

How do I change the gender on all my IDs?

Washington State IDs and driver's licenses, birth
certificates, Social Security cards, U.S. passports, Tribal
IDs, and immigration documents



Northwest Justice Project

Part 1. General information

How do I change the gender on all my IDs?

Each government agency has its own forms and processes. This packet will explain the general processes for changing the gender designation on the following IDs:

- Washington State driver's licenses and IDs
- Birth certificates
- Social Security card and record
- U.S. passport
- Tribal IDs
- Immigration documents

Can I do it all at once for all my IDs with one form?

No. Each agency has different gender options as well as specific requirements and forms.

What are the options for gender designation?

Each agency has its own phrase and options for how it lists gender on each document. Some agencies call it "gender marker" instead of "gender designation". Others may call it "sex designation". All the phrases refer to the same thing- the letter or phrase that is listed as your sex or gender classifier on the record for that ID. Usually it will be a mix of options that include "F" or "female", "M" or "male" and "X". Some IDs are limited to only "F" and "M" options.

How much will it all cost?

The cost to change your IDs varies per document and agency.

How long will it take?

The time it will take to get an updated copy of your ID with the changed gender designation will vary. Some agencies like the Department of Licensing have

turnarounds of about a month. Other agencies, like those for your birth certificate or passport, may take months to send you an updated ID.

In what order should I update all my IDs?

What order you choose will depend on your specific situation and needs. Typically, it is best to update your IDs in the following order for ease of processing:

1. Driver's license or state ID
2. Social Security card and record
3. Tribal IDs if you have them
4. Birth certificate
5. Passport
6. Immigration documents if you have them

Where can I get more info?

Visit the National Center for Trans Equality website. There is an online ID document center with information about each type of ID. The information includes both state and federal ID information and birth certificate information for all 50 states. You can find the document center at transequality.org/documents.

What if I need to update my name on my IDs after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about how to ask for a legal name change in Washington by reading [How to Get a Name Change in Washington](#). After you get a legal name change in court, each ID will have different requirements for changing your name on the ID itself.

Can I change just some of my IDs but not all?

Yes.

The following sections explain how to change the gender on each of your IDs.

Part 2. How do I change the gender on my Washington driver's license or state ID?

What are my options for changing the gender designation on my Washington State ID or driver's license?

In Washington, you can choose one of three gender designation options for your driver's license or state ID card. The only requirement is self-attestation. This means **you don't need to provide any proof of gender change and can choose which gender designation works for you from the provided options.**

You can choose one of these gender designations for any of these Washington State IDs:

- Driver license/ID card
- EDL/EID
- Instruction permit

What are the 3 options for gender designation?

The gender designation options are: F, M and X. You can change the gender designation that is already on your ID to one of the above. Or if you are getting an ID or driver's license for the first time, you can choose one of the three gender designations.

Which form do I use and where can I get it?

Use the Change of Gender Designation Request form #520-043 from Washington Department of Licensing (DOL).

You can find the form at www.dol.wa.gov/?form=520043. You can also find copies of the form in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese at that webpage.

You can also ask for a copy of the form at any Department of Licensing office.

You can complete the form in person at a Department of Licensing office or you can mail it in to the address listed on the form:

**Programs and Services, Record Response
Department of Licensing
PO Box 9030 Olympia WA 98507-9030**

How much does this cost?

- If you don't need a photo change, mail in the form and it should be free to get a replacement ID through the mail. The replacement ID should list the gender designation you chose on the form.
- If you do need a photo change, submit your form in person at a DOL office. You will have to pay the \$20 ID replacement because of the photo change.
- If you are getting an ID for the first time, you will only need to pay for the ID itself and can choose which gender designation for that ID. ID costs will vary depending on which type of ID you are getting.

Where can I learn more?

Visit dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/genderchange.html.

What if I need to update my name on my ID after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about changing your name on your Washington State ID at this Department of Licensing web page: dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/namechange.html.

Part 3. How do I change the gender on my birth certificate?

What are my options for changing the gender designation on my birth certificate?

It depends on if you were born in Washington or born somewhere else. If you were born somewhere other than Washington State, you should read the section of this publication called [What if I was not born in Washington State?](#)

❖ On Washington State birth certificates this is called “Sex Designation” instead of “Gender Designation”.

I was born in Washington State. What are my options for changing my gender designation on my birth certificate?

People born in Washington State can request a birth certificate amendment (or change) to the gender designation that is listed on their birth certificate.

What are the gender designation options?

