

CALIFORNIA CODES
FAMILY . CODE
SECTION 300-310

306.5. (a) Parties to a marriage shall not be required to have the same name. Neither party shall be required to change his or her name.

A person's name shall not change upon marriage unless that person elects to change his or her name pursuant to subdivision (b).

(b) (1) One party or both parties to a marriage may elect to change the middle or last names by which that party wishes to be known after solemnization of the marriage by entering the new name in the spaces provided on the marriage license application without intent to defraud.

(2) A person may adopt any of the following middle or last names pursuant to paragraph (1):

(A) The current last name of the other spouse.

(B) The last name of either spouse given at birth.

(C) A name combining into a single last name all or a segment of the current last name or the last name of either spouse given at birth.

(D) A hyphenated combination of last names.

(3) (A) An election by a person to change his or her name pursuant to paragraph (1) shall serve as a record of the name change. A certified copy of a marriage certificate containing the new name, or retaining the former name, shall constitute proof that the use of the new name or retention of the former name is lawful.

(B) A certified copy of a marriage certificate shall be accepted as identification establishing a true, full name for purposes of Section 12800.7 of the Vehicle **Code**.

(C) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the Department of Motor Vehicles from accepting as identification other documents establishing a true, full name for purposes of Section 12800.7 of the Vehicle **Code**. Those documents may include, without limitation, a certified copy of a marriage certificate recording a marriage outside of this state.

(D) This section shall be applied in a manner consistent with the requirements of Sections 1653.5 and 12801 of the Vehicle **Code**.

(4) The adoption of a new name, or the choice not to adopt a new name, by means of a marriage license application pursuant to paragraph (1) shall only be made at the time the marriage license is issued. After a marriage certificate is registered by the local registrar, the certificate may not be amended to add a new name or change the name adopted pursuant to paragraph (1). This requirement shall not abrogate the right of either party to adopt a different name through usage at a future date, or to petition the superior court for a change of name pursuant to Title 8 (commencing with Section 1275) of Part 3 of the **Code** of Civil Procedure.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to abrogate the common law right of any person to change his or her name, or the right of any person to petition the superior court for a change of name pursuant to Title 8 (commencing with Section 1275) of Part 3 of the **Code** of Civil Procedure.

(d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2009.