

PRIDE CENTER

SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

Transgender and Non-binary Transition Guide

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If you are reading this, congratulations on your choice to live authentically as who you are! There are many obstacles and hoops you must jump through to complete your transition. This handbook will lay out some of the steps to begin your medical and legal transition.

Legal Name Change

This step varies from county to county. In Franklin county you must first fill out a detailed packet, but Franklin county does not have its own name change petition packet; you must use the one from York county. In the packet you cross out every mention of York and fill in with Franklin. The list below lays out the forms needed.

List of Forms:

1. Petition
2. Fingerprint cards (2 sets)
3. Entry of Appearance as Self Represented Party
4. Blank Scheduling Order
5. Form for Notice of hearing to be published in paper
6. Record of Judgement search (notarized from each county)
7. Blank Order Granting Name Change

You can get the fingerprint cards from the prothonotary's office. (\$8.00 per set). You will need to get the Proof of Publication Notarized Form from the 2 papers. You will need to get the record of the lien search (from abstracting company) or attorney.

Steps to Changing Your Name Franklin County

1. Fill out Petition & Verification and Entry of Appearance Form
2. Get Fingerprints (go to state police and take your packet with you)
3. File Petition, Entry of Appearance, & Fingerprints with Prothonotary (1st Floor) & Pay Filing Fee of \$104.00 as of January 2019
4. Verify that Prothonotary will forward a copy to the judge
5. Wait for Order from Judge scheduling the hearing (will come in the mail), then follow their instructions of tasks to be completed before the hearing
6. Publish notice of the hearing & name change in 2 papers AT LEAST 20 DAYS BEFORE the HEARING ***NOTE: The papers may need some extra time to get the notice published. In other words, contact the papers AS SOON AS you receive the judge's order with the hearing date so that they are able to get the notice in the paper before the 20-day deadline. ***

7. Lien/judgment check (ABSTRACT – approximately \$125.00) Bring Proof of Publication to hearing (notarized form by newspapers & Legal Record)
Bring Birth Certificate to hearing Name Change -

This link provides the full petition packet to fill out. Follow instructions in the packet and change York to Franklin county (if living in Franklin County).

<https://yorkcountypa.gov/forms/category/112-name-change-form.html>

One of the most important and complicated pieces is a judgement check. For this step, you MUST go to the prothonotary of each county you have lived in the past 5 years. For example, I lived in Franklin, Lancaster, and Philadelphia counties so I needed to go to the prothonotary for each of those counties and get a notarized copy of the judgement check. The judgement checks MUST be done in person at the county's prothonotary's office.

The prothonotary's office is located in the courthouse of both Franklin and Cumberland Counties.

For the fingerprinting go to the state police barracks on Black Gap Road in Franklin County or Dunwoody Drive in Carlisle. Make sure to get a set of fingerprint cards from the prothonotary and take a copy of the petition for name change with you when you go.

Be prepared to spend a few hundred dollars throughout this process. You will pay the filing fee (\$104.00 for Franklin County), Fees for publishing in 2 newspapers (around \$50.00 each), the cost of the judgement check (around \$50.00 each), and fingerprints on the card.

The address for the prothonotary office in Franklin County is

Courthouse Annex
157 Lincoln Way E
Chambersburg, PA 17201

Name Change Cumberland County

The process to changing your name legally in Cumberland County is similar to Franklin County. Visiting the county website does not provide you with any information on how to approach a name change so I gathered information on how to write your own petition and using a template from York County. These templates should be able to be used because they follow the outline of required information for a name change petition.

If you decide to write your own it needs to include the following:

1. name of petitioner.
2. address of the petitioner's current residence.
3. addresses of the places where the petitioner has resided during the past five (5) years.
4. statement indicating the petitioner's desire for change of name.
5. statement of the reasons for the request.
6. statement indicating whether the petitioner has a prior record of criminal convictions.
7. statement indicating whether there are any judgments or liens of record filed against the petitioner.
8. if the petitioner is seeking a name change for a minor, a statement indicating why such a change is in the best interest of the child.
9. the name which the petitioner would like to adopt.

In addition to these 9 requirements, there are formatting requirements due to Civil Procedure code 204.1. These include the following:

- The document shall be on 8 1/2 inch by 11-inch paper.
- The document shall be prepared on white paper (except for dividers and similar sheets) of good quality.
- The first sheet shall contain a 3-inch space from the top of the paper for all court stampings, filing notices, etc.
- The text must be double spaced, but quotations more than two lines long may be indented and single spaced. Margins must be at least one inch on all four sides.
- The lettering shall be clear and legible and no smaller than point 12. The lettering shall be on only one side of a page, except that exhibits and similar supporting documents may be lettered on both sides of a page.
- Documents and papers shall be firmly bound.