For Washington birth certificate amendments, you can choose one of these three gender designation options: Female, Male or X.

Which form do I use?

It depends.

If you are age 18 or over: Use “[Request to Change Sex Designation on a Birth Certificate for an Adult](#) #422-143” available at bit.ly/3PweLtd. The form will need to be signed in front of a notary.

If you are under 18, but are emancipated: you will also use Form #422-143 at <https://bit.ly/3PweLtd>. The form will need to be signed in front of a notary.

If you are under 18, and you are not emancipated: use “[Request to Change Sex Designation for a Minor](#) # 422-144” available at <https://bit.ly/45bNwKa>. Your parent or legal guardian must sign the form. Only one parent or guardian needs to sign the form. A licensed health care or mental health care provider must also sign the form. Ask a provider who can confirm that the gender designation change you want made is consistent with your identity.



Where do I get the form?

Visit doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/BirthDeathMarriageandDivorce/Forms.

What else do I need?

If you are using the **adult form and you are not** an emancipated minor: Nothing aside from remembering to have the form notarized when you sign it

If you are using the **adult form and you are an emancipated minor**: You will need to provide proof of your emancipation court order.

If you are using the form for a **minor**: It depends. If your legal guardian is signing the form, you need to include a certified copy of the guardianship court order.

How much does this cost?

It is free to change your birth certificate. But it costs \$25 to get a certified copy of your changed birth certificate. If you had a certified copy of your birth certificate issued to you in the last year, then you should be provided a free amended copy if you include the recent certified copy with your request for amendment and order form. Otherwise, there will be the \$25 fee to get a new copy.

How do I get a certified copy of the changed birth certificate?

When you mail in your Request to Change Sex Designation form, you should also fill out and send "[Form # 422-182 Birth Certificate Order Form](https://doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/BirthDeathMarriageandDivorce/Forms/Form%20422-182%20Birth%20Certificate%20Order%20Form)" (available at <https://bit.ly/3tc8Cef>) and the payment to:

Center for Health Statistics
Attn: Corrections
PO Box 47814
Olympia, WA 98504-7814

Where can I learn more?

Visit doh.wa.gov/LicensesPermitsandCertificates/BirthDeathMarriageandDivorce/GenderChange.

What if I was not born in Washington State?

To change your gender designation on a birth certificate from a state, tribal nation, colony or place other than Washington State, you must follow the rules and procedures of the place where you were born.

- Whether you can change the gender designation on your birth certificate at all and how to change it will be determined by where you were born
- Some states, colonies or foreign nations will allow gender designation changes on birth certificates. **Others will not.**
- **The laws about birth certificate gender designations are constantly changing and are very state or place specific.**

You can find more information for your birth state by visiting the Trans Equality ID Document Center online portal at transequality.org/documents. From there you can choose your birth state. Once you choose your birth state, the site will show you the specific rules, forms and instructions for your birth state on the bottom of the page.

If you are able to change your birth certificate, your birth state will have specific rules to follow.

- You might only need a form to change your birth certificate.
- You might need a letter from a doctor or some other proof of gender change.
- Or your birth state may require you to get a Court Order from a Judge stating specific rulings about changing your birth certificate.

If your birth state does require a Court Order to change your birth certificate, the process can be very unique and complicated. A Superior Court Judge from the county in Washington that you live in may be able to issue these kinds of orders. Use this Trans Equality site to learn what is required by your birth state: transequality.org/documents.

If you do ask a local Washington Judge for this kind of order, there are no standard forms or petitions for this kind of process. **It may be very difficult to complete without help from a lawyer or legal aid clinic.**

Q-Law Foundation of Washington is a legal aid service provider in Washington for the LGBTQ+ community. Q-Law Foundation can sometimes help with these issues. You can find out more about Q-Law and their clinics and services on their website at qlawfoundation.org.

What if I need to update my name on my birth certificate after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about changing your name on your birth certificate at doh.wa.gov/licenses-permits-and-certificates/vital-records/court-ordered-name-change

Part 4. How do I change the gender on my Social Security Card?

Is it possible to change the gender designation on my Social Security card or record?

-
- ❖ Social Security calls the designation a “Sex Identification on Social Security record”
-

Social Security cards do not list gender designation on the Social Security card itself. **However, a gender designation is made on your Social Security record.** This gender designation can be seen by hospitals, during credit checks and many other records search that may include your Social Security number.

