

Name and Gender Marker Change Guide – Ontario

This guide was created in 2023 by staff and students working at The 519. Tracey Yu, summer fellowship student, and James Polak, Education and Outreach Coordinator were the lead drafters and creators of this Guide.

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Introduction

This guide is for trans, nonbinary, or gender non-conforming adults who want to change the name on their identity documents (IDs). You do not have to be a citizen or a permanent resident in order to change your name with the province.

This guide applies to you if:

1. You are over the age of 16; and
2. You have lived in Ontario for more than 12 months.

This guide provides legal information and is for educational purposes only. It does not provide nor is a substitute for individual legal advice. If you have trouble at any step of the process, do not hesitate to contact The 519 for access to pro bono legal advice services and support.

The 519 Contact Information

Email: TransIDclinic@the519.org
Phone: 416-392-6874, ext: 4039
Website: <https://www.the519.org/programs/trans-id-clinic/>
Address: 519 Church Street
Toronto, ON M4Y 2C9

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Department of Justice
Canada
Ministère de la Justice
Canada



How to Change your Legal Name in Ontario

You will need to complete the following form: "[Application to Change an Adult's Name](#)."

Cost:	\$137.00	Submit in person to:	ServiceOntario 417-47 Sheppard Avenue East Toronto, ON M2N 5N1
Processing:	6 to 8 weeks	Submit by mail to:	ServiceOntario Office of the Registrar General P.O. Box 3000 189 Red River Road Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5W0

Once your application is accepted, you will receive a Change of Name Certificate. You can then use this certificate to update other official documents. If you were born in Ontario, you will also receive an updated Birth Certificate. If you were born in Canada but outside of Ontario, the Registrar General's office will notify the province you were born in of your name change. You can then order a new birth certificate from that province, though you may also want to change your gender marker with your province of birth first. Below are the steps you will need to take to complete your application:

1. Gather your documents.

Born in Ontario:	All original birth certificates or certified copies of birth registration and Photocopies of all previous legal name change documents
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Born in Canada:	An original birth certificate or certified copy of birth registration and Photocopies of all previous legal name change documents
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Born outside Canada:	Photocopy of original birth certificate or photocopy of certified copy of birth registration from country of birth and Photocopy of Canadian Citizenship Card or photocopy of Canadian Record of Immigrant Landing or photocopy of Permanent Resident Card and Photocopy of the passport used to enter Canada
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2. Fill in the application. The application will ask for a range of personal information. You can fill the form in on your computer and then print it out. However, you **must** sign them in front of a commissioner with a blue or black pen. You can also fill the form in with a blue or black pen. We recommend writing in all uppercase (UPPERCASE) letters because it is easier to read.

3. Write a **cover letter**. This step is optional, but we recommend including one to make everything as clear as possible for the government employee processing your application. This letter will be the first page of your package and should have a general overview of your basic information. For example: your current legal name, what you are changing your name to, your contact info, and a list of what documents you have included. We have templates available for both provincial and federal applications.

4. Find a guarantor and have them fill and sign the **Guarantor's Statement** in the application. You will need to find a guarantor who can confirm that you've lived in Ontario for at least the last 12 months. A guarantor can be either:

a) Someone in a "[prescribed class](#)," such as a doctor or a paralegal. A full list of the prescribed class is as follows -

1. Provincial judges appointed under the Courts of Justice Act.
2. Justices of the peace appointed under the Justices of the Peace Act.
3. Chiefs of Indian bands that are located in Ontario.
4. Persons authorized under the Marriage Act to solemnize marriages.
5. Legally qualified medical practitioners.
6. Members of the Law Society of Upper Canada.
7. Heads of Municipal Councils in Ontario.
8. Clerks of municipalities in Ontario.
9. Principals of elementary and secondary schools.
10. Managers or signing officers of Ontario branches of banks; **OR**

b) Someone other than a relative that has known you for five years.

5. Fill in the **Request for Non-Publication in the Ontario Gazette**.

The Ontario Gazette is the official publication for legislative decisions, proclamations of new statutes, all regulations made under Ontario statutes, and notices that must be made public (which includes legal name changes). If you do not want your name change to be published, you must fill in this request form and submit it along with your application.

