



## CHANGING YOUR NAME POST-DIVORCE

**Name changes are not automatic when you file for divorce.** A change of name post-divorce will require you to take the same steps that you took the first time you changed your name. Here are the steps that you need to follow in California.

### Step 1: File and Receive your Certified Judgement of Dissolution

The first step to changing your name is to request a name change on the Judgment for Dissolution or Legal Separation filing, also known as form FL-180. If you are working with Laura McGee she will ensure that this form is filed on your behalf as part of the uncontested divorce process. If you are not working with Laura, you can learn how to complete this step [here](#).

Once you have received your certified Judgment for Dissolution (which includes the right to change your name), you can begin the process of actually changing your name.

### Step 2: Social Security Office

The first place to go is the Social Security office. They will ask for a “Certified Copy” of your Judgment for Dissolution which they sometimes refer to as a “Decree.” The clerk has certified the judgment that I provided to you as a true copy of the Judgment for Dissolution that is on file with the court. The clerk’s stamp and court seal are located on the last page (sometimes on the back of the last page). Each agency will want to see this court certified copy, **not your own photocopy**.

### Step 3: DMV and Passport

Once you have your new social security card in hand, schedule a trip to the **DMV** and **passport office** to change your driver’s license/ID and passport. Keep in mind that you can also update your address while you are there.

Tip: The California DMV now let’s you make name and address changes online, which can be schedule [here](#). The passport office has an [online application process](#) too.

### Step 4: Other Important Records and Documents

Once your name has been changed on your official documents, there are a number of places where you will want to update your name. The process will be different for each of these places. Here is a checklist to help get you started:

1. Post office and/or mailing address
2. Employer
3. Voter registration
4. Car title and/or leaseholder agreement
5. Insurance policies (auto, health, life)
6. Bank and/or brokerage accounts
7. Credit cards
8. Utilities
9. Health, dental, and vision plans
10. Email and online accounts
11. Memberships and subscriptions
12. Perhaps it's time for a new will or trust or an update to an old one. [Lori Shannon](#) can help you with a new will and trust. You can schedule an appointment with her [here](#).

The above list can seem daunting but many of these changes can take place at the same time. Changing your name can provide you with peace of mind and emotional healing after divorce, all tasks well worth the effort.

Wishing you all the very best!

Laura McGee, JD, Mediator & Divorce Coach