

# Changing Your Name in Canada

Tanya Lee Howe & Eileen Velthuis

**Self-Counsel Press**

*(a division of)*

International Self-Counsel Press Ltd.

Canada USA



Copyright© 2014 by International Self-Counsel Press Ltd.

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means — graphic, electronic, or mechanical — without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review. Any request for photocopying, recording, taping, or information storage and retrieval systems of any part of this book shall be directed in writing to Access Copyright, the Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency. To contact them call 1-800-893-5777 (extension 235) or go to their website, [www.accesscopyright.ca](http://www.accesscopyright.ca), for more information.

Self-Counsel Press acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund for our publishing activities.

First edition: 2014

## **Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

Howe, Tanya Lee, author

Changing your name in Canada / Tanya Lee Howe & Eileen Velthuis.

(Reference series)

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-1-77040-203-4 (pbk.).—ISBN 978-1-77040-948-4 (epub).—ISBN 978-1-77040-949-1 (kindle)

1. Names, Personal—Law and legislation—Canada. I. Velthuis, Eileen, author II. Title.

KE501.H69 2014	346.7101'2	C2014-901340-X
KF468.H69 2014		C2014-901341-8

**Self-Counsel Press**

*(a division of)*

International Self-Counsel Press Ltd.

North Vancouver, BC  
Canada



# Contents

<b>1 An Introduction to Changing Your Name in Canada</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Alberta</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	3
1.1 Marriage	3
1.2 Divorce	4
1.3 Change of parent	4
1.4 Amendment of a name	4
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	5
3. Name Restrictions	6
4. Application Process	6
4.1 Necessary documents	6
4.2 Fingerprint requirements	8
4.3 Publication of name change	8
4.4 Affidavit	9
5. Cost and Payment Methods	9
6. Contact	9

<b>3 British Columbia</b>	11
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	11
1.1 Marriage	11
1.2 Divorce	12
1.3 Amendment of a name	12
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	12
3. Name Restrictions	13
4. Application Process	13
4.1 Necessary documents	14
4.2 Fingerprint requirements	15
4.3 Publication of name change	15
4.4 Statutory declaration	15
5. Cost and Payment Methods	16
6. Contact	16
<b>4 Manitoba</b>	17
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	17
1.1 Marriage	17
1.2 Divorce	18
1.3 Amendment of a name	18
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	18
3. Name Restrictions	19
4. Application Process	19
4.1 Necessary documents	19
4.2 Fingerprint requirements	21
4.3 Publication of name change	21
4.4 Affidavit	22
5. Cost and Payment Methods	22
6. Contact	22
<b>5 New Brunswick</b>	25
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	25
1.1 Marriage	25

1.2	Divorce	26
1.3	Amendment of a name	26
2.	Who Is Eligible to Apply?	26
3.	Name Restrictions	26
4.	Application Process	27
4.1	Necessary documents	27
4.2	Publication of name change	29
4.3	Statements	29
5.	Cost and Payment Methods	29
6.	Contact	30
<b>6</b>	<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	<b>31</b>
1.	Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	31
1.1	Marriage	31
1.2	Divorce	32
1.3	Amendment of a name	32
2.	Who Is Eligible to Apply?	32
3.	Name Restrictions	33
4.	Application Process	33
4.1	Necessary documents	33
4.3	Publication of name change	35
4.4	Affidavit	35
5.	Cost and Payment Methods	36
6.	Contact	36
<b>7</b>	<b>Northwest Territories</b>	<b>37</b>
1.	Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	37
1.1	Marriage	37
1.2	Divorce or separation from common-law spouse	38
2.	Who Is Eligible to Apply?	38
3.	Name Restrictions	39
4.	Change of Name of a Child	39

5. Application Process	40
5.1 Necessary documents	40
5.2 Declaration	40
5.3 Publication of name change	41
6. Cost and Payment Methods	41
7. Contact	42
<b>8 Nova Scotia</b>	<b>43</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	43
1.1 Marriage	43
1.2 Divorce	44
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	44
3. Name Restrictions	45
4. Change of Name of a Child	45
5. Application Process	46
5.1 Necessary documents	46
5.2 Statutory declaration	46
5.3 Publication of name change	47
6. Cost and Payment Methods	47
7. Contact	48
<b>9 Nunavut</b>	<b>49</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	49
1.1 Marriage	49
1.2 Divorce	50
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	50
3. Name Restrictions	50
4. Change of Name of a Child	51
5. Application Process	52
5.1 Necessary documents	52
5.2 Affidavit	53
5.3 Publication of name change	53
6. Cost and Payment Methods	53
7. Contact	53

