

CHANGING YOUR NAME LEGALLY

EXPLAINING DEED POLL

When you want to change your name, you create a name change deed poll. This is a paper that states you are abandoning your old name and promise to use your new name everywhere from now on.

You can do this on tissue paper written with a pencil if you want as there is no law in the UK that you have to make an official certificate. The problem is many people don't know the law, so if you tried to show that to anyone, they won't believe you. The UK Passport office probably will as they are used to dealing with deed polls and know the law.

This deed poll is designed based on UK requirements. Every country has their own rule. So, if you don't have a British passport, you will need to check the rules that your passport comes from as they might not accept the UK deed poll. You can still use the deed poll when you are living in the UK.

One important thing about deed poll is that it is FREE to make. You do not need to pay anything to get a deed poll.

There are a lot of websites¹ (see links for three free websites – be careful not to pick one that expects you to pay) that will create a deed poll for you after you add some information such as your old and new names as well as your address. You then print it out. You can download a deed poll template from and use that if you want. Or you can adjust it to suit you. The template provided is in a formal English style, but you can use casual English if you prefer. You can change the layout to suit you. There are many examples of deed polls on the website for ideas, the choice is yours.

It is recommended that you print your deed poll on a nice paper to make it look official. Parchment paper is a good choice as it is thicker. Cream or light brown coloured may be the best option. Normal white printing paper works fine too – you can use purple or green or

¹ <https://freedeedpoll.org.uk/>
<https://genderedintelligence.co.uk/projects/kip/transitioning/name/deedpoll>
<https://www.netlawman.co.uk/d/change-name-by-deed-poll>

other colour paper if you want, again, the choice is yours. However, the problem is many places might not accept a deed poll in an unusual colour. You do not need to use fancy fonts if you don't want to. Make sure whichever font you choose that it is easy to read. Keep your deed poll on one page.

Several places do not accept photocopies of your deed poll, so it is quicker to print out a few to sign so you can inform many places of your name change at once.

Some places will require you to have your driving licence or passport in your new name before they'll accept Deed Poll. They are not allowed to do that, but it is up to you if you want to fight or just wait until you get your driving licence or passport sorted first. Changing your driving licence is easy and free to do (unless you want to change your photograph at the same time which you will need to pay for). It is recommended not to change both at the same time because there is a long waitlist due to Covid-19. You might still need one for ID when you are waiting.

Do not change your name if you cannot change your passport (or flight ticket) before going abroad because the name on your flight ticket must match your passport. Better to wait until you return.

You will need somebody to witness (watch) you sign your deed poll and then sign it themselves too. Many places require you to have two witnesses sign your deed poll. Your witness can be anybody but NOT your family. You do NOT need a solicitor to witness so don't waste your money hiring one.

When you have completed your deed poll, the next thing you need to do is inform everybody who needs to know of your name change. At the bottom is a list of places you'll need to inform.

UNENROLLED VS ENROLLED DEED POLL

There are two types of deed polls in the UK, unenrolled deed poll is free, and you don't need to do anything more than making a legal paper that states you have changed your name. That's it. This is the popular option, official, legal and it is all you need.

An enrolled deed poll is the same as an unenrolled deed poll that also requires specific words to be added. Then you register it with the Royal Courts of Justice in London. They will keep your deed poll on record (called Enrolment Books of the Senior Courts of England & Wales) for 5 to 10 years before it is moved to the National Archives. This choice also makes your change of name public so both your old and new names and your home address will be published in the London Gazette paper and online, so it is not private. This might be risky as everybody will know where you live. It is not free - £42.44 (correct as of 02/11/2021). Many people have said this is not easy to do as there are a lot of rules that you have to follow. This option is NOT 'more official' than unenrolled, just a different approach.

Deaf Rainbow UK recommends unenrolled deed poll and the information provided is for unenrolled deed poll.

EXPLAINING DEED POLL LAYOUT

The bits that are highlighted **yellow** you will need to change to match your information. You will need to use your old and new names a few times in the Deed Poll so please read carefully to put the correct name in the right place.

Deed of Change of Name

You can keep the title as it is or change it into 'Change of Name Deed', 'Deed Poll on Change of Name', 'Change of name by deed poll' or similar. The important words you should include are 'deed', 'name' and 'change'. A fancy font (called Old English Text MT) is used for the title because this matches the formal English style, but you don't have to.

BY THIS DEED OF CHANGE OF NAME made by myself the undersigned **Your New Full Name** of **Street Name, Town** in the County of **County**, formerly known as **Your Old Full Name**, a British citizen under section 1(1) (or a Commonwealth citizen under section 37(1)) of the British Nationality Act 1981.

This paragraph says that with this Deed Poll, you, known as (old name), is now called (your chosen new name) and that you live at

(wherever it is you live at now). Some people write in their street address too as well as the town and county. It is up to you if you want to include your street address or not.

