

**Important** - This resource is aimed at advisers to discuss with clients, **not** as a potential handout

Changing a name is not complicated, and only takes about ten minutes.

There are three ways to change a name.

- Most people will recommend that clients go to a solicitor with a form of ID (such as a passport). They will charge clients for a deed poll, which then has to be counter-signed by another solicitor for a second charge. These charges vary, but can go up to £50.
- The most official way is to enrol at the UK Royal Courts of Justice. This sounds intimidating, but is very simple; just print off the forms [here](http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/HMCTS/GetForm.do?court_forms_id=2722) at [http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/HMCTS/GetForm.do?court\\_forms\\_id=2722](http://hmctsformfinder.justice.gov.uk/HMCTS/GetForm.do?court_forms_id=2722) and send them in with £36 payment. They take cheques, postal orders, or bankers drafts. There is a small risk attached to this method, as a record of this is kept in the London Gazette.
- The cheapest – and our recommended way – is to do it themselves, absolutely for free. This website [here](http://freedeedpoll.org.uk/) at <http://freedeedpoll.org.uk/> is a great resource for this, but basically clients just need to write a clear, straightforward letter explaining what you're changing.

Once they've got a deed poll, the next thing to do is to start to change their name on all their official documents. One word of warning; most organisations will stress they need the 'original' deed poll, but this is basically just the deed poll the client has just produced. If anyone loses it, they can just make another identical one for free.

People to update includes:

- o Passport Office  
They'll need to pay for a renewal of your passport, and it'll take time to issue a new one, but this will give them photographic ID with their new

name, which is really helpful.

- o DVLA  
Getting their drivers' license changed gives them another form of photographic ID with their new name. Use a D1 form, which they can get from a post office. Also make sure they update their vehicle registration document if they own a car.
- o Their employer.
- o Any banks or credit cards that they have; this is really important so they're not accused of attempting fraud.
- o Insurance companies, although make sure they still need the insurances.
- o Finance and loan companies: again, they don't want to be accused of attempting fraud.
- o Inland Revenue (make sure that they update their National Insurance records, too).
- o Doctor & dentist. They will update the NHS record on the client's behalf.
- o HM Land Registry (if they own their home, even if they are not living in it).
- o Local authority (for council tax payment and electoral roll).

Doing the passport and driving license first is recommended, as they are photo ID's and often biometric, which makes getting subsequent things changed much easier.

## **A new name**

Encourage clients to pick something sensible and low-profile if possible. There is guidance on the .gov.uk website about what restrictions there are on names in the UK, but it's actually very broad and liberal. Clients should pick a name that is not going to stand out, or bring any attention to them.