CHAPTER 32-28
CHANGE OF NAMES OF PERSONS AND PLACES

32-28-01. Court authorized to change name of persons and cities.

The district court shall have the authority to change the names of persons and cities within this state.

32-28-02. Change of name of person - Petition - Criminal history record checks - Exceptions.

1. Any person desiring to change that person's name may file a petition in the district court of the county in which the person is a resident, setting forth:
   a. That the petitioner is a citizen or permanent resident alien of the United States.
   b. That the petitioner has been a bona fide resident of the county for at least six months before the filing of the petition.
   c. The reason for which the change of the petitioner's name is sought.
   d. The name requested.
2. When an individual files a petition for a name change, the court shall determine whether the petitioner has a criminal history in this state or any other state. The court may require the petitioner to submit to a statewide and nationwide criminal history record check. The criminal history record check must be conducted in the manner provided for in section 12-60-24. All costs associated with the criminal history record check are the responsibility of the petitioner. This subsection does not apply to a request for a name change as part of an application for a marriage license under section 14-03-20, to a request for a name change in conjunction with the annulment of a marriage under chapter 14-04 or the dissolution or separation of a marriage under chapter 14-05, or to the change of a minor's name unless the court has reason to believe the request is being made to defraud or mislead, is not being made in good faith, will cause injury to an individual, or will compromise public safety. If the individual petitioning for a name change has a felony conviction under a law of this state or a law of another state or the federal government, the request is presumed to be made in bad faith, to defraud or mislead, to cause injury to an individual, or to compromise public safety. The name change may not be granted unless the individual requesting the name change proves by clear and convincing evidence that the request is not based upon an intent to defraud or mislead, is made in good faith, will not cause injury to an individual, and will not compromise public safety.
3. The judge of the district court, upon being duly satisfied by affidavit or proof in open court of the truth of the allegations set forth in the petition, that there exists proper and reasonable cause for changing the name of the petitioner, and that thirty days' previous notice of the intended application has been given in the official newspaper of the county in which the petitioner resides, shall order a change of the name of the petitioner. Proper and reasonable cause does not exist if the court determines that the request for a name change is made to defraud or mislead, is not made in good faith, will cause injury to an individual, or will compromise public safety. The court may waive publication of the notice when the proposed change relates only to a first or given name as distinguished from a surname or upon evidence satisfactory to the court that the petitioner has been the victim of domestic violence as defined in section 14-07.1-01.
4. If the person whose name is to be changed is a minor, the court shall consider the appointment of a guardian ad litem, and notice of the intended application must be published in the official newspaper of the county in which the minor resides and, if different, the official newspaper of the county in which each of the minor's parents reside. If the minor has a noncustodial parent, a copy of the notice must be deposited in a post office in this state, postage prepaid, not later than ten days after the publication of the notice, and directed to the noncustodial parent's last reasonably ascertained post-office address. An affidavit of mailing of the notice prepared in

accordance with the North Dakota Rules of Civil Procedure must be filed with the court.

5. If the court issues a name change order for a petitioner who has a criminal history in this or any other state, the court, within ten days after the issuance of the change of name order, shall report the name change to the bureau of criminal investigation.
6. The provisions of this section may not delay the granting of a marriage license under section 14-03-20, which may be granted without the change of name.

32-28-03. Change of name of city - Petition.

Whenever it may be desirable to change the name of any city in this state, a petition for that purpose may be filed in the district court of the county in which the city is situated, setting forth the reason for the change of name and the name requested. The court may order the change of name, on being satisfied by proof that:

1. The request of the petitioners is just, proper, and reasonable.
2. Notice has been provided as required in section 32-28-02.
3. Two-thirds of the qualified electors of the city, as determined by the vote cast for the office of governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election, have signed such petition expressing their desire that such change of name be granted.
4. There is no other city in this state with the requested name.

32-28-04. Costs - Change not to affect rights or pending actions.

All proceedings under this chapter shall be at the cost of the petitioner or petitioners, and judgment may be entered against the petitioner or petitioners for costs as in other civil actions. Any change of name under the provisions of this chapter in no manner shall affect or alter any action or legal proceedings then pending, or any right, title, or interest whatsoever.