York County provides blank templates that can be found at the following website:

[forms.html \(yorkcountypa.gov\)](#). These templates can be used to assure that you are covering all the necessary information within your petition. The first page suggests connecting with an attorney for advice and direction on how to proceed with a name change. After speaking with an individual from the prothonotary office, they suggested to contact Mid Penn Legal Services and make an appointment to go over the necessary paperwork needed to obtain the legal name change.

Once you file the civil petition packet and Court of Common Pleas Civil Cover sheet (found on the county website under Prothonotary forms) and petition paperwork at the prothonotary office in Cumberland County Courthouse and pay the required filing fee (120.50) and name change search (9.50), you need to complete the same steps listed for Franklin County. These include:

- Posting a notice in 2 newspapers and providing proof of publication
- Conducting a judgement search in each county you have lived in the past 5 years (make sure these are notarized copies and done in person at each county's prothonotary's office)
- Obtaining fingerprints (this could take a few weeks so do this soon after you get the notice of the hearing date)

The address for the prothonotary office in Cumberland County is

1 Courthouse Square
Suite 100
Carlisle, PA 17013

Name Change for Shippensburg University

When changing your name at Shippensburg, there are two different options, one using your preferred name prior to a legal name change and changing your name legally. All this information can also be found on Shippensburg University's website, but I will include here as well.

1. Log on to myShip using your SU e-mail address and password.
2. Click on **Personal Information**
3. You will be redirected to your **Personal Information** showing your **Preferred Name**.
4. Review any current information.
5. To add or make an update to a Preferred Name, click **Edit** in the top right corner of the **Personal Details**
6. Make appropriate updates and click **Update**

Legal Name Change

This part takes place after having your name changed via the courts system. It is important to get multiple copies of the court ordered name change because photocopies are generally not accepted. A request to change your name must be submitted to the Registrar's office, by mail, fax, or in person. Please bring a copy of the court document reflecting your new name to support your request for the name change. Accepted court documents include marriage certificate, divorce decree, or other court-ordered change of name. Documents may be faxed to (717) 477-1388. Questions may be directed to the Registrar's Office.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

This is often a crucial step for trans/non-binary folks. If you are looking to start hormones, often this requires a letter from a therapist addressing you understand the impact of starting hormones and that you are mentally stable and prepared for the changes that will happen. To obtain hormones, you can go to an endocrinologist, informed consent places (such as planned parenthood) or plume.

An endocrinologist is a doctor who specializes in prescribing and following the effects of hormones through monitoring of blood work and appointments. Oftentimes these doctors are the one that require a letter written by a mental health professional. In Franklin County the endocrinologist is through Wellspan Health in Chambersburg and is very professional and supportive of care for transgender individuals. In Cumberland County there are two endocrinologists: one at Wellspan Health in Carlisle and one at Geisinger Holy Spirit.

To obtain a letter stating you are psychologically stable and understand the risks and benefits associated with hormone therapy, you must first find a therapist. Below I will list some of the mental health counseling centers in both Franklin and Cumberland counties. If your therapist is unsure what a letter should look like, below is a template to share with your mental health provider.

- Alder Health- Harrisburg
- New Passages Inc.- Harrisburg Area
- National Queer/Trans People of Color- Harrisburg Area
- Latinx Therapy
- Hershey Gender Health Clinic
- Franklin Family Services Carlisle- Chambersburg, Shippensburg
- Keystone Behavioral Health- Chambersburg
- Wellspan Behavioral Health- Chambersburg, Greencastle
- Laurel Life Counseling- Gettysburg, Chambersburg, Mechanicsburg, York
- TW Ponessa- York Area
- Downtown Counseling Center- Carlisle

Below is a link for a template for beginning hormone therapy.

https://www.thegenderhealthcenter.org/resources/providers/SAMPLE-Clearance_Letter_HRT.pdf

Planned parenthood offers an informed consent model and does not require the mental health letter. Link below to the planned parenthood site.

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-great-northwest-hawaiian-islands/patient/services-transgender-patients>

Plume is an online telehealth provider of hormones and healthcare for transgender individuals. They do not offer gender confirmation surgeries but can offer names of surgeons that provide them. Plume is a new platform using telehealth in this time of COVID 19 that makes scheduling and obtaining medical services accessible to anyone with internet access. Link below to learn more about plume.

<https://techcrunch.com/2020/06/18/plume-is-building-a-healthcare-service-specifically-for-the-transgender-community/>

In the event of a mental health crisis, here are a few national helplines you can call.

