How to Amend a Birth, Marriage or Death Record

Sometimes a person finds that the information on the official record is not complete or that some item of information on the certificate does not agree with what he/she believes to be the facts. When this is the case, it is possible to have missing information added, or to have errors on the certificate corrected. This pamphlet is designed to assist persons who are applying for completion or correction of certificates.

Applying to Amend a Certificate

Any person may apply for completion or correction of any certificate in which he/she is directly interested. Ordinarily, this will be the person whose certificate needs to be completed or corrected, one of the parents or the legal representative of the individual. If the registrant is 18 years of age or older, he/she must approve the requested change when the application is submitted by anyone other than themselves.

There is a special form used for the purpose of applying to amend a certificate. This form is called "APPLICATION FOR CORRECTING OR COMPLETING A CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH, MARRIAGE OR DEATH, (FORM VSCR). Most applications are made on this form. The application must be completed in triplicate and be signed by the person who is applying to amend the record. The signature must be notarized.

For minor changes, made within six months of occurrence, a different form is used

(VSX). The town clerk will select the proper form for the particular request.

Completing the VSCr Evidence Required

In addition to completing the form VSCr and having it notarized, the applicant must submit, at the same time, suitable documentary evidence to substantiate his statements. **TWO PIECES** of documentary evidence, dated as close to the date of occurrence as possible, are necessary to correct errors of any item on the certificate. One of the documents may be an affidavit of personal knowledge properly notarized.

Documents for Proving the Facts

A variety of documents may be submitted to prove the facts, with some documents more valuable in this respect than others. Always bear in mind that the evidence presented should refer as closely as possible to the time of the event in question, whether birth, marriage or death.

Such documents as baptismal records, hospital records, early school records, census records, income tax records, and other vital records are regarded as excellent means of substantiating facts.

Employment records, application for insurance policies, copies from family Bible records, voting registration lists, military records, newspaper clippings, and other similar records can also be used as documentation.

These are less valuable as evidence, but can be helpful.

Affidavits of personal knowledge can also be useful, but they are in a less valuable category than the documentary evidence cited above.

When properly prepared, an affidavit should only be made by a person who has a ***first-hand knowledge*** of the facts in question, and this should be clearly stated. It should indicate the basic on which the statement is being made, including relationship to the applicant, relative age, and any other pertinent information that will help to strengthen the value of the statement. The affidavit is a supporting document not in the same category as an official record. Affidavits should always be notarized.

Photographic copies or written statements of the information Appearing on documentary evidence can be accepted in lieu of the original records if they are certified by the person who has the original record in his possession.

Documents used as evidence will be returned to the applicant after the certificate is amended.

Correction of Errors in Names

Sometimes a problem arises because the name which appears on the person's certificate is not the name by which he/she is commonly known. In this case it is necessary to determine whether the difference is due to an error on the certificate or whether the person's name has changed by usage.

If the names which appear on the certificate were in error, the name or names may

be corrected by applying and presenting two early pieces of documentary evidence which show the individual's correct name or names.

If there is no proof that there was an error made at the time of recording, it will then be necessary to have the name legally changed by court order. Upon receipt of a certified copy of a court order changing the name of a person born in N.H. and upon request of such person, the city/town clerk shall amend the certificate of birth to show the new name. "A.K.A." shall be noted and the new name added as indicated. The original name is **NOT** removed from the record. Both names shall appear on the face of the amended record.

ADDING NAMES

Some older birth certificates do not show the given name of the registrant. A certified copy of such a certificate cannot be issued until the name is added. This can be accomplished regardless of the time element by having the applicant complete and sign a form VSX which does not require documentary proof.

A missing surname can be added to a birth certificate simply by inserting the surname of the father as shown on the birth certificate. If a father's name is not listed on the record the surname of the mother can be used. If the applicant disagrees with this name, a formal VSCr correction request filed at the Town of birth event will then be required with evidence supporting the request.

WHERE APPLICATION SHOULD BE MADE

Application to correct or complete a certificate must be made to the clerk of the city or town in which the event occurred.

The fee for making a correction on a certificate is $**10.00.** This fee must accompany the application. If a certified copy of the record is desired, there is an additional fee of **$12.00** per copy. Checks should be made payable to: the City/Town Clerk of the City/Town where the event occurred.

HOW TO AMEND A BIRTH, MARRIAGE OR DEATH RECORD IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

VR-135 Rev: 04/2010