

# STATE OF NEW YORK

5465--C

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

February 17, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. O'DONNELL, BRONSON, GLICK, GONZALEZ-ROJAS, TAYLOR, SIMON, QUART, EPSTEIN, SEAWRIGHT, LAVINE, GOTTFRIED, LUPARDO, FERNANDEZ, DINOWITZ, HYNDMAN, BURDICK, GALLAGHER, OTIS, HEVESI, REYES, JACKSON, DAVILA, LUNSFORD, FORREST, CRUZ, DE LA ROSA, PERRY -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COOK -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- again reported from said committee with amendments, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reported and referred to the Committee on Codes -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the civil rights law, the vehicle and traffic law and the public health law, in relation to enacting the "Gender Recognition Act"; and to repeal subdivision 1 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law relating to driver's licenses

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
2 the "Gender Recognition Act".

3 § 2. Section 62 of the civil rights law is amended by adding two new  
4 subdivisions 3 and 4 to read as follows:

5 3. Except as provided in subdivisions one and two of this section, the  
6 court shall not require any other pre-hearing notice. The court shall  
7 not condition the entry of an order on notice to any other party or to  
8 any city, state or federal agency except by written order detailing the  
9 court's reasoning for requiring such notice and showing cause why such  
10 notice should be served. Under no circumstances shall the court require  
11 notice to United States immigration and customs enforcement, United  
12 States customs and border protection, United States citizenship and  
13 immigration services, or any successor agencies, or any agencies having  
14 similar duties.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 4. The court shall not request or require consent from any party other  
2 than the petitioner, or in the case of a petitioner who does not have  
3 capacity to consent, their legal representative, as a condition of  
4 granting the name change or obtaining certified copies of the name  
5 change order.

6 § 3. Section 63 of the civil rights law, as amended by chapter 253 of  
7 the laws of 2014, is amended to read as follows:

8 § 63. Order. If the court to which the petition is presented is satis-  
9 fied thereby, or by the affidavit and certificate presented therewith,  
10 that the petition is true, and that there is no reasonable objection to  
11 the change of name proposed, and if the petition be to change the name  
12 of an infant, that the interests of the infant will be substantially  
13 promoted by the change, the court shall make an order authorizing the  
14 petitioner to assume the name proposed. The order shall further recite  
15 the date and place of birth of the applicant and, if the applicant was  
16 born in the state of New York, such order shall set forth the number of  
17 [~~his~~] the applicant's birth certificate or that no birth certificate is  
18 available. The order shall be directed to be entered and the papers on  
19 which it was granted to be filed [~~prior to the publication hereinafter~~  
20 ~~directed~~] in the clerk's office of the county in which the petitioner  
21 resides if [~~he be~~] they are an individual, or in the office of the clerk  
22 of the civil court of the city of New York if the order be made by that  
23 court. [~~Such order shall also direct the publication, at least once,~~  
24 ~~within sixty days after the making of the order, in a designated newspa-~~  
25 ~~per in the county in which the order is directed to be entered and if~~  
26 ~~the petition is made by a person subject to the provisions of subdivi-~~  
27 ~~sion two of section sixty two of this article, in a designated newspaper~~  
28 ~~in any county wherein such person was convicted if different from the~~  
29 ~~county in which the order is otherwise directed to be entered, of a~~  
30 ~~notice in substantially the following form: Notice is hereby given that~~  
31 ~~an order entered by the ..... court,..... county, on the~~  
32 ~~..... day of....., bearing Index Number....., a copy of which~~  
33 ~~may be examined at the office of the clerk, located at~~  
34 ~~....., in room number....., grants me the right to assume~~  
35 ~~the name of ..... The city and state of my present~~  
36 ~~address are .....; the month and year of my birth~~  
37 ~~are .....; the place of my birth is .....; my~~  
38 ~~present name is .....~~]

39 § 4. Section 64 of the civil rights law, as amended by chapter 258 of  
40 the laws of 2006, and the closing paragraph as separately amended by  
41 chapters 258, 320 and 481 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as  
42 follows:

43 § 64. Effect. 1. If the order [~~shall be fully complied with, and with-~~  
44 ~~in ninety days after the making of the order, an affidavit of the publi-~~  
45 ~~cation thereof shall be filed in the office in which the order~~] is  
46 entered, the petitioner shall be known by the name which is thereby  
47 authorized to be assumed. If the surname of a parent be changed as  
48 provided in this article, any minor child of such parent at the time of  
49 such change may thereafter assume such changed surname.

