

Name Changes in Respect of Children Over Two Years Old

A change in a child's name or surname can be recorded only if the following conditions are met.

- 1 If the application is for the recording of a change of name, there must not already have been recorded a name given or altered within the first two years of the child's life, either in baptism or otherwise.
- 2 There must not have been a previous application accepted under this procedure for the recording of a change of name. The same conditions also apply to a change of surname.
- 3 The child must have been born or legally adopted in Northern Ireland and from information supplied by you, it must be possible to trace the entry relating to his/her birth or adoption in the Birth Registers or Adopted Children Register.
- 4 The child must have been known by the name or surname now used for a period of not less than 2 years.

Documentary Evidence

- 5 You must produce two pieces of documentary evidence as proof of the child having been known by the name or surname now used and at least one of the documents should be dated two years before the date of your application. Preferably the date of birth should be shown on one of the documents. Photocopies of documents are not acceptable.
- 6 The following are example of documents which may be acceptable:

medical card
bank book/statement
school report
school certificate
insurance policy
passport
bus pass
library card

documents submitted will be returned.

- 7 Change of Forenames - the documentary evidence must show the spelling of all names.
- 8 Change of Surname - the documentary evidence must show the spelling of the surname and include details of all forenames. Where a child has more than one forename initials will be accepted for the additional forenames.

- 9 If the Registrar General is not satisfied with the evidence produced he may require the applicant to produce to him a copy of a notice in a newspaper circulating in the area where the child resides stating the applicant's intention to apply to the Registrar General for the recording of the different name or surname and that the child has been known by such name or surname for a period of not less than 2 years.

Application Form

- 10 When completing the application form please note that at Question 5 any details entered should relate to the natural/adoptive father and at Question 7 the child's new name/surname should be entered.
- 11 This form must be signed by:
- a ***the child's parents*** where they are married to each other; or
 - b ***both parents*** where they are not married to each other and the father has parental responsibility; or
 - c ***both parents*** where they jointly effected the registration of the birth of the child on or after 15 April 2002; or
 - d ***the child's mother*** where the parents are not married to each other and the father does not have parental responsibility; or
 - e ***the adoptive parents*** of the child; or
 - f ***the surviving parent*** if one parent is deceased; or
 - g ***the guardian*** of the child if both parents are deceased or if the mother is deceased and the father does not have parental responsibility; or
 - h ***other person*** who has parental responsibility where both parents are deceased or one parent is deceased and the surviving parent does not have parental responsibility.

- 12 If a parent is deceased details of the date and place of death should be provided.

Change of Name shown on Birth Certificate

- 13 It should be clearly understood that the name or surname in the birth entry cannot be changed. Any certificate of birth will continue to show the name and surname as originally registered but the new name and surname as recorded will be shown in a separate space in any certificate subsequently issued, together with the date on which the change was recorded by the Registrar General.
- 14 For further information please contact:

The General Register Office
Oxford House
49-55 Chichester Street
Belfast BT1 4HL

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