

STATE OF NEW YORK

4402--A

Cal. No. 515

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 4, 2021

Introduced by Sens. HOYLMAN, BAILEY, BENJAMIN, BIAGGI, COONEY, GOUNARDES, JACKSON, PARKER, RAMOS, RIVERA, SALAZAR, SEPULVEDA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Codes -- reported favorably from said committee, ordered to first and second report, ordered to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place in the order of third reading

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.

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

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

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

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

34 § 4. Section 64 of the civil rights law, as amended by chapter 258 of
35 the laws of 2006, and the closing paragraph as separately amended by
36 chapters 258, 320 and 481 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as
37 follows:

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

45 [~~Upon compliance with the order and the filing of the affidavit of the~~
46 ~~publication, as provided in this section, the clerk of the court in~~
47 ~~which the order has been entered shall certify that the order has been~~
48 ~~complied with; and, if~~] 2. (a) If the petition states that the petition-

49 er stands convicted of a violent felony offense as defined in section
50 70.02 of the penal law or a felony defined in article one hundred twen-
51 ty-five of such law or any of the following provisions of such law
52 sections 130.25, 130.30, 130.40, 130.45, 255.25, 255.26, 255.27, article
53 two hundred sixty-three, 135.10, 135.25, 230.05, 230.06, subdivision two
54 of section 230.30 or 230.32, [~~such~~] the clerk of the court in which the
55 order has been entered [~~(1)~~] shall deliver, by first class mail, a copy
56 of such certified order to the division of criminal justice services at

1 its office in the county of Albany and [~~(2) upon the clerk of the court~~
2 ~~reviewing the petitioner's application for name change and subsequent~~
3 ~~in-court inquiry, may, in the clerk's discretion, deliver, by first~~
4 ~~class mail, the petitioner's new name with such certified order to the~~
5 ~~court of competent jurisdiction which imposed the orders of support.~~
6 ~~Such certification shall appear on the original order and on any certi-~~
7 ~~fied copy thereof and shall be entered in the clerk's minutes of the~~
8 ~~proceeding]~~ (b) if the petition states that the petitioner is responsi-
9 ble for spousal support or child support obligations pursuant to court
10 order, upon review of the petitioner's application for name change and
11 subsequent inquiry, the court may, in its discretion, order the peti-
12 tioner to deliver by first class mail, the petitioner's new name with
13 such certified order to the court of competent jurisdiction which
14 imposed the orders of support. Such certification shall appear on the
15 original order and on any certified copy thereof and shall be entered in
16 the court's minutes of the proceeding.

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

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

30 § 64-a. [~~Exemption from publication requirements]~~ Sealing name change
31 papers. 1. If the court shall find that [~~the publication]~~ open record of
32 an applicant's change of name would jeopardize such applicant's personal
33 safety, based on totality of the circumstances [~~the provisions of~~
34 ~~sections sixty-three and sixty-four of this article requiring publica-~~
35 ~~tion shall be waived and shall be inapplicable. Provided, however, the~~
36 ~~court shall not deny such waiver solely on the basis that the applicant~~
37 ~~lacks specific instances of or a personal history of threat to personal~~
38 ~~safety. The], the court shall, at the request of the applicant or sua
39 sponte, order the records of such change of name proceeding [to] be
40 sealed, to be opened only by order of the court for good cause shown or
41 at the request of the applicant. For the purposes of this section,
42 "totality of the circumstances" shall include, but not be limited to, a
43 consideration of the risk of violence or discrimination against the
44 applicant, including such applicant's status as transgender or as the
45 subject of domestic violence. The court shall not deny such sealing
46 request solely on the basis that the applicant lacks specific instances
47 of or a personal history of threat to personal safety.~~

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, proposed new name, residential and business addresses, telephone
52 numbers, and any other information contained in any pleadings or papers
53 submitted to the court to be safeguarded and sealed in order to prevent
54 their inadvertent or unauthorized use or disclosure while the matter is
55 pending.

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

3 ARTICLE 6-A

4 CHANGE OF SEX DESIGNATION

5 Section 67. Petition to change of sex designation.

6 67-a. Order.

7 67-b. Sealing change of sex designation papers.

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

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

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

31 § 67-a. Order. If the court to which the petition is presented is
32 satisfied thereby, or by the affidavit and certificate presented there-
33 with, that the petition is true, and that there is no reasonable
34 objection to the change of sex designation proposed, and if the petition
35 be to change the sex designation of an infant, that the interests of the
36 infant will be substantially promoted by the change, the court shall
37 make an order authorizing the petitioner to assume the sex designation
38 proposed.

39 § 67-b. Sealing change of sex designation papers. 1. Upon request of
40 the applicant or sua sponte, the court shall order the records of such
41 change of sex designation proceeding to be sealed, to be opened only by
42 order of the court for good cause shown or at the request of the appli-
43 cant.

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

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

54 (d) The identification card shall display the sex designation of M, F,
55 or X as certified by the applicant, with no additional documentation

1 required. The applicant may amend the sex designation of their identifi-
2 cation card upon request.

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

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

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

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

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

48 The commissioner of health shall not maintain records of any person
49 who checks "skip this question". Except where the application is made in
50 person or electronically, failure to check a box shall not impair the
51 validity of an application, and failure to check "yes" or checking "skip
52 this question" shall not be construed to imply a wish not to donate. In
53 the case of an applicant under eighteen years of age, checking "yes"
54 shall not constitute consent to make an anatomical gift or registration
55 in the donate life registry, except as otherwise provided pursuant to
56 the provisions of paragraph (b) of subdivision one of section forty-

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

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

26 5. Each parent of the child may choose to be designated on the
27 original certificate of birth or by amendment as "father" or "mother" or
28 "parent".

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

35 Birth certificate; new certificate in case of subsequent marriage of
36 unwed parents; adoption; adjudication of parentage; change of name of
37 registrant or parent; gender transition of registrant or parent.

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

48 (f) any person born in New York state who submits an application to
49 change the gender on the birth certificate and an affidavit attesting
50 under penalty of perjury that the request for a change of gender to
51 (female, male, or X) is to conform the person's documents and records to
52 the person's gender identity and is not made for any fraudulent purpose.
53 A sex designation of X shall not be a required sex designation of any
54 individual. Upon receipt of the documentation, the commissioner shall
55 establish a new birth certificate reflecting the gender stated in the
56 application and any change in name, if accompanied by a court order for

1 a change of name. If such application is made on behalf of a person
2 younger than seventeen, such affidavit shall be signed by the person's
3 parent, legal guardian, mental health or medical provider, or social
4 services provider.

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