50 [~~Upon compliance with the order and the filing of the affidavit of the~~  
51 ~~publication, as provided in this section, the clerk of the court in~~  
52 ~~which the order has been entered shall certify that the order has been~~  
53 ~~complied with; and, if] 2. (a) If the petition states that the petition-  
54 er stands convicted of a violent felony offense as defined in section  
55 70.02 of the penal law or a felony defined in article one hundred twen-  
56 ty-five of such law or any of the following provisions of such law~~

1 sections 130.25, 130.30, 130.40, 130.45, 255.25, 255.26, 255.27, article  
2 two hundred sixty-three, 135.10, 135.25, 230.05, 230.06, subdivision two  
3 of section 230.30 or 230.32, [~~such~~] the clerk of the court in which the  
4 order has been entered [~~(1)~~] shall deliver, by first class mail, a copy  
5 of such certified order to the division of criminal justice services at  
6 its office in the county of Albany and [~~(2) upon the clerk of the court~~  
7 ~~reviewing the petitioner's application for name change and subsequent~~  
8 ~~in-court inquiry, may, in the clerk's discretion, deliver, by first~~  
9 ~~class mail, the petitioner's new name with such certified order to the~~  
10 ~~court of competent jurisdiction which imposed the orders of support.~~  
11 ~~Such certification shall appear on the original order and on any certi-~~  
12 ~~fied copy thereof and shall be entered in the clerk's minutes of the~~  
13 ~~proceeding] (b) if the petition states that the petitioner is responsi-  
14 ble for spousal support or child support obligations pursuant to court  
15 order, upon review of the petitioner's application for name change and  
16 subsequent inquiry, the court may, in its discretion, order the peti-  
17 tioner to deliver by first class mail, the petitioner's new name with  
18 such certified order to the court of competent jurisdiction which  
19 imposed the orders of support. Such certification shall appear on the  
20 original order and on any certified copy thereof and shall be entered in  
21 the court's minutes of the proceeding.~~

22 3. A name change order or other documentation of name change shall be  
23 sufficient to change the petitioner's name on any document or record  
24 issued or maintained by the state of New York or any subdivision there-  
25 of, or any private entity, including but not limited to, all school  
26 records for current and past students, archival records and marriage  
27 certificates. Failure of a public or private entity to comply with such  
28 a request may constitute a violation of section two hundred ninety-six  
29 of the executive law, section forty-c of this chapter and any applicable  
30 local non-discrimination law and may be the basis for a complaint to the  
31 New York state division of human rights and any other applicable  
32 enforcement entity.

33 § 5. Section 64-a of the civil rights law, as amended by chapter 241  
34 of the laws of 2015, is amended to read as follows:

35 § 64-a. [~~Exemption from publication requirements~~] Sealing name change  
36 papers. 1. If the court shall find that [~~the publication~~] open record of  
37 an applicant's change of name would jeopardize such applicant's personal  
38 safety, based on totality of the circumstances [~~the provisions of~~  
39 ~~sections sixty-three and sixty-four of this article requiring publica-~~  
40 ~~tion shall be waived and shall be inapplicable. Provided, however, the~~  
41 ~~court shall not deny such waiver solely on the basis that the applicant~~  
42 ~~lacks specific instances of or a personal history of threat to personal~~  
43 ~~safety. The~~], the court shall, at the request of the applicant or sua  
44 sponte, order the records of such change of name proceeding [~~to~~] be  
45 sealed, to be opened only by order of the court for good cause shown or  
46 at the request of the applicant. For the purposes of this section,  
47 "totality of the circumstances" shall include, but not be limited to, a  
48 consideration of the risk of violence or discrimination against the  
49 applicant, including such applicant's status as transgender or as the  
50 subject of domestic violence. The court shall not deny such sealing  
51 request solely on the basis that the applicant lacks specific instances  
52 of or a personal history of threat to personal safety.

53 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, pending such a finding  
54 in subdivision one of this section where an applicant seeks relief under  
55 this section, the court shall immediately order the applicant's current  
56 name, proposed new name, residential and business addresses, telephone

1 numbers, and any other information contained in any pleadings or papers  
2 submitted to the court to be safeguarded and sealed in order to prevent  
3 their inadvertent or unauthorized use or disclosure while the matter is  
4 pending.

5 § 6. The civil rights law is amended by adding a new article 6-A to  
6 read as follows:

7 ARTICLE 6-A

8 CHANGE OF SEX DESIGNATION

9 Section 67. Petition to change of sex designation.

10 67-a. Order.

11 67-b. Sealing change of sex designation papers.

