Identification Documents and Transgender People: An Overview of the Name and Gender Marker Change Process in the United States
The process for changing a legal name and/or updating gender marker depends on where you live, where you were born, and other individual circumstances and needs. This guide should give you an overview of that process!

### Updating Documents & Records

To change your name, follow the name change process in the state where you live.

To change your gender marker, follow the instructions for each document or record you want to update.

To update your birth certificate, follow the process in the state where you were born.

To update your driver’s license, follow the process in the state where you live.

For state-specific instructions on name change orders and gender marker changes, see TransEquality.org/Documents.

The process for updating a name and gender marker on documents and records typically looks like this...

1. Legal name change
2. Update social security record
3. Update license or state/territory ID
4. Update financial, insurance, school, & employment records
5. Update passport (if you have one)
6. Update birth certificate (if you need or want to)
Checklist

This is the typical process for updating names and gender markers. For more details or more specific information for your state or territory, visit TransEquality.org/Documents.

1 Some applicants may wish to file for a court order for gender change at the same time as their name change depending on if the state or territory requires legal recognition of gender transition.
Apply for an updated birth certificate *(if desired)*

If you want an updated birth certificate for school enrollment, employment, or other reasons, follow the instructions in the state or territory where you were born, regardless of where you currently live. If you were born in another country, follow the process for that country.

☐ If you were born in a state where it is difficult to update your birth certificate you may want to get an updated passport, which you can often use instead of a birth certificate as proof of citizenship.

☐ If the state where you were born requires a court order recognizing your gender to update your birth certificate, you may be able to get that court order issued in the state where you currently live or you may have to petition the state where you were born. For more information about your state’s process, visit [TransEquality.org/Documents](http://TransEquality.org/Documents).

Inform Selective Services of a name change *(if applicable)*

According to Selective Service rules, all individuals assigned male at birth are required to register with Selective Service. All name changes are to be reported to Selective Service. Learn more at [TransEquality.org/SSA-Trans](http://TransEquality.org/SSA-Trans).

☐ Fill out a Change of information form and return it with a copy of your name change court order at [Tiny.cc/SSS-portal](http://Tiny.cc/SSS-portal).

☐ Individuals assigned female at birth may need to obtain a status information letter to show that you are exempt from registering at [Tiny.cc/Trans-Status](http://Tiny.cc/Trans-Status).

Update immigration documents *(if applicable)*

If you have changed your legal name, submit your court-ordered name change document to update your name on immigration records.

If you are updating your gender, you will need to submit a driver’s license, birth certificate, passport, court order, or other official government-issued document reflecting the requested gender designation OR a letter from a licensed health care professional certifying the change in gender as shown in the sample letter at [TransEquality.org/immigration-documents](http://TransEquality.org/immigration-documents).

Update voter registration *(if you are over 18 and able to vote)*

If you haven’t registered to vote yet and are able, please register!

Voter registration can be updated with the Board of Elections or with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

☐ See [USA.Gov/Register-To-Vote](http://USA.Gov/Register-To-Vote) for more information on your state.

More Information

ID Documents Center


Legal Services Network

NCTE’s Trans Legal Services Network ensures that trans people can access assistance navigating the complicated name and gender change process and any other legal issues they may face. Learn more at [TransEquality.org/Legal-Network](http://TransEquality.org/Legal-Network).