You can change the gender designation on your Social Security record but will be limited to only 2 gender designation options. To change the gender designation on your Social Security record, you do not need to provide medical or legal evidence of your sex or gender designation.

You will have to provide proof of your identity and you may have to provide proof of citizenship or immigration status.

What are my options for changing my gender designation on my Social Security Card record?

The Social Security Administrations records system currently only allows for 2 gender designations: Female or Male.

Even if your identity proof document (like your Washington State driver’s license) lists a different gender designation such as “X”, the Social Security Administration will only issue gender designation changes from Female to Male or from Male to Female. **You can request either Male or Female gender designation on your record regardless of what gender designation is listed on your state ID or other identity proof document.** They don’t have to match.

How do I prove my gender?

Social Security no longer requires proof of gender to change the gender designation on your record. You no longer need to provide a doctor’s letter. Just choose which of the two gender designation options works best for you when you complete your

Application for a Social Security card form. On the form the options are listed as “Sex”.

How do I prove my identity?

Social Security requires that you prove who you are when you are requesting a change to your card or record. Use documents that are current (not expired) and have your name, date of birth or age, and, preferably, a recent photo. **Examples:** U.S. driver’s license, State-issued non-driver ID card, U.S. Passport. Social Security might also accept an employee or school ID card, a health insurance card (except for Medicare cards), or a U.S. military ID card.

Social Security also requires proof of citizenship and immigration status. Social Security will only accept certain documents as proof of citizenship status.

How do I prove my immigration status?

If you are a U.S. Citizen:

- **If you were born in the U.S.**, show your U.S. birth certificate or U.S. passport.
- **If you are foreign-born**, show your U.S. passport, Certificate of Naturalization (N-550/N-570), Certificate of Citizenship (N-560/N-561), Certification of Report of Birth (DS-1350), or Consular Report of Birth Abroad (FS-240)

What if I am not a U.S. citizen?

You must show a current U.S. immigration document, such as Form I-551 (Lawful Permanent Resident card, Machine Readable Immigrant Visa), with your unexpired foreign passport, I-766 (Employment Authorization Document, EAD, work permit), or I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) or admission stamp in the unexpired foreign passport.

F-1 or M-1 students must show I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status).

J-1 or J-2 exchange visitors must show DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status).

I have gathered my documents. What do I do now?

You must fill out an application for a Social Security card. You can fill it out online and print it from the Social Security card application online at ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf.

Take your completed application and documents to your local Social Security office. All documents must be originals OR copies certified by the issuing agency (no photocopies or notarized copies).

How much does it cost?

Replacing your Social Security after a change to your record is free.

Will changing my gender designation on my Social Security record affect my Social Security benefits or eligibility?

No.

Will changing my gender designation on my Social Security record affect my health benefits?

Generally, changing your gender designation on your Social Security record will not affect private health insurance. For some insurance plans like Medicare, Medicaid or Social Security Income programs, you could experience coverage approval or denial issues due to a mismatch of gender designations between your medical records and Social security records. You may have to work with your insurance provider to address this problem. Adding a specific billing code or contacting the plan to request a formal coverage determination could help.

Where can I get more info?

Visit faq.ssa.gov/en-us/Topic/article/KA-01453.

What if I need to update my name on my Social Security card after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about changing your name on your Social Security card at faq.ssa.gov/en-us/Topic/article/KA-01981.



Part 5. How do I change the gender on my Passport?

What are my options for changing the gender designation on my United States Passport?

❖ U.S. Passports call this your “gender marker” instead of “gender designation.”

You can choose one of three gender designations for your U.S. Passport. The only requirement is self-attestation. **This means:**

- **You don’t need to provide any proof of gender or gender change.**
- **You can choose which gender designation works for you from the provided options. No medical certifications or doctors letters are required.**
- **The gender you choose for your designation does not have to match the gender that is listed on your supporting documents.** For example, if your birth certificate says “Female”, you can still choose a different gender designation for your passport.
- **Limited validity passports are no longer required for people who are “in transition.”** Learn more about replacing your limited-validity passport in the section of this publication called “[*What if I have a limited-validity passport because my gender transition was still in process?*](#)”

What are the options for gender designation on my passport?

The gender designation options include: F, M and X. You can change the gender designation that is already on your passport to one of the three options. If you are getting a passport for the first time, you can choose one of the three gender designations.

❖ **However, until the end of 2023, “X” gender designations will only be issued for regularly processed non-expedited passport books.** At the end of 2023, it will be possible to request an X designation on passport cards, emergency passport books and expedited passport books.

What forms do I use?

