

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT – COUNTY DIVISION**

SUBJECT: COVID-19 PROCEDURES FOR REMOTE NAME CHANGE HEARINGS

Consistent with the General Administrative Orders entered by Chief Judge Evans regarding limited court operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning Monday, June 1, 2020, name change hearings will be conducted remotely via Zoom Videoconference. Protocols for remote name change hearings will be as follows:

1. **Where to File a Petition.** Petitions for a Change of Name can be filed at the Richard J. Daley Center during regular business hours. Please see the Daley Center address and hours below.

Richard J. Daley Center
Room 1202
50 W. Washington St.
Chicago, IL 60602

Hours: 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday through Friday; closed on legal and court holidays

Note: Petitions for Change of Name may also be filed in any of the five (5) suburban court locations (Skokie, Rolling Meadows, Maywood, Bridgeview or Markham). These procedures pertain to cases filed in the Daley Center. Procedures, such as filing or scheduling a hearing, may differ in the other court locations. Please consult the court location where you intend to file for more information.

2. **Scheduling a Hearing.** At the time the Petition for a Change of Name is filed, the Clerk of Court's computer system will assign the case to a judge's calendar for a virtual Zoom hearing. If you have any questions relating to scheduling a Zoom hearing, please send all inquiries to countydivision.inquiries@cookcountyil.gov. Please be sure to include a case number in all correspondence.
3. **Filing Fees and Costs.** Filing fees and costs shall be as follows. For more information relating to filing fees and costs associated with Petitions for Change of Name, please see the County Division homepage [Guide to Procedures In Change of Name Proceedings](#).
 - a. Court Filing Fee: \$319.00
 - b. Certified Copy Fee: \$9.00 per copy (fees payable to the Clerk of Court may be made in cash or by certified check or money order payable to Clerk of Court)
 - c. Publication Fee: varies depending on newspaper selected
 - d. Sheriff's Summons: \$50 + mileage, if required
4. **Fee Waivers.** A Fee Waiver Petition under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 298 may be filed by Petitioners who are unable to pay fees associated with a Petition for Change of Name. If you have filed a 298 Fee Waiver Petition it should be emailed to

countydivision.inquiries@cookcountyil.gov before a hearing can be scheduled. Your 298 Fee Waiver Petition will then be forwarded to the calendar judge for review.

5. **Required Documentation.** The Petitioner should contact countydivision.inquiries@cookcountyil.gov to receive information as to what documents are needed prior to scheduling a Zoom Videoconference for the name change hearing (and 298 Fee Waiver Petition, if needed).

Required documentation – including Petitioner’s Illinois Photo Identification, Birth Certificate and any other necessary documents – should be e-filed before a hearing can be scheduled. Petitioners exempt from e-filing should email their required documents to countydivision.inquiries@cookcountyil.gov.

Once documentation is received, an email will be sent to Petitioner containing the date and time of a name change hearing, as well as Zoom login information (including meeting ID and password).

6. **Notice Requirement.** After the hearing has been scheduled, the Petitioner must cause the proper notice to be published or served. Notice of the hearing on a Petition for Change of Name must be published for three (3) consecutive weeks commencing not less than six (6) weeks before the date of hearing in a newspaper published in Cook County, Illinois.

Petitioners must have the notice published in a newspaper that is published in Cook County. While the Court does not require or prefer any particular publication, Petitioners should be aware that *The Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* is a newspaper that regularly publishes legal notices and maintains an office in Room 802 of the Richard J. Daley Center.

For more information relating to the notice requirement, please see the County Division homepage [Guide to Procedures In Change of Name Proceedings](#).

7. **Name Change of Minor Children.** If both parents, or the sole surviving parent, sign the Petition for Change of Name, there is no requirement that notice be given to any other person or the general public by publication. Such cases may be heard on the date of filing, if the assigned judge’s schedule permits.

If only one parent, guardian, or authorized person signs the Petition for Change of Name, reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard must be given to all absent parents whose parental rights have not been terminated. The Change of Name statute does not specify the manner or form in which this required notice is to be given. Current practice allows sending notice by regular mail to the last known address in Illinois of the absent parent or parents. The Petitioner must establish proof of mailing.

Please note that for the name change of a minor, the minor must be present during the Zoom hearing.

8. **Receiving a Signed and Stamped Order.** The Court will enter orders remotely and a copy of the signed and stamped order will be emailed back to the Petitioner using the contact information provided in Petitioner’s Petition for Change of Name.

9. **Certified Copies.** To obtain a certified copy of the signed order from the Clerk of Circuit Court, Petitioners should email a request to countydivservices@cookcountycourt.com. Specific instructions on how to request a certified copy will also be included in the email sent to Petitioner that includes a signed and stamped copy of their Order.