

Legally speaking...

Did you know?

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CHANGING YOUR NAME

Can I just change my name or is there a legal process I must follow?

There is a standard process to follow in order to legally change a name in B.C. The steps required in the process depend on your circumstances. If you are getting married or want to return to your original surname you do not need to follow the legal process. But if neither of these situations applies to you (for example, if you want a brand new last name or want to combine or hyphenate two surnames) then you must take the following steps to legally change your name.

You will need to get a Change of Name application package from any Vital Statistics Agency office. This includes an official application form, a list of eligibility requirements, a checklist of required documents, and special envelopes designed for the fingerprinting process.

In order to be eligible to apply, a person must be 19 or older and have resided in BC for at least 3 months prior to the application. To change the name of a child, the consent of both parents is generally required. It can be waived in certain circumstances. If a child is over the age of 12, he/she must consent.

What is the actual process of changing a name?

Assuming you require a legal name change, complete the application and take it together with the fee and required documents to your local police or RCMP detachment. If you are over 18, you must also pay to have your fingerprints taken and sent in a sealed envelope to the Vital Statistics Agency in Victoria for processing. A criminal record check will be conducted on your application and the Agency will decide whether or not to register your name change. If granted, a Certificate of Change of Name will be sent to you. This will allow you to apply for other identification in your new name.

Will this cost me any money?

Yes, changing a name can be a costly process. Fees are \$137 for one person and \$27 for each child included in the application. A criminal record check costs \$25 and there may be an additional fee for fingerprinting. You will also have to replace your current birth certificate at a cost of \$27.

For more information contact the Vital Statistics Agency: www.vs.gov.bc.ca.

Within BC: 1-888-876-1633

Victoria Area: 250-952-2681



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