Trevor Project - 866-488-7386

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 800-273-8255

Trans Lifeline - 877-565-8860

Crisis Text Line - text home to 741741

PrEP and PEP

PrEP is a medication that individuals can take to help lower the risk of contracting HIV. According to the CDC, there are two different medications approved and used for PrEP. These include Truvada and Descovy. Truvada can be used for anyone at risk for contracting HIV through sex or intravenous injections as a part of drug use. Descovy is only used for people at risk through sex and excludes individuals assigned female at birth. You can obtain this medication through your doctor.

According to the PrEP locator database, you can obtain PrEP through the following locations:

- Keystone Health in Chambersburg
- CVS MinuteClinic in Hagerstown
- Washington County Health Department in Hagerstown, MD
- Meritus Infectious Disease Specialists in Hagerstown, MD
- Planned Parenthood of Maryland in Frederick, MD
- Planned Parenthood Keystone, Harrisburg, PA
- Penn State Health Medical Group, Harrisburg, PA
- UMPC Pinnacle Health, Harrisburg, PA
- Alder Health Services, Harrisburg, PA
- Pinnacle Health, Harrisburg, PA
- Family First Health, York, PA
- Planned Parenthood Keystone, York, PA

Obtaining and Paying for Truvada or Descovy

The cost of Truvada and Descovy is hundreds and thousands of dollars a month, which would prove to be a barrier for individuals who are low-income. However, most insurance companies cover some or even all the cost. For individuals without health insurance, there is an access program for both Descovy and Truvada. You must apply to be considered for this assistance program. Good Rx also has coupons, but these are also a high price. The lowest cost for Truvada is \$491.05 and the highest is \$1,572.16. For Descovy the lowest is \$1,908.22 and the highest is \$2,011.58. It is important to check with your insurance to see how much they would pay for these medications and if needed you can apply for the medication assistance programs offered by the manufacturers of the medications. You can access these medication pages at the website links below.

[DESCOVY FOR PrEP® Co-Pay Support | HCP \(descovyhcp.com\)](http://DESCOVY FOR PrEP® Co-Pay Support | HCP (descovyhcp.com))

TRUVADA for PrEP® Cost Assistance

PEP

PEP, or post-exposure prophylaxis, is medication you can begin within 72 hours of exposure to HIV to prevent seroconversion, or becoming HIV+. It is a pill that you take for 28 days. If taken within 72 hours for 28 days consistently, it has been shown to be highly effective in preventing seroconversion.

PEP can be accessed at Planned Parenthood of Maryland in Frederick.

Transgender Friendly Surgical Providers for Gender Confirmation Surgery

Gender confirmation surgery is a big step that some transgender and non-binary individuals choose to have. It can be an overwhelming task to try and find competent surgeons. Luckily, PA has multiple different providers who are skilled in transgender care. It is important for you to feel confident and comfortable with the surgeon you choose, so it might be worth checking around different surgeons to see which one you feel most comfortable with. If you have insurance which includes transgender care you may have more limited options if you plan to have the surgery covered. If you would rather pay out of pocket, you have a lot more options. For this section I chose to focus only on surgeons in Pennsylvania.

Surgeons

Dr. Jared Liebman, Philadelphia, PA - [215-456-4670](#). Dr. Liebman specializes in plastic surgery and has training in gender confirmation surgery procedures. Dr. Liebman works through Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA. Dr. Liebman accepts insurance, Medicaid, and financing options. Below is a link with more detailed information.

<https://providers.einstein.edu/provider/Jared+Liebman/1451383>

Dr. Kathy Rumer in Ardmore, PA - [\(855\)-782-5665](#). She specializes in both M to F and F to M surgical procedures. Rumer can take insurance, out of pocket, financing, and Medicaid. For Medicaid or insurance to cover the surgery at Dr. Rumer's surgical center, you will have to get combinations of referrals and letters unique to each insurance company. Below are the links to the detailed information for each method.

Medicaid coverage - <https://rumergendersurgery.com/medicaid-coverage/>

Financing/out of pocket - <https://rumergendersurgery.com/fees-financing/>

Insurance coverage - <https://rumergendersurgery.com/insurance-coverage/>

Dr. McGinn Papillon Center, New Hope, PA- (215) 693-1199. Dr. McGinn specializes in transgender services for both M to F and F to M. She created her practice after completing her own transition because she noticed there was a lack of comprehensive and affirming providers. She does not accept insurance or financing, but she does accept credit cards. Below is the link for a more detailed look at her practice.

<https://www.drchristinemcginn.com/services/financing.php>

Dr. Bryan Cicuto, Litiz, PA - (717) 625-3509. Must call to get information about financing and coverage and type of procedure one is looking for.

