



# How to Change Your Child's Name

There are **two** main ways to change the name of a child:

① **Fill out and file these court forms to ask the court for a name change:**

- *Petition for Change of Name*, NC-100
- *Attachment to Petition to Change Name*, NC-110
- *Order to Show Cause for Change of Name*, NC-120

You can fill out the court forms online at:  
[www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/other/namechange.htm](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/other/namechange.htm)

Then, go to a court hearing and ask the judge for a court order with the child's new name.

**Note:** If only one parent fills out the form, you must also notify the other parent. (See below.)

② **Ask to change a child's name during or after a family law case.**

If you are involved in a family law case, like paternity or adoption, the court may be able to change the child's name as part of that case.

The Family Law Self-Help Center can help you fill out your forms. Go to:  
**400 McAllister Street, Room 009**

**Do I have to tell the other parent about the name change?**

Yes. Both parents have the right to know about a request to change their child's name. You **must** let the other parent know, even if you have sole custody of your child.

**How do I let the other parent know about the name change?**

You **must give "notice" to the other parent.** There are specific steps you must follow. Ask a lawyer or ACCESS to help you with this.

You must also **put a notice of the hearing in a newspaper** for 4 weeks in a row, one day per week.

**What if I don't know where (or who) the other parent is?**

Contact ACCESS for information and help.

**What happens if the parents don't agree?**

The court will listen to both parents and decide what is best for the child.

The court will consider:

- How long the child has used the current name
- How the name change may affect the child's relationship with both parents
- How strong the parents' relationship is with the child
- The last name(s) of the child's siblings, if any
- What the child wants (for an older child), and
- Anything else the court considers important.

**Will the Court agree to the name change?**

The court usually agrees if the name change is best for the child, and:

- Both parents ask for the name change, or
- One parent asks, and the other parent was told about the name change and does not object,
- One parent has abandoned the child.

**Need help?**

Go to the ACCESS Center for the forms and instructions you need.

Our schedule is:

**Monday – Thursday:** 8:30 a.m. – 12 Noon  
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
**Friday:** 8:30 a.m. – 12 Noon



**ACCESS**

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