east of Phantom Canyon Brewing Co. in downtown COS.

My friends Ash and Tori report that the [Colorado Springs Independent](#) and the [Colorado Springs Business Journal](#) will also advertise your legal notice. If you are interested, please call these businesses and/or ask the court clerk.

1. Take your 426 and 427 forms to the Gazette.
2. Tell the front desk clerk that you want to publish a legal name change. They do this all the time.
3. A lady that handles these requests will come out into the lobby, sit down at a computer opposite you, and process your forms.
4. They will not keep your forms.
5. She will print out a copy of what your announcement will look like. Proof the shit out of this. You need to make sure that the case number, room number, and your names are correct. If you leave and notice an error, let them know ASAP.
6. The cost of publishing three times is \$92.50. They accept cards.
7. On day three of your announcement after 10am, you can return to the Gazette and they will give you an Affidavit of Publication.

I went to the Gazette on a Friday before 1:30 pm, the ad ran Sat, Sun, & Mon in their paper, and I was able to collect my affidavit on that Monday morning after 10 am.

PART FOUR: COLLECTING YOUR FINAL DECREE FROM THE COURT

Now you can return to the court and collect your Form 448. This form is what you'll need to change your name with Social Security, the DMV, Passport, etc.

1. Take the Affidavit of Publication to the Clerk's Office at the county courthouse. Remember to remove all weapons from your person when you go just like before.
2. Get a few copies of your 448. Each certified copy costs \$20. (Shoot, the costs are racking up, eh? Tell me about it.) I would recommend getting at least three. Some institutions will keep the 448 form when you change your name.³

Now you have what you need to get your new awesome name! 😊

³ The passport office will keep a 448. Changing your birth certificate will also keep one. I was told this information by a court clerk. See end of passport section for an update.



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PART FIVE: CHANGING YOUR DOCUMENTATION

• SOCIAL SECURITY

Ok, so the very next thing you should do is change your name with the Social Security Administration. To do this, you will need a 448 Form (they won't keep it).

The Social Security Administration is located at 2306 E Pikes Peak Ave, Colorado Springs, CO, 80909.

1. Fill out a Social Security Card Application [Form](#). Fill out with your new name in the "name to be shown on card" field.
2. Take your 448 form and physician letter (if also changing gender marker) to the SSA.
3. No weapons. An officer will search any bags that you bring. You will walk through a metal detector.
4. Go to the kiosk and sign in.
5. Wait (Expect at least an hour. My wait was 1.5 hours to get to a window. I recommend bringing a book. There could be a lot of people waiting there as well, so be prepared for that possibility.)
6. Provide the 448 and physician letter to the clerk.
7. There is no cost with this process.
8. They will issue you a record of your changes and a letter with your address stating the return time on your new social security card. Expect two weeks. There are also instructions should it not arrive.
9. You will need to wait until to the next day to change any other documentation so that the SSA system syncs with the DMV's. (I was told to wait 24 hours but went to the DMV 18 hours later at 8am the next day.)

• DMV – DRIVER'S LICENSE, VEHICLE REGISTRATION, VEHICLE TITLE, ETC.

You will need a 448 form (and the DR 2083 for your marker) and your current vehicle title (if applicable). You do not need any other forms. I went to the downtown Colorado Springs location (the Centennial Branch) located at 200 S. Cascade. They are open 8am-5pm. Their number is 719-520-6240. This location is clean and has always been a good experience for me.

1. Change your license first. BE AWARE – WHEN UPDATING YOUR LICENSE, THEY WILL HAVE YOU TAKE A NEW PICTURE. LOOK AWESOME!
 - a. Provide the 448 and the DR 2083 to the clerk.
 - b. Take a snazzy picture of your awesome self.
 - c. Pay \$26 by check payable to “County Clerk.” (They accept cards.)
 - d. The clerk will punch “VOID” in your current ID and give you a temporary license. (I have not had any issue changing other documentation with this temp license.)
 - e. They will also give you a timeframe for delivery of your new license and a number to call if it does not arrive by then.
2. Get a new ticket to change your title and registration.
 - a. Provide the 448, SS documents, and your current title.
 - b. Pay \$7.50 by check payable to “County Clerk.”
 - c. The clerk will issue you new registration slips. (This doesn’t now renew the registration. The expiration on your previous slip still holds. Place the slip without your address in the glove box of your car.)
 - d. The clerk will issue you an updated title. Keep this [secret and safe](#) at home.

ANOTHER NOTE: NOTIFY YOUR LOCAL POST OFFICE OF YOUR NAME CHANGE. I WAS TOLD TO DO THIS BY THE DMV AS A DIFFERENT NAME ON AN ADDRESS MIGHT CAUSE ISSUES.