12 § 67. Petition to change of sex designation. 1. A petition for leave  
13 to change sex designation may be made by a resident of the state to the  
14 county court of the county or the supreme court in the county in which  
15 such resident resides, or, if such resident resides in the city of New  
16 York, either to the supreme court or to any branch of the civil court of  
17 the city of New York, in any county of the city of New York. The peti-  
18 tion to change the sex designation of an infant may be made by the  
19 infant through either of such infant's parents, or by such infant's  
20 general guardian or by the guardian of such infant's person.

21 2. When an individual petitions the court to recognize their gender  
22 identity or to amend the sex designation on an identity document, the  
23 court shall issue such an order upon receipt of an affidavit from such  
24 individual attesting to their gender identity or reason for the change.  
25 No additional medical evidence shall be required to grant such request.  
26 No such order shall be required to amend an identity document issued  
27 within New York state. No such order shall be required to otherwise  
28 recognize the gender of an individual and treat them consistent with  
29 their gender identity within New York state or under New York state law.  
30 No fee shall be charged for a request for judicial intervention associ-  
31 ated with a petition to change sex designation.

32 3. Such request may be made simultaneously with a petition for change  
33 of name pursuant to section sixty or sixty-five of this chapter or on  
34 its own.

35 § 67-a. Order. If the court to which the petition is presented is  
36 satisfied thereby, or by the affidavit and certificate presented there-  
37 with, that the petition is true, and that there is no reasonable  
38 objection to the change of sex designation proposed, and if the petition  
39 be to change the sex designation of an infant, that the interests of the  
40 infant will be substantially promoted by the change, the court shall  
41 make an order authorizing the petitioner to assume the sex designation  
42 proposed.

43 § 67-b. Sealing change of sex designation papers. 1. Upon request of  
44 the applicant or sua sponte, the court shall order the records of such  
45 change of sex designation proceeding to be sealed, to be opened only by  
46 order of the court for good cause shown or at the request of the appli-  
47 cant.

48 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, pending such a finding  
49 in subdivision one of this section where an applicant seeks relief under  
50 this section, the court shall immediately order the applicant's current  
51 name, sex designation, proposed new sex designation, residential and  
52 business addresses, telephone numbers, and any other information  
53 contained in any pleadings or papers submitted to the court to be safe-  
54 guarded and sealed in order to prevent their inadvertent or unauthorized  
55 use or disclosure while the matter is pending.

1 § 7. Subdivision 3 of section 490 of the vehicle and traffic law is  
2 amended by adding a new paragraph (d) to read as follows:

3 (d) The identification card shall display the sex designation of M, F,  
4 or X as certified by the applicant, with no additional documentation  
5 required. The applicant may amend the sex designation of their identifi-  
6 cation card upon request.

7 § 8. Subdivision 1 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
8 amended by chapter 487 of the laws of 2012, is REPEALED.

9 § 9. Subdivision 1 of section 502 of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
10 amended by chapter 37 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as  
11 follows:

12 1. Application for license. Application for a driver's license shall  
13 be made to the commissioner. The fee prescribed by law may be submitted  
14 with such application. The applicant shall furnish such proof of identi-  
15 ty, age, and fitness as may be required by the commissioner. The license  
16 shall display the sex designation of M, F, or X as certified by the  
17 applicant, with no additional documentation required. The applicant may  
18 amend the sex designation of their driver's license upon request. Upon  
19 amendment of the sex designation, the change shall be made consistent  
20 through all affiliated records within the control of the department.

21 With respect to a non-commercial driver's license or learner's permit  
22 which does not meet federal standards for identification, in addition to  
23 the acceptable proofs of age and identity approved by the commissioner  
24 as of January first, two thousand nineteen, acceptable proof of identity  
25 shall also include, but not be limited to, a valid, unexpired foreign  
26 passport issued by the applicant's country of citizenship (which shall  
27 also be eligible as proof of age), a valid, unexpired consular identifi-  
28 cation document issued by a consulate from the applicant's country of  
29 citizenship, or a valid foreign driver's license that includes a photo  
30 image of the applicant and which is unexpired or expired for less than  
31 twenty-four months of its date of expiration, as primary forms of such  
32 proof. Nothing contained in this subdivision shall be deemed to preclude  
33 the commissioner from approving additional proofs of identity and age.  
34 The commissioner may also provide that the application procedure shall  
35 include the taking of a photo image or images of the applicant in  
36 accordance with rules and regulations prescribed by the commissioner. In  
37 addition, the commissioner also shall require that the applicant provide  
38 ~~[his or her]~~ such applicant's social security number or, in lieu there-  
39 of, with respect to an application for a non-commercial driver's license  
40 or learner's permit which does not meet federal standards for identifi-  
41 cation, an affidavit signed by such applicant that they have not been  
42 issued a social security number and shall provide space so that the  
43 applicant may request a notation upon such license that the applicant is  
44 a veteran of the United States armed forces. The commissioner also  
45 shall provide space on the application so that the applicant may regis-  
46 ter in the New York state organ and tissue donor registry under section  
47 forty-three hundred ten of the public health law with the following  
48 stated on the application in clear and conspicuous type:

49 "You must fill out the following section: Would you like to be added  
50 to the Donate Life Registry? Check box for 'yes' or 'skip this ques-  
51 tion'."