6. Get your application commissioned for the **Statutory Declaration Form**.

You will need to make a declaration that your application is true and then sign in front of a commissioner for taking affidavits. If you are submitting your application in person, you can [book an appointment](#) at the Service Ontario to have your documents commissioned for free. Otherwise, you can make an appointment with The 519 to have someone commission it for you.

7. Submit your completed application via mail or in person.

If you were born in Ontario, you will be sent an updated birth certificate with your new name. Therefore, if you wish to change your gender marker as well, it is recommended to submit an [Application for Change of Sex Designation on a Birth Registration of an Adult](#) and the corresponding statutory declaration at the same time.

How to Update other Identification Documents

Once you have received your Change of Name Certificate, you can use that to update your other government documents. Generally, the next step will be to update your gender marker and name on your birth certificate. Then, with your new birth certificate, you can update your health card. Finally, you can apply for a new Photo ID Card, Driver's License, or other federal documents that require much more proof of identification.

You can update your gender marker on most ID without using a birth certificate, but it will require a letter from a physician or psychologist instead.

Birth Certificate

If you were **born in Ontario** and you want to change your name and gender marker on your birth registration, you can do so at the same time (that is, send in both applications in one package). You will receive a Name Change Certificate and a new Birth Certificate, which you can then use to change your name and gender marker on other documents.

Despite what the form says, you do not need to separately fill out a Request for Birth Certificate, since the name change process automatically sends you a new birth certificate with your updated name. If you are only changing your gender marker on your birth certificate, you will need to include that request and the accompanying fee.

If you were **born outside of Ontario**, you will have to submit the Name Change application first. Once it is accepted, you can then change your name and gender marker at the same time on your other Canadian documents. The required documentation for changing your gender marker will vary.

Requirements for the letter signed by a practicing physician or psychologist

A letter (**on the health practitioner's letterhead**) signed by a practising physician or a psychologist (including a psychological associate) authorized to practise in Canada, showing their **licence number** and stating that they:

1. are a practising member in good standing of the appropriate regulatory body (e.g., College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, College of Psychologists of Ontario);
2. have treated or evaluated the applicant (identified by full name) who is requesting the change in sex designation (specify the change in sex designation);
3. confirm that the applicant's gender identity does not accord with the sex designation on the applicant's birth registration; and
4. are of the opinion that the change of sex designation on the birth registration is appropriate.

OHIP (Health) Card

[To change information on your health card](#), you must visit a Service Ontario – Health Card Services – OHIP Office. Health cards do not indicate sex/gender as of 2016. However, it is still recorded in their internal system, and there is an option on the form to update it. You should bring the following:

1. [Completed Change of Information Form](#). You should fill in section A as it is on your current health card, and section C as you wish to update it.
2. Original copy of change of name certificate.
3. If you have a birth certificate with the correct gender marker, you should bring that as proof. There is no official guidance for accepted proof if you do not have a updated birth certificate. but we recommend bringing the two letters required for a driver's license/photo ID (see below section).
4. For absolute certainty, we recommend also bringing three documents as specified on the [Ontario Health Insurance Plan \(OHIP\) Document List](#).

Driver's License/Photo ID Card for Non-Drivers

To change your name and gender marker on [your driver's license or photo ID card](#), you must visit a ServiceOntario centre. You should bring the following **original** documents (the government will not accept photocopies):

1. Your current driver's license or photo ID
2. [Original copy of change of name certificate](#)
3. Original, valid long or short form birth certificate showing the correct information.

If you do not have a birth certificate with the correct gender marker, you will need to bring the following two documents:

1. A letter from a licensed doctor or psychologist. The required information on the letter is the same as for the birth registration but should specify that you wish to update your driver's license.
2. A letter from you that includes:
 - a. the change you want to make
 - b. your full name

- c. your current address
- d. your driver's licence number
- e. the name and address of the doctor or psychologist, who has signed the letter (described above) in support of the change

You do not need to have undergone surgery in order to update your gender marker. However, if you have had surgery, you can present documentation from a recognized specialist (such as the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health or other comparable institutions) instead of a letter from a doctor or psychologist.