You should say that you are a British citizen because this Deed Poll is created for UK use. If you are not a British Citizen delete the line: 'a British citizen under section 1(1) (or a Commonwealth citizen under section 37(1)) of the British Nationality Act 1981.'

HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

I. **I ABSOLUTELY AND ENTIRELY RENOUNCE**, relinquish and abandon the use of my former name of **Your Old Full Name** and assume, adopt, and determine to take and use from the date hereof the name of **Your New Full Name** in substitution for my former name.

Part I: This part is you promising you will not use your old name anymore and will start using your new name all the time from the date you have chosen (this date is printed near the bottom of the Deed Poll in this template – you can add the date here too if you want).

II. **I SHALL AT ALL TIMES** hereafter in all records, deeds, documents and other writings in every medium and in all actions and proceedings as well as in all dealings and transactions and on all occasions whatever use and sign the name of **Your New Full Name** as my name instead of my former name.

Part II: This part is you promising that you will write, say, sign and type your new name everywhere in everything in future and will not use your old name again.

III. **I AUTHORISE AND REQUIRE** every person to always to designate, describe, and address me by the chosen name of **Your New Full Name**.

Part III: This part is you giving people permission and expecting them to use the new name that you chose.

IV. **I FURTHER HEREBY DECLARE** that I entirely renounce, relinquish, and abandon the use of my former titles **Your Old Title** and assume, adopt determine to take and use from the date hereof the title of **Your New Title** in substitution for my former titles of **Your Old Title**.

Part IV is optional. It is up to you if you want to include this part or not. Most people don't bother with this part.

In here, you are saying that you are changing which title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms or Mx) you want to use in future instead of your old title. You are promising that you won't use your old title and use your chosen one in future. This part is usually useful if you want to use an unusual title like 'Mx' as anybody can use any title they choose anyway as they are not the legal requirement – it is only traditional in the UK to use titles.

This part is not for titles like Lord, Lady, Sir, Doctor and so on because they have different rules that you need to follow. You cannot use any of these titles if you don't have the right to use them. You do not need to include them here if you have the right.

IN WITNESS to this intention, and notwithstanding the decision of Mr Justice Vaisey in re Parrott, Cox v Parrott, I have signed this deed in both my adopted name of **Your New Full Name** and my former name of **Your Old Full Name**.

The paragraph about Mr Vaisey's decision is optional and you can decide whether to keep it or not. Mr Vaisey (1946) decided based on a court case (Cox v Parrott) that people cannot change their first name without parliament's agreement. Including the word 'notwithstanding' means that you don't care what Mr Vaisey said and you ARE changing your name anyway. There are laws in the UK that if enough people use your chosen name, it becomes your real name anyway so Mr Vaisey can be ignored. (Yes, UK laws are weird!)

SIGNED AS A DEED BY THE ABOVE-NAMED **YOUR NEW FULL NAME**, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **YOUR OLD FULL NAME** THIS **1st** OF **JANUARY** IN THE YEAR **2021**.

You should include the date your deed poll is created. It is a good idea that this is the same day that your deed poll will be signed and witnessed by two people – so you might want to change the date to match when you can meet with your witnesses to sign.

New Signature

Old Signature

by the above name
Your New Full Name

by the above name
Your Old Full Name

You need to provide two signatures, one for your new name, and the old signature that you used for your old name. Be careful not to confuse which signature for which part! You don't have to change your signature if you don't want to, you still need to sign twice anyway.

in the presence of:

Witness #1 Full Name
Witness #1 Street Name and Town

Name: _____

Address: _____

You will need two witnesses to sign. You can type in their name and address (street name and town is enough though you can use their full address) before you print your deed poll if you already know who your witnesses are or leave a space to be filled in - see examples above. You can list their job titles too if you want.

PLACES THAT YOU NEED TO INFORM OF YOUR NAME CHANGE:

- HM Passport (apply for a new passport)
- DVLA for driving licence (apply for a new driving licence)
- V5C vehicle registration document (car ownership paper)
- Insurance (car, house, medical etc)
 - Your parents or friend's insurance if you are named there
- Employer
- Inland Revenue for tax and National Insurance (NI)
- School / College / University if studying
- GP / Doctor / Dentist / Social Service
- Bank / Building Society
- Credit card, store charge card, and finance and loan companies
- Mortgage
- Utility (water, electricity, gas)
- Telephone / mobile phone / broadband
- Your local authority (council tax and register for election)
- TV Licensing office

- Investment, bond companies and companies that you have shares in
- Pension
- Mail-order companies, accounts with shops, clubs etc
- Police if you have criminal actions or is on the Sex Offenders' Register
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service - used to be called CRB check)
- Everywhere!