There are different forms to use depending on what your situation is. You can learn more about which form is best for your specific situation at the travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply/forms.html.

The most common passport forms should now include three gender designation options. Follow the instructions on the form to learn which required documents you will need. There are also specific passport photo rules.

-
- ❖ Youth under age 16 must always use [Form DS-11](#) and will have to apply in person with **both** parents or legal guardians present. Both parents must consent to the passport changes.
-

If you are applying for a passport for the first time or applying for someone who is under 16:

- Use [Form DS-11](#)
- You can choose one of the three gender designation options for your first passport
- You will need to apply in person

If you want to change the gender designation on a passport that you already have:

- Use [Form DS-82](#) unless you are under 16
- **If you are under 16 and have had a passport before**, you must use [Form DS-11](#) instead
- You can choose one of the three gender designation options
- You should also check the box that says “Changing Gender Marker?”
- You will need to submit a new photo that looks similar to your current appearance and that meets general passport photo guidelines

If you want an X gender designation, you will be limited to a regularly processed non-expedited passport book until the end of 2023. Starting in 2024, you will be able to request an X gender designation for all types of passports including on passport cards, emergency passports and expedited passports.

If X is not available due to the type of passport you need during 2023, you have to choose M or F. You can get a free replacement routine passport with an X gender marker for up to one year from the issuance date of your 2023 passport. You can request the free replacement passport using [Form DS-5504](#).

What if I have a limited-validity passport because my gender transition was still in process?

This process has ended. You no longer have to provide medical proof of transition. Limited-validity passports are no longer issued to people who are “in the process of transition”.

However, you may still have an old limited-validity passport that needs to be updated if you were issued one prior to the policy change. You can change your gender designation at the same time as when you update to a regular validity passport.

You should use [Form DS-5504](#). You must apply within two years of your previous limited-validity passport’s issue date.

If your limited-validity passport was issued more than 2 years ago, then you must use [Form DS-11](#) and apply in person.

Where can I get more info?

Visit travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/need-passport/selecting-your-gender-marker.html

What if I need to update my name on my passport after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about changing your name on your passport at travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/have-passport/change-correct.html

Part 6. How do I change the gender on my tribal IDs?

Which of my tribal IDs has an option for changing the gender that is listed on it?

- Certificate Degree of Indian Blood cards (CDIB cards) do not have a gender designation listed on them. Your Bureau of Indian Affairs record or file could have a gender listed on it.
- If you are an enrolled member of a tribe, there might be a gender listed on your tribal enrollment card or tribal ID. It varies from tribe to tribe whether their ID has sex or gender listed. Some tribes might let you change the gender that is listed on that ID.
- Your tribal enrollment or tribal rolls records may need to be updated if they also list a gender. Many do not have a gender listed. But your gender may be listed in other records kept by your tribe like your family tree charts.

❖ Be sure to update your Social Security card and record with any changes to your name and gender **before** you change your name or gender with your tribal enrollment office. **If you change your tribal IDs before you change your Social Security card, your tribe could be fined by the Social Security Administration.**

How do I change the gender that is listed on my tribal enrollment card or records?

Some tribal ID cards list gender designations and others do not. If your tribal ID card does list a gender designation that you want changed, you must ask your tribal enrollment office for the specific process and forms. **Each nation has its own rules and customs about whether a gender designation change is possible.**

If your nation does allow you to change the gender designation on your ID or records, you may need to provide proof of your gender like a Washington State ID. You also may be limited to the gender designations provided by your tribal nation. **For example, even if your Washington State ID lists your gender designation as “X”, the ID provided by the nation you are enrolled in may not offer any options other than “F” or “M”.**

What if I need to update my name on my tribal IDs after a court ordered name change?

You can learn more about changing your name on your tribal ID from your tribal enrollment office. Each tribal nation has its own processes and forms for updating your name on their records. Usually you will need proof of a legal name change which means that a court granted you a name change with a court order.

Some tribal nations in Washington State will be able to grant you a court ordered legal name change as well using their tribal court system and forms. If you want to ask for a legal name change from your tribal court, ask the tribal court clerk for your tribe if there is a name change petition for your tribal court. Usually you must be an enrolled member of a tribe to ask the tribal court for a legal name change.



Part 7. How do I change the gender on my immigration documents?

Can I change the gender designation that is on my immigration documents?

It depends on your situation. This publication answers questions about some of the most common immigration situations and documents.

Immigration documents will be limited to only “M” or “F” (or “male” or “female”) gender designations.

