

LEAFLET RCN1

RECORDING CHANGES OF FORENAME(S) AND/OR SURNAME(S) IN SCOTLAND

- The law of Scotland allows anyone, who wishes to do so, to change his or her forename(s) or surname(s).
NOTE - Any reference to forenames also includes any middle names.
- Such changes of forename(s) or surname(s) in respect of the following may be recorded against the appropriate entry in the register:
 - (a) persons who were born in Scotland; or
 - (b) who are the subject of a parental order made in Scotland; or
 - (c) who have been legally adopted in Scotland; or
 - (d) who are the subject of an entry in the Gender Recognition Register in Scotland.
- Details of the procedure to be followed in order to have a change of forename(s) or surname(s) recorded are shown in this leaflet. Further information can be obtained from your local registrar of births, etc or from the **National Records of Scotland, Change of Name Unit, New Register House, Edinburgh EH1 3YT. Telephone 0131-314 4404, 4545, 4409 or 4444 or visit our website at: <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/registration/recording-change-of-forename-and-surname-in-scotland>.**

- The fees for recording changes are:

	For one application	Example total for two family members
RECORDING FEE	£40	£50

Family members who apply at the same time pay £40.00 for the initial application and £10.00 for each additional application, submitted at the same time.

Following a change of name extracts (birth certificates) can be purchased online at <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/> or, from your nearest registration office.

- Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to “**The Scottish Government**”. (Please write your name on the reverse.) Alternatively you can pay by credit or debit card by completing form CON Card at the back of the application form. **Do not write your credit/debit card details on the application form.**

TO HELP YOU WITH THE TERMS USED IN THIS LEAFLET

- **CHANGE** includes any change by way of substitution, addition, omission, spelling or hyphenation. See page 2 for examples.
- **QUALIFIED APPLICANT** in relation to applications made on behalf of children under 16 years of age means:
 - (a) Where only one parent has parental responsibilities in relation to the child, that parent;
 - (b) Where both parents have such responsibilities in relation to the child, both parents; and
 - (c) Where neither parent has such responsibilities, any other person who has such responsibilities.(A person may be a “qualified applicant” whether or not they have attained the age of 16 years.)
- **APPLICATION FORMS**
The forms used when applying for a change of forename(s) or surname(s) are:
 - Form 21 – child under 12 months of age (forename change only).
 - Form 23 – child under 16 years of age.
 - Form 24 – person over 16 years of age.
 - Form PRF – this form may be required where the parents are either unmarried or, not in a civil partnership.
- **NOTE** – If the child’s birth was registered or re-registered on or after 4 May 2006, and the father’s name is shown on the birth entry, then he will be required to sign any application form unless his parental responsibilities have been removed by a court order.

WHO CAN HAVE A CHANGE OF FORENAME(S) OR SURNAME(S) RECORDED

Any person whose birth is registered in Scotland, or who is the subject of a parental order made in Scotland, who was legally adopted in Scotland, or who is the subject of an entry in the Gender Recognition Register in Scotland.

- Any application for a change to be recorded in respect of a child under 16 years of age must be made by a qualified applicant (see page 1 for the definition of a qualified applicant).
- After reaching 16 years of age a person may apply at any time for a change of forename(s) and/or surname(s) to be recorded. He or she must complete and sign the application.
- Please note that any birth certificate issued subsequent to the recording of the change will show the new forename(s) and surname(s) with the original forename(s) and surname(s) shown separately. This does not apply to an application for the recording of forename(s) or change of forename(s) of a child under 12 months of age (i.e. Form 21 applications).

HOW AND WHERE TO APPLY

You can obtain an application form from any registrar of births, etc in Scotland. The address of your local registrar can be found in the telephone directory. Alternatively you may write to the National Records of Scotland, Change of Name Unit, New Register House, Edinburgh EH1 3YT or phone (see page 1). Additionally, you can download the form from our website address (see page 1).

Completed applications should be sent to that address along with Form PRF (if applicable) and the fees for recording the change and for any extract or abbreviated extract (see the front of this leaflet). Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to **“The Scottish Government”**. (Please write your name on the reverse.) Please do not send cash.

Alternatively you can pay by credit or debit card by completing form CON Card at the back of the application form. **Do not write your credit/debit card details on application form.**

NUMBER OF CHANGES WHICH MAY BE RECORDED

- Only one change of forename(s) and one change of surname(s) may be recorded for a child under 16 years of age.
- If a change of forename(s) in infancy (i.e. a change of forename or a forename given within 12 months from the date of birth) has already been recorded, no further change of forename(s) may be recorded before the child reaches 16 years of age. This does not, however, prevent the recording of a change of surname.
- For persons 16 years of age and over, one change of forename(s) and up to three changes of surname(s) may be recorded. A period of 5 years must elapse between successive changes of surname(s).

OTHER KINDS OF CHANGES WHICH MAY BE RECORDED

Changes of forename(s) or surname(s) may also be recorded if:

- A decree or certificate of change of forename(s) or surname(s) pronounced or granted by the Lyon King of Arms is produced.
- A certified copy of a will, settlement or deed of trust containing a condition that the person concerned takes a forename(s) or surname(s) different from that in which his or her birth was registered is produced.
- A male person who has married in Scotland and who has changed his forename(s) or surname(s) following his marriage, produces a decree or certificate pronounced or granted by the Lyon King of Arms.
- Alternative forename(s) or surname(s) is/are used where the registered name(s) is a non-English name(s), (for instance a Gaelic name) and the alternative name(s) is the English equivalent. If the application is approved, the alternative name(s) so recorded will be shown on any birth certificate alongside the name(s) as originally registered, for example: Domhnall (Donald).

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO PROCESS A CHANGE OF NAME APPLICATION?

We aim to process your application within 20 working days of receipt, but it may take longer during busy periods. Please contact for current timescales.

AVOIDING DELAY

The most common causes of delays in processing applications are:

- the absence of the signatures of **both** parents where the parents of a child were married or in a civil partnership at the time of the child's conception or subsequently;
- the absence of the signatures of both parents, where the parents of a child have never married, or entered into a civil partnership **but** where both parents registered or re-registered the child's birth on or after 4 May 2006;
- the absence of Form PRF where the parents of a child have never married or entered a civil partnership and the mother/parent has sole parental responsibilities;
- form not signed and/or dated;
- insufficient fees;
- completion of wrong form;
- wrong payee; and
- no contact telephone number.

TABLE

FORENAME(S) & SURNAME(S) (as shown in birth register)		FORENAME(S) & SURNAME(S) (now using and known by)		TYPE OF CHANGE WHICH MAY BE RECORDED
James	Brown	Robert	Brown	Change of forename by substitution.
James	Brown	James	Smith	Change of surname by substitution.
James	Brown	Robert	Smith	Change of both forename and surname by substitution.
James	Brown	James Thomson	Brown	Change of forename(s) from James to James Thomson by addition.
James Thomson	Brown	James	Brown	Change of forename(s) from James Thomson to James by omission.
James	Brown	James	Browne	Change of surname, i.e. a change in spelling.
James Thomson	Brown	James	Thomson-Brown	Change of forename and surname by hyphenation.

It is accepted in Britain that on marriage a person will generally assume the surname of their partner, though they are not obliged to do so. The National Records for Scotland does not require any forms to be completed for this.

The changes of name recorded here apply to a person's birth entry therefore a person would probably not want to have their birth surname changed to that of their married name.

This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a complete authoritative statement of the law.