

## **JUDICIAL NAME CHANGE:**

The procedure for a Judicial Name Change is set forth at section 6 of Act 1982, Dec. 16 P.L. 1309, No. 295.1. Outlined below is a general interpretation of the procedures for a Judicial Name Change in the State of Pennsylvania and the County of Chester.

### **FINGERPRINTS:**

If the petitioner is thirteen (13) years or older, a fingerprint card is required to be filed with the petition. The Chester County Sheriff's Office, Pennsylvania State Police, and most local police departments may assist with fingerprinting. It is your responsibility to contact them. The Chester County Sheriff's Office is located at the Chester County Justice Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Suite 1202, (610) 344-6850.

### **NAME CHANGE PETITION:**

The name change petition form is located on the Chester County website, chesco.org or at the Chester County Law Library, Chester County Justice Center, 201 West Market Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Suite 2400. The petition is filed with the Prothonotary's office, Chester County Justice Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Suite 1425. The filing must include the fingerprint card and an 8 x 10 envelope, with postage. The Prothonotary will mail the petition and fingerprint card to the State Police. The State Police have sixty (60) days to return the report back to the Prothonotary's office.

### **HEARING DATE:**

The petitioner will take the **filed** petition to Court Administration, Chester County Justice Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 4100, to obtain the hearing date notice. After the hearing date is scheduled, the petitioner will file the hearing date notice with the Prothonotary's office. The hearing date is typically around ninety (90) days from the date of filing.

### **NAME SEARCH**

A name search is required to inform the court of any outstanding debts or taxes a petitioner owes, and/or of any criminal conviction information, if applicable (some crimes preclude a name change). The petitioner must contact each of the following offices to arrange for the name search.

1. Recorder of Deeds, 313 W. Market Street, West Chester, Pa, Suite 3302, (610) 344-6330
2. Register of Wills/Clerk of Orphan's Court, Chester County Justice Center, Suite 2200, (610) 344-6335
3. Clerk of Courts, Chester County Justice Center, Suite 1400, (610) 344-6135

The petitioner will be asked to provide the hearing date, current name (the one to be changed), if the petition is for a minor or not, the name of any spouse and a contact name and phone number for any further questions.

### **PUBLICATION NOTICE:**

The petitioner is directed to give notice of the name change hearing date by publication in the following newspapers and provide proof of publication at the hearing.

1. Notice **MUST** be published in the Chester County Law Reporter, 15 West Gay Street, 2nd Floor, West Chester, PA. (610) 692-1889; this is the official publication for Legal Notices for Chester County.
2. Notice **MUST ALSO** be published in one (1) of the following newspapers of general circulation within Chester County. Both are located at 390 Eagleview Blvd., Exton, PA.
  - A. Daily Local News, Legals@dailylocal.com.
  - B. Pottstown Mercury, Legals@pottsmmerc.com.

For more information, please contact the classifieds department at (610) 430-1199.

### **WAIVER OF PUBLICATION AND SEALING OF THE RECORD:**

If the petitioner wishes to waive the requirements of publication and to seal the record, please see question No. 5 (b) of the name change petition. You must include the Order to Waive the Publication and Seal the Record.

### **ON THE DAY OF THE HEARING:**

Prior to the hearing, the petitioner must collect the prepared name search certificates at the following three (3) offices; Clerk of Courts, Register of Wills/Clerk of Orphan's Court and Recorder of Deeds.

### **FEES:**

Various fees apply to the steps outlined above. The petitioner may contact each office for specific information on their fees. Any late and/or same day requests may require additional fees and/or be denied. The petitioner must verify with each department if they accept personal checks or credit cards.