



/guide



Your questions answered

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR NAME AFTER DIVORCE

The purpose of this Stowe guide is to explain how to change your name or title following divorce or separation.

If you took on a new surname when you became married or entered into a civil partnership, and you've recently been through divorce or civil partnership dissolution, you may now be considering whether to change back to your previous name. After all, names are an integral part of your identity.

For some, keeping their name is an important way of maintaining that named connection to their children. For others they keep their current surname as a matter of practicality, for example providing continuity for professional reasons.

However, for many newly divorced people choosing to let go of their ex-partner's name and change back to their birth name is symbolic, signalling new beginnings and reclaiming who they were before marriage.

How do you change your name?

By law, you can simply choose to adopt a new name and start using it. However, to update your passport, driving licence, bank accounts and other official records, you will need a deed poll name change confirmation or the following original documents:

- Final order
- Original marriage or civil partnership certificate
- Original birth certificate

Divorce documents are not usually accepted on their own as evidence of a change of name unless it shows both your married name and maiden name, so you may also need original birth or marriage certificates.

What if you don't have all the necessary documents?

If you do not have the original documents listed there are some options:

- You can apply for replacement marriage and birth certificates with the [General Registers Office](#) for a fee.
- If your final order has been granted but you no longer have the documentation, for a fee you can apply for a replacement final order from the court that issued the original document.
- If you haven't yet been granted a final order, or you simply don't want to circulate original copies of formal documents, you can change your name by deed poll.

Five tips for changing your name after divorce

Whether you're changing your passport, bank account or driving license, or simply updating your records with companies and organisations that you are registered with, each will require specific documentation that will vary from organisation to organisation. So, here are our tips to get you started:

1. Prioritise changing your name on a form of photo ID such as passport or driving license first, as some companies may ask to see it as proof of name change
2. It can be useful to take copies of photo IDs using your old name before changing just in case you need proof at a later day
3. Set aside a day to get all your name changes completed in one day
4. Check what's needed for each organisation before you begin the process to ensure you have everything you need
5. Keep track of who you have contacted and when and keep a record of when each name change is completed so that you have a clear view of your progress.

Need more information?

Call our Client Care Team on **0330 838 7456** to speak with one of our specialist family lawyers or visit www.stowefamilylaw.co.uk

Who should I inform of my name change?

Once you've changed your name, you must update your name on all your official records. These include government departments, companies and organisations that hold your personal records such as:

- Banks & Building Societies
- Mortgage lender or Landlord
- Insurance companies
- Utilities companies (gas, electricity, water)
- Pension providers
- Electoral Register
- Credit or loan providers
- Employer
- HMRC
- Benefits office
- Property documents
- Passport office
- DVLA (driver's license and vehicle registration)
- Local council
- The Police (if you have a criminal record)
- Doctors and Dentist.

What if you only want to change your title?

Changing your married surname may not be as important to you as changing your title from Mrs back to Ms or Miss. If all you want to do is change your title, then you don't need a deed poll or to go through any formal process, you can simply start using your preferred title.

Useful links

Name change administration can take time and be stressful, especially if you have issues tracking down the paperwork or problems proving your identity. To help, we have gathered together useful links below.

Get a copy of your final order from the court that issued it – [find a court in England & Wales](#).

Order [official copies of birth and marriage certificates](#) online.

UK Gov advice on [changing your name by deed poll](#).

