



**OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE
501st COMBAT SUPPORT WING
RAF ALCONBURY / RAF CROUGHTON, UK**



NAME CHANGES

Changing your name or your child’s name legally and permanently is not just a matter of signing it differently from now on. Nearly all states require that you go through a formal, legal process to effect the change, as defined by each state’s laws.

Most states begin by requiring you to file a petition for a name change in the county courthouse of the state in which you are a legal resident. Part of a typical application will be a section asking you to give the reason for the request. Usually a petition can only be denied for “good cause,” such as the applicant having a criminal or bankruptcy record. After payment of the processing fee, you will be notified that the change is official. In some states, your proposed name change must be published in the Legal Notices Section of the local newspaper.

Once you officially receive your new name, you must immediately assume it. This entails perhaps the hardest part of the process. You must change all legal documents that reflect your old name, such as your driver’s license, voter registration, deeds, credit cards, social security number, etc. If you are going through a divorce, the easiest way to handle all of this is by requesting that the judge make a return of the maiden name as part of the divorce decree. A newly married spouse does not have to fill out a legal name change form; however, he/she must follow the individual processes of having all of the information changed on the driver’s license, voter registration, social security card, etc.

If you cannot do this in person yourself you may be able to enlist the assistance of a relative or friend back home to have them go to the courthouse and ask about the required procedures, paperwork and fees. If you would like another person to file on your behalf, you likely will need a special power of attorney.

Resources

https://aflegalassistance.law.af.mil/apps/aflass_public/bin/main.php

RAF Alconbury and RAF Croughton Legal Office Hours

All Services by Appointment Only (email 501cswja@us.af.mil)

Tuesdays and Thursdays 1000-1200 & 1300-1400

Current as of May 2022