Dr. Sherman Leis, Bala Cynwyd, PA - (610) 667-1888. Must call to get information about financing coverage and type of procedure one is looking for.

Dr. Wayne Ledinh, Chambersburg, PA - (717) 263-8463. Specializes in plastic surgery and has training in transgender confirmation surgery (specifically F to M top surgery). Office accepts insurance, Medicaid, and out-of-pocket financing. Below is the link for more detailed information.

<https://www.wellspan.org/offices-locations/wellspan-plastic-surgery-skin-care-center/>

Dr. Joseph Ravnic, Hershey, PA - (717-531-8952). Must call or visit online at <https://hmc.pennstatehealth.org/display-provider/-/provider/1728/dino-j-ravnic-do> to request a consultation and ask any questions about desired procedures.

Trans Friendly OB/GYN's

Getting special care from an OB/GYN can be a difficult experience and a challenge to find one that is competent in caring for individuals who are transgender. Luckily there are a few competent doctor practices in both Franklin and Cumberland Counties. These include:

Keystone Women's Center
830 5th Ave Ste 202, Chambersburg, PA 17201
(717) 709-7990

Women's Health Specialists of Carlisle
19 Sprint Dr Ste 2, Carlisle, PA 17015
(717) 218-8888

Cumberland Valley OB/GYN
9 Flowers Dr, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
(717) 691-8750

Legal Information for Discrimination

Unfortunately, many transgender and non-binary folks face discrimination and may require legal help. Below will be listed a synopsis and link to different legal supports.

The National Center for Transgender Equality has a list of legal members that spans all 50 states. This is important because whenever transgender and non-binary folks face discrimination they need supportive and professional supports to achieve equality. Below is a link to over 80 different legal members that support transgender rights. The legal support in Pennsylvania include:

Garden of Peace Project

P.O. Box 174 Homestead, PA 15120

412.879.0477 <http://www.gardenofpeaceproject.org>

Michael David Battle, Executive Director

michaeldavid.battle@gardenofpeaceproject.org

(Trans)ition Project aids with name and gender marker change paperwork.

Trans-Help

1315 Spruce St, Phila, PA 19107 267.235.4570

Julie Chovanes, jchovanes@chovanes.com

Providing legal, social, and medical services to trans people, and education about trans people to the greater community. Legal services are in house and primarily litigation.

Mazzoni Center

21 S. 12th St., 13th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19107

215.563.0657 <https://mazzonicenter.org/>

Thomas W. Ude, Jr., Legal and Public Policy Director tude@mazzonicenter.org

Legal Help Desk: legalservices@mazzonicenter.org

Provides legal services for elder issues, discrimination, harassment, family law, name change, wills, and youth, as part of the Center's mission to provide quality health and wellness services in an LGBT-focused environment.

To check out more resources for different states, visit the link below.

<https://transequality.org/id-documents-center/transgender-legal-services-network>

Transgender Rights in Cumberland County, PA

If you are living in Cumberland County, there are some rights that you should be aware of. According to Fox 43, Cumberland was one of eight counties in PA to pass an LGBTQ non-discrimination order. This order protects all individuals who identify as LGBTQ from discrimination in many areas of life. The Human Rights Campaign, or HRC, conducted a measure of their LGBTQ policies nationwide. This measure rated how well the municipalities and counties in all states protect individuals within the LGBTQ population. Carlisle, which is a municipality in Cumberland county PA passed its non-discrimination order in 2016.

Today, Carlisle was rated an 86 out of 100 on its LGBTQ protection policies. In addition to Carlisle, Shippensburg and Camp Hill also enacted LGBTQ ordinances that protect individuals from discrimination in housing, employment, and other public accommodations. This is a huge development as there are currently no statewide protection for LGBTQ individuals despite the passing of LGBTQ protections at a federal level. According to the ACLU, the state discrimination policies include protections for race, sex, age, religion, national origin, or physical disability. Because the state as a whole does not have inclusive LGBTQ protections, it is even more critical for counties and municipalities to adopt inclusive protections. Cumberland county is paving the way for more inclusive and broader protections in other counties in PA.

Links below for more information:

[These 8 Pa. municipalities are doing more than state governments to protect LGBTQ rights, report says \(msn.com\)](#)

[Shippensburg enacts non-discrimination law to protect LGBT community - pennlive.com](#)

[City leaders are trailblazing path forward for LGBTQ equality | fox43.com](#)

[Despite landmark ruling, Pa. GOP leaders in no hurry to extend LGBTQ protections under state law - Spotlight PA](#)