

Ad Clerum 3a.4

Change of name at confirmation

Where a candidate for confirmation asks to add to or change their Christian name(s), the parish priest should first ensure that the change is being made after careful consideration and, in the case of a minor, with the parents' consent. The request for this change to be made at confirmation should then be sent in writing to the officiating bishop before the day of the service.

The Legal Advisory Commission has given the following opinion in respect of this issue, referring to Canons B 27 para 6 and B 39 para 2.

1. A bishop may at confirmation for good reason add to or alter the Christian name of a person who is to be confirmed. The candidate is confirmed under the new name which is then deemed to be his or her lawful Christian name.
2. A record of the change of name must be made in the register book of confirmations, and the register should clearly show the change made e.g. 'Jane Mary (previously Joanna Mary)' or 'Peter David (previously Peter)'. If the confirmation takes place in the same parish church as the earlier baptism, it is desirable to record the change of name in the margin by the original entry in the Register of Baptisms as well.
3. The confirmation certificate or card should also record the change of name at confirmation.
4. The candidate should be advised to record this change either by statutory declaration or deed poll. The birth certificate must *not* be altered. The Diocesan Registrar advises: 'It sometimes causes confusion when a person is known by one name or set of names, e.g. because of a change introduced at confirmation, and then still has to produce a birth certificate showing the original name. It is therefore desirable for some other legal record to be drawn up to record the change of name. The best record is a Deed Poll which is good for all time. A Statutory Declaration is sometimes used in evidence of the change of name pending the completion of a formal Deed Poll when the declarant attains the age of 18 years.'
5. At the confirmation the bishop should confirm the candidate using the full Christian name or names as altered.

Revised April 2015.