

# Gender Affirming Care

## FAQs About Legal Name & Gender Changes

### You aren't like anyone else - and we LOVE that about you!

Some people who are transgender, nonbinary, and/or gender diverse may use a chosen name that is different than their given name. At Chase Brexton, "given name" means the name on documentation (i.e. insurance card, passport, Social Security card, and/or drivers license/state ID). "Chosen name" is the affirming name that someone claims and uses. This FAQ is for people who want their Chase Brexton Health Care providers to use their chosen name and for people seeking legal name and gender affirmation by updating their identity documents with chosen names and gender markers.

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## CHOSEN VERSUS LEGAL NAME USE AT CHASE BREXTON HEALTH CARE

### CAN I USE MY CHOSEN NAME AS A PATIENT WITH CHASE BREXTON?

**YES! Let us know the name you'd like us to call you.** It's important that we do all we can to affirm who you are. You can share your chosen name with a Patient Service Representative (PSR), the lab and/or pharmacy when you check-in. You can also tell your provider during a visit.

If you are wondering how to share your chosen name, pronouns, gender identity, and other important information with a provider, you might use a communication tool like the TGNC Card (under the "Patient Resources" section of this page [transhealthresearch.org/resources](https://transhealthresearch.org/resources)).

### WHEN DOES CHASE BREXTON USE MY GIVEN NAME INSTEAD OF MY CHOSEN NAME?

**Chase Brexton will use your given name when legally necessary.** For example:

- when creating your patient health record and account;
- on official correspondence;
- when billing insurance;
- when sending prescriptions to pharmacies;
- when sending your lab requisitions (i.e. to Quest Diagnostics or Labcorp);
- when sending imaging orders (i.e. to American or Advanced Radiology);
- when making medical referrals; and
- when completing paperwork that requires use of an insurance-matching name.

### WHAT IF CHASE BREXTON'S TEAM CALLS ME BY THE WRONG NAME OR MISGENDERS ME?

**First and foremost, we apologize.** Mistakes do happen, and it's important that we support our patients. **Please let us know if we made a mistake.** If you are not comfortable doing it in person, you can:

- call or email Patient Feedback: 410-837-2050 x1352 or [feedback@chasebrexton.org](mailto:feedback@chasebrexton.org).
- request to speak to a manager to resolve concerns.
- ask for support from a Transgender Care Navigator in the Center for LGBTQ Health Equity at Chase Brexton.

At Chase Brexton, we strive for exceptional service from all staff. If you are dissatisfied by care from Chase Brexton, we want to know so that we can improve.

## I HAVE LEGALLY CHANGED MY NAME AND/OR GENDER MARKER. HOW DO I UPDATE MY CHASE BREXTON HEALTH RECORD?

### Follow these steps:

- 1. Health insurance plan:** Update your information with your health insurance plan. Each insurance company has a process for updating personal information.
  - Have Maryland Medicaid? You will need to access your online Maryland Health Connection consumer account.
    - Login to your account
    - Select "Change my information"
    - Then select "Add, Remove, or Edit Household Member"
    - Update your name and/or gender marker, then save and submit your updated information.
    - Contact your Managed Care Organization (MCO) and request a copy of your updated health insurance member card.
- 2. Chase Brexton health record:** During your next appointment at Chase Brexton, share your updated health insurance card and driver's license or State photo ID with a PSR at the front desk.
- 3. Chase Brexton's lab and pharmacy:** If you use the Chase Brexton Pharmacy and/or Lab, please share your updated health insurance card and driver's license or State photo ID with a pharmacy and/or lab staff member.

## CHANGING YOUR NAME OR GENDER IDENTITY LEGALLY IN MARYLAND

### I LIVE IN MARYLAND AND I WANT TO LEGALLY CHANGE MY NAME. HOW CAN I DO THAT?

**To do this, you will need to apply for a judicial declaration.** Review the process, find forms, and view videos at [bit.ly/MDnamechange](https://bit.ly/MDnamechange) or download the application at [bit.ly/MDnamechangeform](https://bit.ly/MDnamechangeform).

You can also review the steps for legal name changes that begin on page 4 of this document.

### DO I HAVE TO LEGALLY DECLARE/CHANGE MY GENDER IDENTITY THROUGH A JUDICIAL DECLARATION?

**Gender is handled slightly different than a name change.** In certain situations, you may need a court order for other legal or administrative reasons (accessing services or resources, updating records in other states or countries, etc.).

- **Social Security, Passport, Driver's License/State ID:** Gender is self-select for Social Security Administration, US Passport, and Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administration.
- **Birth Certificate:** While gender is not self-select for birth certificates, you do not have to have a judicial declaration to change your gender identity on your birth certificate through the Maryland Division of Vital Records, BUT you do need either a judicial declaration or

will need to complete a form for the Division of Vital Records and submit it along with a supporting statement from a health care provider. Other states may vary.

