

# Four Ways To Change Your Name

(The information in the article below applies to adults. The law applying to changing a child's name is complex and specific advice from a solicitor should be sought).

## **Option 1 – Just call yourself something else!**

The law of England and Wales does not require adults to follow any procedure in order to change their names. You can call yourself whatever you want, as long as you are not doing it in order to defraud anyone. There is nothing wrong with doing this, from a legal point of view, but it does cause some practical difficulties. You may find that organisations are unwilling to accept that your name has changed without some evidence in writing.

## **Option 2 - Change Your Marital Status**

Your marriage certificate, civil partnership certificate, decree absolute or dissolution of civil partnership certificate will usually be accepted as evidence that your name has changed. Organisations may ask to see the document alongside your birth certificate.

You are not obliged to change your name when your marital status changes and can continue to use your original name if you wish.

## **Option 3 -Statutory Declaration**

A statutory declaration is a specially worded document which is sworn as a declaration in front of a solicitor or a magistrate. If you are thinking of using this method of changing your name you should find out whether the organisations you are seeking to convince of your name change, will accept a statutory declaration as evidence. A format for a statutory declaration is given below.

You could enquire whether a magistrate at your local Magistrates Court is willing to witness this document. Alternatively, a local solicitor may be willing to witness it. You would normally be charged for this.

## **Format for Statutory Declaration**

I (new name) of (address) do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- 1) I was born on (date of birth) and formally know as (old name),
- 2) I absolutely and entirely renounce my former name of (old name) and assume and adopt the new name of (new name) in substitution for my former name.

3) I intend on all occasions, from today, in all records, deeds, documents and proceedings, as well as in all dealings and transactions, in public and in private, to use my new name of (new name) in substitution for my former name of (old name)

4) I request all persons, at all times, to identify and address me by my new name of (new name)

I make this solemn declaration conscientiously, believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835.

Declared at

(Address).....

Before me: .....

This (day) day of (month) (year)

Signature of Declarant.....

Formerly known as.....

#### **Option 4- Deed Poll**

This method uses a formal deed. The deed has to be signed in the presence of two witnesses. The witnesses have to give their names, addresses and occupations. The deed must contain set phrases in order to be valid. A solicitor can prepare a deed poll on your behalf. A cheaper option may be to buy a deed poll from a specialist legal stationers such as Oyez (<http://www.oyezforms.co.uk/>)

You can simply use the deed poll as evidence of your change of name. If you wish to go further to prove the change of name, you can enrol the deed poll in Central Office of the Supreme Court. A fee is payable to the court.

This will create a public record of the change of name. Only British, British Dependent Territories, British Overseas or Commonwealth citizens and British subjects who are permanently resident in the UK are entitled to enrol a deed poll. For more information about this process, please see the [government's website](#).

The change of name would also be advertised in the London Gazette. A fee would also be payable for this.

<http://www.gazettes-online.co.uk/home.aspx?geotype=London>

THIS FACT SHEET IS INTENDED AS A GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE PROCEDURE AND DOES NOT PURPORT TO RENDER SPECIFIC

ADVICE, LEGAL OR OTHERWISE. SPECIFIC ADVICE ON A PARTICULAR PROBLEM SHOULD ALWAYS BE SOUGHT.

Last updated 24/10/2011 EMW