

Does your trans child want to legally change their name or gender marker?

Here is what you need to know.





My trans child has told me that they would like to legally change their name. Can they do so?

Like every Canadian, your trans child has a right to change their name. They can change their name on government issued identification documents including their passport, birth certificate, driver's license, photo card, health card, passport, SIN card and Indian Status card.

Do I have to give my consent for my trans child to change their name?

In Ontario, if you have decision-making responsibility (used to be called "custody") for your child you can apply to change their name if your child has lived in Ontario for the past 12 months, and is 17 or under. If your child is 16 or older they can apply to change their name on their own. You should speak with a lawyer if there is a court order that says that you cannot change your child's name.

Gender identity means the gender that you personally feel is who you are, not the gender you were labeled as when you were born. Some people are non-binary and this means that they do not identify as either male or female.

Deadname means someone's name they were given when they were born but no longer use because it does not match their gender identity.

My ex-partner and I are divorced and have joint decision-making responsibility (used to be called “custody”) for our child. Do I have to tell them that our child will be changing their deadname?

Yes! You need to get the other parent's consent before submitting the name change document. It is also a good idea to include a copy of your court order or separation agreement that details your parenting arrangements.

What if the other person who has joint decision-making responsibility (used to be called “custody”) for my child does not provide their written consent for our child to change their deadname?

If you cannot get the written consent of the child's other parent who has joint decision-making responsibility, then you can apply to court and ask them to change the name without the other parent's consent. You should speak to a lawyer if this situation applies to you.



Gender marker means a sign on your government identification documents that tells people what your gender identity is. It is sometimes called gender identifier or sex designation. Can be “M” as in “male”, “F” as in “female” or “X” which is gender neutral.

What if my child’s other parent only has parenting time (*used to be called “access”*) and not decision-making responsibility (*used to be called “custody”*), am I still required to tell them about our child’s name change?

Yes, even if the other parent does not have decision-making responsibility (*used to be called “custody”*) you need to give them written notice of your child’s name change.

My child is trans and wants to legally change their gender marker. Do I have to apply for them?

If your child is 16 or older they can apply to change their gender marker on their own, if they are under 16 you, as their parent must apply for them.

My trans child is under 16 and wants to change their gender marker but I am not sure what to do. Do I have to give my consent for them to change their gender marker?

If your trans child is under 16 they will need your consent to change their gender marker. It is important that you speak to a lawyer if you are unsure about consenting to the change to find out about your child’s rights and your rights.


Here are some resources to support your trans child:

Lesbian Gay Bi Trans (LGBT) Youth Line has an Ontario-wide database of mental health service providers and other supports

 www.youthline.ca/get-support/referral-database

The 519 offers support and services for LGBTQ2S individuals


 www.the519.org

 (416) 392-6874


 Info@The519.org

Positive Space Network provides programming and mental health support for 2SLGBTQ+ youth in the Halton Region


 www.positivespacenetwork.ca/resources/

 (289) 208-0886 or (289) 208-0902

Rainbow Health Ontario a database of health and social service providers who have expressed a commitment to providing care to LGBT2SQ people in Ontario

 www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/lgbt2sqhealth/service-provider-directory/

Transgender Map is a full guide on the social, legal and medical aspects of gender transition for transgender individuals, questioning individuals or their supporters


 www.transgendermap.com/resources/canada/ontario/




For help finding a lawyer:

Legal Aid Ontario


 www.legalaid.on.ca

 Toll free: 1-800-668-8258

 TTY: 1-866-641-8867

Law Society of Ontario Lawyer Referral Service

 www.findlegalhelp.ca

 Toll free: 1-855-947-5255

JusticeNet

 www.justicenet.ca



This is general information only. If you need legal advice, you should contact a lawyer.