Most will require proof of gender change through another ID document or a letter from a licensed healthcare professional certifying your “true gender”. There is a sample letter attached to this publication. There are no specific surgery or medical requirements. The letter just needs to confirm your gender.

-
- ❖ If you currently have an immigration attorney, you should talk to your attorney about changing your gender on your immigration documents before you try to change the documents.
-

How do I change my employment authorization card?

You must submit:

- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization (uscis.gov/i-765)
- Filing fee of \$495 (in 2023) or a Fee Waiver (permission to not pay the fee). The Fee Waiver form is Form I-912 (uscis.gov/i-912). If you need to use the Fee Waiver, submit the Form I-912 along with your Form I-765.
- Two passport-style photos
- Driver’s license, birth certificate, passport, court order, or other official government-issued document showing the requested gender designation, **or** a letter from a licensed healthcare professional certifying your true gender - see sample letter

How do I change my Permanent Resident Card (green card)?

You must submit:



- Form I-90, Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (uscis.gov/i-90)
- Filing fee of \$540 (in 2023) or a Fee Waiver (permission to not pay the fee)
- Driver's license, birth certificate, passport, court order, or other official government-issued document showing the requested gender designation, **or** a letter from a licensed healthcare professional certifying your true gender - see sample letter

How do I change my Naturalization Certificate?

You must submit:

- Form N-565, Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (uscis.gov/n-565)
- Filing fee of \$555 (in 2023) or a Fee Waiver (permission to not pay the fee)
- Two passport-style photos
- Driver's license, birth certificate, passport, court order, or other official government-issued document showing the requested gender designation, **or** a letter from a licensed healthcare professional certifying your true gender (see sample letter)

Where can I learn more?

Learn more about gender changes and immigration documents from The National Center for Trans Equality at transequality.org/know-your-rights/immigration-documents.

Learn more about USCIS issued identity documents at USCIS's website: uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-11-part-a-chapter-2.

What if I need to update my name on my immigration documents after a court ordered name change?

Learn more about changing your name on USCIS issued secure identity immigration documents at uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-11-part-a-chapter-2.

Learn more about how to ask for a legal name change in Washington by reading [How to Get a Name Change in Washington](#).

-
- ❖ If you currently have an immigration attorney, you should talk to your attorney about changing your name on your immigration documents before you try to change the documents. You should also tell your attorney that you received a legal name change.
-

SAMPLE MEDICAL CERTIFICATION LETTER FOR IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

Have your health care provider re-write this on their own letterhead.

(Attending Physician's Official Letterhead)

I, *(physician's full name)*, *(physician's medical license or certificate number)*, *(issuing State of medical license or certificate)*, am *(your name)*'s attending physician. We have a doctor-patient relationship.

(Check one :)

☐ *(Your name)* has had appropriate clinical treatment for gender transition to *(state true gender)*.

☐ *(Your name)* is in the process of gender transition to *(state true gender)*.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the above is true and correct.

(Physician's signature)

(Physician's typed name)

(Date)



Get Legal Help

- **Apply online** with [CLEAR*Online](https://nwjustice.org/apply-online) - nwjustice.org/apply-online
- **Facing a legal issue in King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call 2-1-1 (or toll-free 1-877-211-9274) weekdays 8:00 am - 6:00 pm. They will refer you to a legal aid provider.
- **Facing a legal issue outside of King County** (other than Eviction or Foreclosure)? Call the CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm or apply online at nwjustice.org/apply-online.
- **Contact the Native American Unit of the Northwest Justice Project:** Residents of King County can call the NAU front desk at 206-707-0920. Residents of all other counties can call NJP's CLEAR hotline at 1-888-201-1014, Monday through Friday between 9:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.
- **Contact the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project:** Seattle office: 206-587-4009/ 800-445-5771 Granger office: 509-854-2100/ 888-756-3641 Wenatchee office: 509-570-0054 / 866-271-2084
- **Facing Eviction?** Call 1-855-657-8387.
- **Facing Foreclosure?** Call 1-800-606-4819.
- **Seniors (age 60 and over)** with a legal issue outside of King County can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111.

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers can call any of these numbers using the relay service of your choice.

Interpreters provided.

This publication provides general information concerning your rights and responsibilities. It is not intended as a substitute for specific legal advice.

© 2023 Northwest Justice Project — 1-888-201-1014.

(Permission for copying and distribution granted to the Alliance for Equal Justice and to individuals for non-commercial use only.)