

## Benton County Name Change Instructions

**Who can File:** a person wanting to change their name for any reason except to defraud others, may petition for a Name Change. A current, valid Washington state drivers license or ID card must be presented to confirm identity.

**Where to File:** A person desiring to change their name may file an action in any district in the state of Washington.

**Where to get Forms:** Forms are available on the District Court website and the District Court Administrative Offices.

**Filing Fees:** Filing fees are due at the time of filing and are non-refundable. The fee is \$291.50

**Fee Waivers:** Pursuant to GR 34, a fee waiver is available upon request. If your fee waiver is granted, all filing, administrative, and recording fees will be waived.

**Sealed Name Changes:** Any person requesting that their name change be sealed, needs to file their petition in Superior Court. For questions, please contact Superior Court.

**Copy of a Name Change Order:** One certified copy of your signed name change order will be provided after your hearing. Any additional copies will be \$5.00 each. If you are trying to obtain a copy of a previous name change order, please visit the Benton County Auditor's recording website.

**Before Filing your Name Change Petition:** If filing on behalf of a minor, **please bring a certified copy of the child's birth certificate.** All documents must be filled out completely and legibly. Please read the statements on the petition carefully, as you will be signing this document and swearing to it under penalty of perjury.

**Minor Name Change or a Family Name Change with a Minor:** If one of the legal or natural parents is not a petitioner for the name change, that parent must complete the **Consent of Natural Parent** form. This form must be notarized and filed prior to the hearing. If you cannot obtain consent of the other parent, you must have them personally served with a copy of the petition and hearing notice, and file proof of service. They must be served at least five court days prior to the hearing.

If you do not know the whereabouts of the other parent, you may ask the court to authorize service by publication under RCW 12.04.100. The Motion and Declaration to Publish Notice is available in the District Court Administration Office.

If you have a pending parenting plan, dissolution or paternity action that involves a minor, your name change request should be addressed in that action.

**What to Expect at your Hearing and After:** You must be present at the hearing. At the hearing, a District Court judge will consider the petition and make a ruling.

One certified copy of your signed name change order will be provided after your hearing.

**It is your responsibility to take a copy of the signed Order to all institutions or persons needing proof of the name change.**

**Registered Sex Offenders and/or an Offender Under the Jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections:**

If you or the minor is a registered sex offender, you must submit a copy of the petition to the Benton County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State Patrol at least five court days after the hearing. After you have submitted a copy of the petition and signed order to these agencies, you must fill out the return of service form and file it with the court. The return of service form may be obtained in District Court.

An offender under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections who applies to change their name shall submit a copy of the application to the Department of Corrections not fewer than five days before the entry of an order granting the name change.