<b>10 Ontario</b>	<b>55</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	55
1.1 Marriage	55
1.2 Divorce	56
1.3 Name change election	56
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	56
3. Name Restrictions	57
4. Change of Name of a Child	57
5. Application Process	58
5.1 Necessary documents	58
5.2 Guarantor's statement	59
5.3 Statutory declaration	60
5.4 Publication of name change	60
6. Cost and Payment Methods	61
7. Contact	61
<b>11 Prince Edward Island</b>	<b>63</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	63
1.1 Marriage	63
1.2 Divorce	64
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	64
3. Name Restrictions	64
4. Change of Name of a Child	65
5. Application Process	65
5.1 Necessary documents	65
5.2 Publication of name change	66
6. Cost and Payment Methods	67
7. Contact	67
<b>12 Québec</b>	<b>69</b>
1. Marriage and Divorce in Québec	69
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	70
3. Name Restrictions	71

4. Application Process	71
4.1 Necessary documents	72
4.2 Publication of name change	72
5. Cost	73
6. Contact	74
<b>13 Saskatchewan</b>	<b>75</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	75
1.1 Marriage	75
1.2 Divorce, annulment, or widowed	76
1.3 Amendment of a name	76
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	76
3. Name Restrictions	77
4. Application Process	77
4.1 Necessary documents	77
4.2 Publication of name change	79
4.3 Affidavit	79
5. Cost and Payment Methods	79
6. Contact	80
<b>14 Yukon</b>	<b>81</b>
1. Who Doesn't Require a Legal Name Change?	81
1.1 Marriage	81
1.2 Divorce	82
1.3 Amendment of a name	82
2. Who Is Eligible to Apply?	82
3. Name Restrictions	83
4. Application Process	83
4.1 Necessary documents	83
4.2 Publication of name change	85
4.3 Affidavit	85
5. Cost and Payment Methods	85
6. Contact	86



<b>Appendix I — Resources</b>	87
Vital Statistics Offices	87
Offices Outside of Canada	91
Name Change Acts	92
<b>Appendix II — Identification Update List</b>	95
<b>Download Kit</b>	97





## Notice to Readers

Laws are constantly changing. Every effort is made to keep this publication as current as possible. However, the author, the publisher, and the vendor of this book make no representations or warranties regarding the outcome or the use to which the information in this book is put and are not assuming any liability for any claims, losses, or damages arising out of the use of this book. The reader should not rely on the author or the publisher of this book for any professional advice. Please be sure that you have the most recent edition.

**Note:** The fees quoted in this book are correct at the date of publication. However, fees are subject to change without notice. For current fees, please check with the court registry or appropriate government office nearest you.

Prices, commissions, fees, and other costs mentioned in the text or shown in samples in this book probably do not reflect real costs where you live. Inflation and other factors, including geography, can cause the costs you might encounter to be much higher or even much lower than those we show. The dollar amounts shown are simply intended as representative examples.





## Chapter 1

# An Introduction to Changing Your Name in Canada

In the past, changing a surname is something most Canadian men never did, and most Canadian women would only do once or twice in their lives when they got married or divorced. Nowadays more men are opting to share their spouse's last name by combining the two names or even switching to a spouse's last name, many women still change their names upon marriage or divorce, and some people change their names for reasons that have nothing to do with marriage or divorce.

Although changing a name is a task infrequently done by any one individual, it can be quite involved. There are so many places, people, and organizations you need to contact when you want your name changed, and each one has its own ways to do it, and its own red tape and bureaucracy. At the end of the book, in Appendix II, you'll find an Identification Update List to help you contact everyone who needs to be alerted to your name change.

To complicate matters more, each province and territory has its own vital statistics agency rules and legal acts when it comes to formally or informally changing a name. A *formal* name change

means a legal change to the first name, surname, or both in which the person's birth records are updated with the new name and a new birth certificate is issued. An *informal* name change usually means opting to use your spouse's surname when you get married, or switching back to a previous surname or birth name if you've recently divorced. An informal change does not affect your birth certificate.

People change their names for a variety of reasons, which may include the following:

- Marriage.
- Divorce.
- Correction of a typo or changing an odd spelling of a name.
- Dislike of the name that was given at birth.
- To remove problems with confusion or mispronunciations.
- To use a name the person is known for such as a nickname (e.g., the name is Robert but the person is only known as Bob).
- Protection from others, perhaps to prevent harassment by an individual.

Names are inherently personal, and as such, your reason for changing your name is your choice. Whatever your reason, this book will help you know what to do and in what order, depending on where you reside in the country, to change your name legally and across all of your identification and documentation.

Depending on where you currently reside, and where you were born, you may need to contact your former jurisdiction as well as your current one. This book discusses the procedures for every province and territory in Canada. The Resources section in Appendix I lists Vital Statistics contact information in other parts of the world.

This book discusses name changes for marriage, divorce, amendments to names, and how to change a child's name. It also includes the costs, which were current at the time of publication but are subject to change. Turn to the chapter for your province of residence for specific instructions.