- **Maryland Court petitions:** Gender is a fillable (write-in) box on the petition forms. So, it is possible that you can write whatever term you use for yourself. As of March 2024, clients at FreeState Justice have written in the terms male, female, and nonbinary and those have been accepted by the court. We are unsure how the court has responded to other terms, such as Two-Spirit.

You can review more about [gender markers](#) on the Maryland Courts website at [bit.ly/MDgender](https://bit.ly/MDgender).

## HOW DO I CHANGE MY GENDER IDENTITY LEGALLY IN MARYLAND?

Visit the **Maryland Courts website** at [bit.ly/MDgender](https://bit.ly/MDgender) for an overview and [bit.ly/MDgenderform](https://bit.ly/MDgenderform) to download the application form. With the gender identity change form you can also apply to change your name.

## I LIVE IN MARYLAND AND I WANT TO LEGALLY CHANGE MY GENDER IDENTITY OR NAME. DO I HAVE TO DO BOTH?

In Maryland, you can request a **judicial declaration of gender identity or name change with or without doing both**. The application for a legal gender identity change does allow you to apply for a name change at the same time, if you want: [bit.ly/MDgenderform](https://bit.ly/MDgenderform).

## I WANT TO CHANGE MY CHILD'S NAME AND/OR LEGAL GENDER MARKER. CAN I DO THAT?

There are a few places where this personal information is recorded, so this process takes multiple steps. Here are some options to consider:

1. **School Records:** In Maryland, some school records can be updated to show a person's chosen name and pronouns, even without seeking a legal name or gender marker change. In Maryland, public school districts are guided by "Providing safe spaces for transgender and gender non-conforming youth," which can be reviewed at [bit.ly/MDschool](https://bit.ly/MDschool), and its companion document, which can be reviewed at [bit.ly/MDschool2](https://bit.ly/MDschool2). Find your child's school's policies and procedures by:
  - Speaking with your child's guidance counselor or
  - Visiting the school's or school district's website and searching for "gender identity" or "LGBT."
2. **Legal Affirmation:** If you are seeking to legally change identity for your child, the steps in the process are outlined in the coming pages. You can also visit the Maryland Courts website for information and forms:
  - **For name changes -**
    - review the process: [bit.ly/MDnamechange](https://bit.ly/MDnamechange)
    - download the application: [bit.ly/MDchildname](https://bit.ly/MDchildname)
  - **For gender identity** (with or without a name change) -
    - review the process: [bit.ly/MDgender](https://bit.ly/MDgender)
    - download the application: [bit.ly/MDchildgenderform](https://bit.ly/MDchildgenderform)

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEGAL AFFIRMATION INFO AND SERVICES?

Check out the **"Legal Services and Information"** section in the *Resources for Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender Expansive Care* created by the Center for LGBTQ Health Equity at Chase Brexton Health Care: [bit.ly/CLHEresource](https://bit.ly/CLHEresource).

## STEPS AND TIMELINE FOR LEGALLY CHANGE NAME/GENDER IN MARYLAND

**These are the steps for name and gender changes in the state of Maryland for the most commonly needed documents.** The name/gender change process in other states and for other documents will vary.

Step	Document	Agency/ Organization	Approximate Time Frame	Gender Marker Options
1	<b>Court order for legal name change and/or declaration of gender identity</b>	Maryland Circuit Courts	1-6 months (varies by <u>jurisdiction</u> )	Write-in - blank space. Known successfully accepted terms include Female, Male, and Nonbinary.
2	<b>Social Security Card*</b>	US Social Security Administration	2 weeks or less	Self-selected - Options are Female and Male
3	<b>Driver's License, Learner's Permit, or State Photo ID *</b>	Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA)	2 weeks or less	Self-selected - Options are Female, Male, and X (unspecified or other)
4	<b>Birth Certificate*</b> (Must be updated in the state where you were born.)	Maryland Division of Vital Records	Varies	Updated based on supporting documents - options are Female and Male**
5	<b>U.S. Passport *</b>	US State Department	Varies; routine (at least 6 weeks) and expedited processing options available.	Self-selected - Options are Female, Male, and X (unspecified or other)

\* = For legal name change, a certified copy of the court order is needed.

\*\* = A court order **or** completing a form and providing health care provider's statement will be needed to change gender.