Social Insurance Number

Permanent and temporary residents need a Social Insurance Number (SIN) in order to work in Canada or to access government programs and benefits. This number is stored by Service Canada along with all of the information that was provided when you first applied. This means your SIN is linked to your current legal name, date of birth, place of birth, and parents' names. Updating the information connected to your SIN will not change the number itself; you will simply receive a confirmation letter in the mail to let you know that your update was successful. You should apply to change the information on your SIN when you change your name and/or your gender marker.

Submit in person to: Service Canada Centre
559 College Street, Suite 100
Toronto ON M6G 1A9

Submit online via: <https://sin-nas.canada.ca/en/Sin/>

Submit by mail to: Service Canada
Social Insurance Registration Office
PO Box 7000
Bathurst, NB E2A 4T1

For most people, it will be easier to apply either in person or online. To apply in person, you will need to visit a Service Canada Centre. [You will need to bring three separate identity documents: one primary, one secondary, and one supporting document \(for most people this will be your Name Change Certificate\).](#) See the included link for what counts as primary/secondary/supporting documents.

[To apply online,](#) you may use digital copies of the same documents discussed above.

The forms must be downloaded and filled electronically, then printed out.

Required documents from the Document Checklist:

1. Your original PR card.
2. Fees: Copy of the receipt showing the amount paid.
3. Two identical photos taken within twelve (12) months of the date of this application that meet the specifications listed here: [photo specifications \(PDF, 1.24 MB\)](#). The photos should be put in a small envelope with your name written on it.
4. Proof showing that you meet the residency obligation in the past five (5) years immediately before the application. Please refer to [Appendix A: Residency Obligation](#).
5. A copy of your passport or travel document. For more details on what will be accepted, see the linked Government of Canada website.
6. A copy of your Change of Name Certificate.
7. A copy of your *Record of Landing* (IMM 1000) or *Confirmation of Permanent Residence* (IMM 5292 or IMM 5688).

Even though they are listed as required only in exceptional cases, we also recommend that you submit all of the following documents if you can, for extra certainty.

1. A copy of any identity document issued outside of Canada before you came to Canada, **OR**
2. A statutory declaration signed by you attesting to your identity **AND**
3. A statutory declaration also attesting to your identity signed by:
 - a. a person who knew you before you came to Canada (such as a family member) **OR**
 - b. an official of an organization representing people from your country of nationality or past residence.

All statutory declarations must be certified by an accredited commissioner of oaths.

Temporary Residence Permits

- According to [this page](#), the IRCC will not amend temporary residence permits to reflect changes made in Canada (e.g. a name change completed in Ontario). Your temporary residence permit must match your passport.

Citizenship Certificate

- [See also the Government of Canada application package](#). Answer “paper” in the drop-down menu. To update your name and gender identifier, you cannot apply online and must do so on paper.

Required forms:

1. [Application for a Citizenship Certificate for Adults and Minors \(Proof of Citizenship\)](#) [Last updated September 11, 2023]
2. [Document Checklist \[CIT 0014\]](#) [Last updated September 11, 2023]
3. [Request for a Change of Sex or Gender Identifier](#) [Last updated September 11, 2023]

The forms can either be filled electronically then printed out, or printed and then filled by hand using a pen.

Required Documents from the Document Checklist:

1. Your current, original citizenship certificate.
2. Two identical citizenship photos, meeting the requirements listed here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/citizenship-application-photograph-specifications.html>.
3. Colour copies of **two** pieces of valid identification. Both must show your name and date of birth, and one must have your photo on it. See [the official instruction guide](#) for what IDs are accepted.
4. A colour copy of your Change of Name Certificate.
5. Proof of payment.

Other places to update your information

Finally, there will be various other places where you will want to update your name and/or gender marker. Here is a list to jog your memory:

- Passport
- Employer
- Schools
- Banks (and credit cards)
- Credit Bureaus
- Billing Accounts
- Doctor's Offices
- Your landlord
- Elections Canada
- Extended Health Benefits
- Legal Documents, such as your Will and Power of Attorney documents