52 The commissioner of health shall not maintain records of any person  
53 who checks "skip this question". Except where the application is made in  
54 person or electronically, failure to check a box shall not impair the  
55 validity of an application, and failure to check "yes" or checking "skip  
56 this question" shall not be construed to imply a wish not to donate. In

1 the case of an applicant under eighteen years of age, checking "yes"  
2 shall not constitute consent to make an anatomical gift or registration  
3 in the donate life registry, except as otherwise provided pursuant to  
4 the provisions of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section forty-  
5 three hundred one of the public health law. Where an applicant has  
6 previously consented to make an anatomical gift or registered in the  
7 donate life registry, checking "skip this question" or failing to check  
8 a box shall not impair that consent or registration. In addition, an  
9 applicant for a commercial driver's license who will operate a commer-  
10 cial motor vehicle in interstate commerce shall certify that such appli-  
11 cant meets the requirements to operate a commercial motor vehicle, as  
12 set forth in public law 99-570, title XII, and title 49 of the code of  
13 federal regulations, and all regulations promulgated by the United  
14 States secretary of transportation under the hazardous materials trans-  
15 portation act. In addition, an applicant for a commercial driver's  
16 license shall submit a medical certificate at such intervals as required  
17 by the federal motor carrier safety improvement act of 1999 and Part  
18 383.71(h) of title 49 of the code of federal regulations relating to  
19 medical certification and in a manner prescribed by the commissioner.  
20 For purposes of this section and sections five hundred three, five  
21 hundred ten-a, and five hundred ten-aa of this title, the terms "medical  
22 certificate" and "medical certification" shall mean a form substantially  
23 in compliance with the form set forth in Part 391.43(h) of title 49 of  
24 the code of federal regulations. Upon a determination that the holder of  
25 a commercial driver's license has made any false statement, with respect  
26 to the application for such license, the commissioner shall revoke such  
27 license.

28 § 10. Section 4132 of the public health law is amended by adding a new  
29 subdivision 5 to read as follows:

30 5. Each parent of the child may choose to be designated on the  
31 original certificate of birth or by amendment as "father" or "mother" or  
32 "parent".

33 § 11. The section heading and paragraph (e) of subdivision 1 of  
34 section 4138 of the public health law, the section heading as amended by  
35 chapter 201 of the laws of 1972 and paragraph (e) of subdivision 1 as  
36 amended by section 9 of part L of chapter 56 of the laws of 2020, are  
37 amended and a new paragraph (f) is added to subdivision 1 to read as  
38 follows:

39 Birth certificate; new certificate in case of subsequent marriage of  
40 unwed parents; adoption; adjudication of parentage; change of name of  
41 registrant or parent; gender transition of registrant or parent.

42 (e) the certificate of birth of a child born out of wedlock as defined  
43 in paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section four thousand one hundred  
44 thirty-five of this article has been filed without entry of the name of  
45 the signatory other than the person who gave birth and the commissioner  
46 thereafter receives the acknowledgment of parentage pursuant to section  
47 one hundred eleven-k of the social services law or section four thousand  
48 one hundred thirty-five-b of this article executed by the person who  
49 gave birth and the other signatory which authorizes the entry of the  
50 name of such other signatory, and which may also authorize a conforming  
51 change in the surname of the child[+]; or

52 (f) any person born in New York state who submits an application to  
53 change the gender on the birth certificate and an affidavit attesting  
54 under penalty of perjury that the request for a change of gender to  
55 (female, male, or X) is to conform the person's documents and records to  
56 the person's gender identity and is not made for any fraudulent purpose.

1 A sex designation of X shall not be a required sex designation of any  
2 individual. Upon receipt of the documentation, the commissioner shall  
3 establish a new birth certificate reflecting the gender stated in the  
4 application and any change in name, if accompanied by a court order for  
5 a change of name. If such application is made on behalf of a person  
6 younger than seventeen, such affidavit shall be signed by the person's  
7 parent, legal guardian, mental health or medical provider, or social  
8 services provider.

9 § 12. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day  
10 after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition,  
11 amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the  
12 implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be  
13 made and completed on or before such effective date.