

After the Wedding: A Checklist for Changing Your Name in California

*Information provided by SoCal Christian Weddings Officiant, Rev. Dr. Jeff Saville
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The items below are listed in this order because in some cases, a given step requires you've already done an item listed above it. Read the entire checklist to decide how many copies of your marriage certificate to obtain.

1. **Get TWO or THREE certified copies of your marriage certificate** from the Office of the County Recorder which issued your license—cost is \$15.00 per certified copy. Photocopies are not accepted by government agencies and many other organizations. *(Reason for two or more copies—one to use while with the various agencies listed below, and one to keep at home in a safety/fire box as a backup in case something happens to the one you are using. Plus, if you do some of the processes by mail, you might not get your certified copy back—see especially # 3)*
2. **IF AFFILIATED WITH THE MILITARY**, visit the Base “Pass and ID Center” or “Joint Reception Center” to change the name on your ID card and update your listing in DEERS for associated military benefits. Your individual command may also need to see the certificate for various reasons—change of housing benefits, etc.
3. **SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**. Change your name with the Social Security Administration and obtain a new card. This agency is near the top because it needs your correct name and ID number for payroll tax withholdings and retirement benefits. A mismatch between your name and Social Security number could trigger a rejection of your tax return. Having your new Social Security card will also help you change your name with financial institutions and other contacts on your list. Notifying the Social Security Administration will also update the Internal Revenue Service of your new name. You can visit a local office in person and keep your certified copy of your marriage certificate, or if you complete the form found online (see below) and use USPS mail to send everything in, you might not get your certified copy back...which is why you would want a THIRD certified copy of your marriage certificate. <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf>
4. **DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES**. Change your name at Department of Motor Vehicles to get a new drivers license AND possibly changing your name on the title of any vehicles you own. https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/dl/dl_info#two504
5. **FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**. Change your name on your Bank/credit union/credit card accounts to keep your identity intact. You will probably have to visit your bank/credit union in person with your updated driver's license/ID.
6. **AT WORK**. Change your name and other relevant information at work: W-4 for taxes, 401k, business cards, nameplate, email, work website etc.
7. **U.S POSTAL SERVICE**. Change your name (and address if applicable) so you don't miss your mail. You can do so in person or online with the “Change of address form”: <https://moversguide.usps.com/icoa/home/icoa-main-flow.do?execution=e4s1&flowId=icoa-main-flow&referral=MG14>
8. **PASSPORT**. Change your name on your passport. *(Note: if you are traveling out of the country shortly after the wedding on your honeymoon, you can use your current passport with your maiden name so long as it is the same name on your airplane ticket.)* <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/change-correct.html>
9. **NOTIFY OTHER PLACES**: voter registration board, landlord or mortgage company, insurance accounts (auto, life, home, etc.), physicians' offices, professional licensing boards, investment accounts, your attorney (to update legal documents), utilities, alumni association, social media sites where your proper name is important (like LinkedIn).