

NOTICE

NAME CHANGE APPLICATIONS – ELIMINATION OF THE REQUIREMENT OF NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION; AMENDMENTS TO RULE 4:72


The Supreme Court has amended Rule 4:72-3 (“Notice of Application”) and 4:72-4 (“Hearing; Judgment; Publication; Filing”) so as to eliminate the requirement of newspaper publication of the notice of application and judgment granting a name change. The Court’s November 17, 2020 Order is attached.

The Supreme Court Committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement (formerly the Committee on Minority Concerns) in its 2017-2019 biennial report recommended eliminating the requirement of publication in minor name change actions in order to protect the privacy and safety of transgender, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary youth who seek a name change in affirmation of their gender identity. The Supreme Court Family Practice and Civil Practice Committees endorsed and expanded the proposal to eliminate the publication requirement for both minors and adults, citing the general barriers the publication requirement also imposes on self-represented litigants and litigants of limited economic means in addition to the safety and privacy concerns of transgender, gender nonconforming, and non-binary adults.

The September 14, 2020 notice publishing the proposal generated a number of comments, all of which supported the recommendation to amend Rule 4:72.

The Court’s November 17, 2020 action will expand equal access to the courts for people who are poor, self-represented, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, including transgender women of color who disproportionately continue to be targeted victims of violence throughout our nation. Amending Rule 4:72 advances the Judiciary’s goals of equal access, procedural fairness, and ongoing identification and elimination of obstacles to justice.

Questions about this notice may be directed to the Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement Unit at (609) 815-2900 x52365 or the Civil Practice Division at (609) 815-2900 x54900.



Hon. Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: November 18, 2020