### STEP 1: MARYLAND COURT ORDER

**To legally change your name/gender you will start by submitting a petition to the court.** This step outlines petitioning the Maryland court. This is for people who live in Maryland. Watch videos by Maryland Circuit Courts to learn more about Name Change:

- for adults - [bit.ly/MDadultncvideo](https://bit.ly/MDadultncvideo)
- for children - [bit.ly/MDyouthncvideo](https://bit.ly/MDyouthncvideo)

*If you are seeking a legal name change and are 18 years and older, you can get free help with the paperwork through Trans Maryland's name change program: [transmaryland.org/name-change-program](https://transmaryland.org/name-change-program).*

## COURT FORMS

Goal(s)	Link to Forms, Documents, & Questions & Answers
Name change only	<a href="https://bit.ly/MDnamechange">bit.ly/MDnamechange</a>
Gender marker change, with OR without name change	<a href="https://bit.ly/MDgender">bit.ly/MDgender</a>

## PETITION THE COURT

### Complete the form for name and/or gender change:

- for name only - [bit.ly/MDnamechangeform](https://bit.ly/MDnamechangeform);
- for gender with or without name change - [bit.ly/MDgenderform](https://bit.ly/MDgenderform)

The form will ask you to provide the reason for your request.

- The reason cannot be for any illegal or fraudulent purpose.
- Some people choose to disclose that they are transgender as the reason for their request.
- Others choose to say something like “This is the name that I go by,” or “This is the name of common usage.”

### Gather identification documents

- Copy of your birth certificate
- Copy of a valid government-issued ID (driver’s license, state ID, passport, etc.)

### Arrange your payment

- Fees must be paid in full with exact cash, money order, or a check made out to *Clerk of the Court*.
- The cost for filing the petition is \$165.
  - You may apply for a reduced or waved fee: [bit.ly/MDfeewaver](https://bit.ly/MDfeewaver)
- There is also a \$1 photocopy fee.
  - You may want to bring an extra dollar if you’d like them to make you a photocopy of the forms/documents you are submitting.
  - You may also tell them that you do not want a copy of the document.

### File the petition at your circuit court

- Find your jurisdiction’s circuit court here: [courts.state.md.us/circuit](https://courts.state.md.us/circuit)

### Court approves or denies the request

You can use Maryland Judiciary Case Search to track the status of your case: [bit.ly/MDcasesearch](https://bit.ly/MDcasesearch)

- If the court has questions about your request, it may hold a hearing. Your petition will never be denied without a hearing.
- If your request is approved, the court may mail you a certified copy of the court order.

### Get several certified copies of the approved name/gender change court order

After your name change is approved, visit the clerk’s office of the circuit court to purchase at least 4 certified copies of the approved court order. Consider these copies your lifetime supply

- most agencies will return original copies to you, though some may not. Remember, it will be harder to get additional copies:

- in 10-20 years when files are archived by the court
- if you move out of the area

You will use the certified copies for each of the next steps to update your identity documents.

## STEP 2 : SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

**Updating your Social Security card is FREE.** The update will appear in the system in approximately 10 days, so wait at least this long before moving to Step 3. To update your Social Security card:

### Fill out form SS-5: [ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf](https://ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf)

- You can update your gender marker and name on the same form.
- The SSA offers self-select options for gender marker in the row marked 'Sex'.
- Right now the options are Female and Male. In the future, more options may be made available.
- For further information about changing your gender identity for Social Security, visit [bit.ly/SSAfaq](https://bit.ly/SSAfaq).

**Gather your forms and documents.** Bring form SS-5, a certified copy of your approved name/ gender change court order, proof of citizenship (such as your birth certificate), and an unexpired government issued ID.

**Go in-person to take your form and documents to a US Social Security Administration office.** Find your closest office by visiting [bit.ly/SSAlocations](https://bit.ly/SSAlocations).

**Receive your updated card.** Your new, updated card will be mailed to the address you put on your application within 2 weeks.

## STEP 3: MARYLAND VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION (MVA)

**Schedule an in-person appointment with Motor Vehicle Administration.** Visit [bit.ly/MVAschedule](https://bit.ly/MVAschedule) to make an appointment. Choose the appointment option: *Correct My Maryland Driver's License (Name Change)*.

**Bring the following supporting documents:** For name changes, you will need your updated Social Security card, a certified copy of your court order, and your existing MD state ID or license.

- If you are only changing your gender, not your name, you can do so without the supporting documents.
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### Go to your appointment and complete the application.

- **Gender:** The Maryland MVA offers these self-select options for gender marker: X (unspecified or other), Female, and Male. You can update your gender marker while you are there to update your name; no additional form or supporting documents are needed because it is a self-select option.
- **Photo:** You can have a new photo taken. If they do not offer, you can ask.
- **Signature:** You may find it helpful to practice signing your new name while you wait- you will digitally sign your new ID before it is printed.
- **Address:** Make sure your address is correct.
- **Payment:** There will be a \$20 fee for the new ID to be printed.

**Your new license/ID will be mailed to you in 1-2 weeks.** Remember to make sure that your address is up to date; the new copy will be sent to your address on file. For more information visit [bit.ly/MVAcorrect](https://bit.ly/MVAcorrect).



