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| **Petition to Change the Name of a Minor Child** |

Congratulations {{ users }}! You have finished most of the forms you need for a petition to change the name of a minor child. The rest of the pages in this packet are your petition, and you must now bring your petition and some additional forms to a notary public for notarization.

## Next steps:

1. Make sure that you have a printed copy of this petition, along with your CARI and WMS release request form. Also print proof of guardianship if necessary.
2. Bring these documents to a notary public to have this petition notarized.
3. After the documents are signed and notarized, file this petition with the probate and family court that you selected during the interview.
4. If any of the individuals presenting this petition indicated in the interview that they **do not assent** to the name change, then **said individuals must be served with a copy of the documents that were filed with the court** and given a chance to object to the name change. You should also keep a copy of all of the filed documents for yourself and any of the individuals presenting this petition.
5. If there are no objections to the petition and the judge decides to grant it, then you will receive notice from the court when the child’s name change has been approved.
6. If there are objections to the name change, then there will be a hearing where the non-assenting individual can object to the child’s name change. In this case, the clerk will tell you how to "go to" the hearing.
7. Check the order when you get it to make sure that the child’s name was changed correctly.

## Getting your documents notarized:

1. Notary publics can typically be found in city or town clerk offices, courts, local banks, real estate or insurance offices, travel agencies, at a local drugstore or pharmacy, or in the phonebook.
2. Each individual involved in the presentation of this petition must appear before the notary public. Bring the documents from this petition that you need to have notarized as well as any government-issued photo I.D. for each individual.
3. The child’s birth certificate is also required in order for the petition to be notarized.
4. In Massachusetts, notarizing a document should not ever cost more than $1.25. If a notary says that notarization will cost more than $1.25, call 617-725-4030 to speak with the governor’s legal counsel.

## Paying your filing fee:

There will typically be a filing fee when submitting this petition to the court. You can call the court that you intend to file at to find out which methods of payment are accepted.

Filing fees typically include a $150 filing charge, a $15 surcharge, a $15 fee for citation of publication if required, and an additional $100 fee if filing during a divorce nisi period.

If you cannot pay the filing fee, you can ask to have the fee waived. In order to do so, you must qualify under the federal poverty income guidelines and file an Affidavit of Indigency.

## After you have filed your petition:

1. After the petition is filed, you need to give public notice of the petition by publishing the citation for publication that the court will send you. Arrange to have this citation published in a local newspaper and mailed to all necessary parties.
2. You must also serve notice to any parties listed on the petition that did not assent to the petition. This can be done via mail with return receipt requested. This does not need to be completed if the court has terminated the rights of the parent or guardian who has not assented, or if the court has otherwise waived need for notice.
3. Following publication and mailing, return the following to the court: the original citation with a clipping of the notice from the newspaper, the green return receipt postcard, and your signature certifying that you have mailed and published the notice.

## Final steps:

1. Look over the forms below, one more time. Make sure everything is correct.
2. {%p if defined('trial\_court.address.address') %} The address of your court, if you need it, is:   
   {{ trial\_court.address.on\_one\_line() }}.
3. {%p endif %}