

→ THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ID BOOK AND YOUR GENDER

- ✓ Possessing an identity document that reflects your gender identity/self-presentation is vital for accessing the most basic human rights and services as a citizen and member of society.
- ✓ Without an accurate ID book it becomes very hard to access bank accounts, healthcare services, driver's licences, grants, bursaries without having to make embarrassing explanations about your gender.
- ✓ When one's identity document does not reflect your gender, you sometimes have to disclose your transgender status, which could jeopardise your chances at employment as well as make you vulnerable to prejudice in the workplace.
- ✓ When you don't have an ID book it puts you at greater risk of ridicule and victimisation in your encounters with the law, the police, the criminal justice system (where transgender women are often put in cells with men) and society in general.
- ✓ Your access to healthcare and other services becomes difficult and impedes your chances for good healthcare.
- ✓ It becomes very difficult to travel.

“For so many years I had to drive back roads to avoid roadblocks. I dreaded to think what might happen if the police saw there was an F on my driver's licence and not an M. I no longer looked like a woman but my driver's licence still had my female name and gender on it! It was very scary...”
- Transman, Cape Town



GENDER DYNAMIX

Vision

Gender Dynamix envisions a society where everyone is free to express their gender, within, across and beyond the male-female binary without fear of discrimination.

Mission

Using a human rights framework, we undertake to support transgender people to access and advocate for their rights; increase awareness and visibility of transgender people in South Africa; promote freedom of expression of gender identity; focusing on transgender, transsexual and other gender non-conforming people. We assist significant others, family, friends and colleagues of trans people with information and education. We lobby government, civil society, national and international decision-makers and the media to combat prejudice against transgender people; and we strive to play an integral role in transgender activism in South Africa,

Africa and globally by participating in relevant human rights networks.



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→ CHANGING YOUR NAME AND GENDER IN YOUR IDENTITY DOCUMENT

The Alteration of Sex Description Act 49 of 2003*

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Before 2003 people could not apply to the Department of Home Affairs to change the gender marker in identity documents. Activists lobbied for Parliament to change this law, and in 2003 it was changed.

Not only does the law now allow transgender people to change their names and gender, but South Africa is one of the first countries to allow people to change their name and gender without having any kind of surgery!

This is your right as a transgender or intersex person today. Read here how to claim that right!

TRANSGENDER. IT'S NOT A GAY OR STRAIGHT THING. IT'S ABOUT MY GENDER.



* NO SURGERY NEEDED FOR GENDER CHANGE IN SA! IT'S THE LAW.

English

→ MAY I CHANGE MY NAME IN MY ID BOOK?

- ✓ Yes, changing one's name so that it reflects one's gender identity is often the first step for transgender people in their gender transition.
- ✓ It is important to know that merely changing your name (e.g. from Jacob to Janine) does not change your legal gender.
- ✓ Getting your name changed is a simple process of filling in forms, supplying photos and paying a fee at Home Affairs.
- ✓ You do not need to motivate why you want to change your name.

Where is gender in an ID book?

- ✓ Changing your legal gender will change the sex in your birth certificate as well as your identity number.
- ✓ Every identity number indicates gender (male or female).
- ✓ The first six digits of your identity number indicate the date of your birth. The next four digits are a gender marker.
- ✓ For females it is usually from 0 to 4999 and for males 5000 and up.

→ EXAMPLE

0043:
Indicate male/female

730424:
Indicate date of birth



Please contact Gender Dynamix to obtain sample letters and guides to help your doctor or medical health care person to write these reports for you.

It is very important that the reports are written in a certain manner for efficient processing at the Department of Home Affairs.



HOW DO I CHANGE THE GENDER IN MY ID BOOK?

- ✓ This is a different application than your name change.
- ✓ You need to supply two letters from your medical professionals (e.g. a medical doctor, psychologist or social worker).
- ✓ The first report must be from your main doctor. This could be the doctor who prescribes your hormones or a surgeon if you have had surgery.
- ✓ The letter must say that "gender reassignment has taken place." It could also describe your process but is not necessary.
- ✓ Remember you do not have to have surgery, hormone treatment qualifies one.
- ✓ The second report from another medical person must simply confirm the first one.
- ✓ Along with the two reports, you will also need a copy of your birth certificate;
- ✓ Fill in a Form DHA BI 526 which you will get at the Home Affairs office.
- ✓ Fill Form DHA BI 24 in duplicate. Write OLD on the one where the old gender is written and NEW on the other one where the new gender is written.

→ A SHORT GUIDE TO HOW THE LAW WORKS



Who may apply for gender amendment in an ID book?

In Section 1 of the Act it says:
"Any person whose sexual characteristics have been altered by surgical or medical treatment resulting in gender reassignment may apply to the Director General of the National Department of Home Affairs..."

How does the law see these terms in the definitions?

"SEXUAL CHARACTERISTICS"

The act describes this as:

- ✓ Primary or secondary sexual characteristics.
- ✓ Primary refers to genitals.
- ✓ Secondary sexual characteristics refer to those characteristics that develop throughout life and which are dependent upon the hormones.

"MEDICAL TREATMENT"

- ✓ Hormones are the substance in our bodies which is responsible (amongst other things) for developing breasts in women and beards in men.
- ✓ Medical treatment with regards to trans people is the use of the hormone testosterone to help trans men develop beards. Transwomen can develop breasts with the use of the hormone oestrogen.

"GENDER REASSIGNMENT"

"...gender reassignment means a process which is undertaken for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other sexual characteristics, and includes any part of such process..."

- ✓ Essentially this means that gender reassignment is not a single event but is a process that takes time.
- ✓ An application for amendment can be made during any stage of this process. It also means the law considers more than just private parts when we define gender change.