#### STEP 4: BIRTH CERTIFICATE (If Applicable)

If you were born in a state other than Maryland, you can look at this site for state-by-state instructions here: [transequality.org/documents](https://transequality.org/documents). If you were born in Maryland, do the following:

**Download and complete the change form:** [bit.ly/MDbirthcert](https://bit.ly/MDbirthcert)

- **To change your name, you will need a court order.** You will put your name change under “Current Name” and former name under “Name at Birth.”
- **To change your gender, you will either provide:**
  - a certified copy of your court order OR
  - have your Chase Brexton Health Care provider (medical and/or behavioral health) fill out the affidavit on the third page of the application.

**Make an appointment to submit the form** in person at the Division of Vital Records, 6764-B Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21215. To make the appointment, visit [bit.ly/MDbirthappt](https://bit.ly/MDbirthappt).

**Take the following with you to the appointment:**

- the application,
- required evidence - court order and/or provider affidavit and state ID, and
- a check or money order made out to the State of Maryland. The total fee will depend on your needs.
  - There is a \$10 processing fee.
  - If you want certified copies of your new certificate, each copy is \$10.

#### STEP 5: US PASSPORT (If Applicable)

**Download and complete either form DS-82 or form DS-5504.** You will select the form based on whether you are getting your first passport or correcting/updating your passport.

- For information on applying for your first passport visit: [bit.ly/passportfirst](https://bit.ly/passportfirst)
- For information on correcting/updating your passport visit: [bit.ly/passportupdate](https://bit.ly/passportupdate)
- For information on changing your gender marker, visit: [bit.ly/passportgender](https://bit.ly/passportgender)

**Apply in-person with the following documents:**

- the correct form,
- your most recent US passport (if you currently have one),
- your updated birth certificate (if this is your first time getting a passport),
- a certified copy of the court order, and
- a color passport photo.

**Find where to apply in-person here:** [iafdb.travel.state.gov](https://iafdb.travel.state.gov)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**As you complete the above steps, share your updated identity documents with applicable organizations and businesses.** This name change check list provides insight on where to update your information: [bit.ly/namechangelist](https://bit.ly/namechangelist). We also suggest using a spreadsheet to track your progress as you update identity documents and contact organizations and businesses. Other places you may need to update include:

- **Taxes:** Your IRS Federal taxes will automatically update once you complete the process with

the SSA. Before filing state taxes, ensure your name is correctly updated on your form(s).

- **Employer/Work Information:** Contact your manager or human resources for support with updating your documentation and records. Consider professional organizations such as state boards.
- **Credit Bureaus:** This article has information specific to nonbinary and transgender people who change their name legally: [bit.ly/namechangecredit](https://bit.ly/namechangecredit).

## SOME OF THE AGENCIES REQUIRE DOCUMENTS TO BE NOTARIZED. DOES CHASE BREXTON PROVIDE NOTARY SERVICES?

**Yes! Chase Brexton provides notary services Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM.** Ask your case manager, provider, or any member of your care team to be referred. An appointment must be made in advance for these services.

You can also find notary public services at banks, courts, and some businesses like UPS and FedEx. Fees will vary by location.

## DO I NEED A SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM (SSS) STATUS INFORMATION LETTER?

**The SSS is a list of US citizens and legal residents who could potentially be recruited for the military, commonly known as the draft.** US citizens who were assigned male at birth must register with the SSS within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Legal residents between the ages of 18-25 years old who were assigned male at birth must register as well.

SSS registration is also required for opportunities such as student financial aid, government jobs, US citizenship, and other government benefits. When applying for government jobs and benefits, transgender people can face difficulties related to their SSS registration status.

For more info on the SSS for transgender+ people visit:

- Transequality.org: [bit.ly/transequalitySSS](https://bit.ly/transequalitySSS)
- Selective Service System: [bit.ly/ssstrans](https://bit.ly/ssstrans)

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Chosen name:** The affirming name that someone claims and uses. This is considered chosen unless you change it legally.

**Gender identity:** The gender (or genders) that best match how you feel inside. This may or may not match the sex you were assigned at birth.

**Gender marker:** The gender chosen from options given. Male, female, X can be gender markers on a form or used by an agency/organization, for example.

**Given name:** The name on documentation (i.e. insurance card, passport, Social Security card, and/or driver's license/state ID). This is considered your legal name unless you change it legally.

**Judicial declaration:** A legal decision, official statement, or proclamation. In the case of name and gender identity changes, a judicial declaration is also known as a court order.

**Jurisdiction:** The area in a state or country where a court has power to make legal decisions.

**Petition (court petition):** A formal request asking the court for a court order and giving the reasons why the court order is needed.

**Pronouns:** The words we use to talk about ourselves or that others use to talk about us. She/her; he/him; they/them, for example.