- **PASSPORT**

Updating your passport can proceed in one of two ways. It depends on if you are updating your gender marker at the same time as your name change. Definitely review the [passport website](#) (and I recommend calling their Information Center at 1-877-487-2778. Talking with a person is the best way to figure out your individual situation. The supervisor I talked to was super nice and helpful about changing my name and marker). Each link below will take you to the travel.state.gov website for the change matching the text.

Other forms you will need are:

- 448 court order form (They keep this and submit it with your application.)
- Physician letter for gender marker change (They submit this with your application.)
- A copy of your social security documents (not necessary but will bolster your application)

I took my application and documentation to the downtown Post Office, located at 201 E Pikes Peak Ave. They are super awesome and friendly. The middle-aged gentleman who processed my application was very respectful and sweet!

[If you are just changing your name:](#) fill out the [DS-82 form](#).

[If you are changing your gender marker too:](#) fill out the [DS-11 form](#). Regardless of if you have a passport already or if it is either valid or expired, to change your gender marker you’ll need to fill out a new passport application. My passport was expired; so I followed this step.

My costs here were:

- \$110 for the passport application
- \$25 for the post office to process my DS-11
- \$60 to expedite my application (2-3 week return)

Be sure to bring all documentation that each form asks of you. This includes photocopies of any documentation you have proving your citizenship (a current or old passport/birth certificate) and your identity (your new temp driver’s license works.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: The passport website says that they only accept checks, but the Pikes Peak Post Office Branch has a card reader.

An update: About a week after I received my new passport in the mail, I received another package from the State Department. It contained my previous passport (punched through and thus voided), my social security documents, and the original 448 court order. The passport office only kept the physician letter.

AN AMAZING RESOURCE PUT OUT BY THE [TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER](#) LISTS HOW TO CHANGE THE GENDER MARKER ON YOUR BIRTH CERTIFICATE BY STATE. THE WEBSITE IS [HERE](#) AND A DIRECT LINK TO THE PDF IS [HERE](#). THE PDF IS ALSO POSTED IN THE DIRECTORY.

Other places to visit (that day, depending on your stamina) could include: (Shamelessly taken from DF)

- Identity Documents: Social Security Card*, Driver's License*, Passport*, Workplace* (payroll, email, internal directories, name tags, uniforms, business cards, etc.), Voter Registration*, School ID, Library Card, Military ID.
- Financial Information: Personal Banking Information, Credit Card Information, Employer/Payroll Department, 401K Account, Mortgage/Lease, IRS, Beneficiary Information, County Clerk (deeds, car title, car registration, tax records, etc.).
- Insurance and Memberships: Insurance Policies (Home, Auto, Life, etc.), Utilities (gas/electric, phone, cell, internet, cable, etc.), Licensing Agencies (Bar, Nursing, EMT, etc.) Memberships (Gym, Netflix, Magazines, etc.).
- Other Items: Notify Post Office, Schools and Alumni Associations, Email Address (if applicable), Social Media Profiles, and other account information.

ESTIMATED COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH A LEGAL NAME CHANGE

Cost

Step 1: Background Checks	
1. FBI card	
a. Mail-in	a. on cards \$10-\$20, trackable mail \$5-\$15
b. Expedited/Electronic	b. service provided via Denver Fingerprinting \$80
	Law enforcement \$10-\$20
2. CBI card	Denver Fingerprinting \$5 w/ FBI, \$15 w/o
3. Deliver #2 to CBI Headquarters in Denver	\$16.50 (cash or card – must fill out form for card)
Step 2: Filing the Legal Name Change Petition	
1. Turn in 433, 426, 427, & 448 & both background result forms to a court clerk	\$100 filing fee (accepts cards – has chip reader)
Step 3: Publication of Legal Name Change Intent	
1. Go to a newspaper and pay to have published 3 times within 21 days (need 426 & 427)	\$92.50 (Gazette) unsure on pricing for other newspapers
2. Return to the newspaper and get Affidavit of Publication	none
Step 4: Collecting Your Final Decree from the Court	
1. Return to the court clerk's office and turn in the Affidavit of Publication	none
2. Receive notarized 448 form	\$20/copy (get a couple)
Step 5: Changing All of Your Documentation	
1. Social Security	none
2. DMV – Driver's License	\$26, \$27 with optional \$1 organ donor awareness (some locations may have card readers)
3. DMV – Title & Registration	\$7.50 (in my experience, check only – payable to County Clerk)
4. Passport	Only name – can mail in form yourself, \$110 app Name & gender – \$110 app, \$25 processing fee at Post Office (\$60 to expedite application)