



# Home Office Identity & Passport Service

General Register Office  
Room C202  
Smedley Hydro  
Trafalgar Road  
Birkdale  
Southport  
PR8 2HH

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Dear Stakeholder,

We are writing to you as part of a wider communication to groups within the transgender community to inform you of proposed changes to the Gender Recognition Register (the register held by the General Register Office which enables the birth of a person who has obtained their gender recognition certificate to be re-registered to show their new name and gender) and certificates issued from it.

We would like your co-operation in circulating this information to those of your membership who have either had their births re-registered or those who are in the process of making an application to the panel for their gender recognition certificate. We are particularly keen to ensure that the information is made available to individuals who may no longer be actively involved with your group but are known to you or your membership. We do not intend to publicise this information more widely, since the changes are sensitive and we do not wish to compromise the privacy of individuals.

## The changes are two-fold

Firstly, there are to be changes made to the particulars recorded in the register itself and, therefore, the information contained in any certificate issued from the register.

Secondly, there are to be changes to the 'series number' (the series of letters which form part of the serial number) of the certificates issued from the register.

The first change will require changes to the relevant regulations whereas the second can be handled administratively by this office. Below is a description of each change and the reason why it is taking place.

## Changes to the format of the entry

It is intended that the current regulations (Gender Recognition Register Regulations 2005) are amended in order to create forms of entry in the Gender Recognition Register (GRR) that mirror the original birth record of a person who has obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate. Schedule 3 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 (the Act) requires the Registrar General to maintain the GRR. Furthermore paragraph 5(4) of schedule 3 states that "A certified copy of an entry in the Gender Recognition Register must not disclose the fact that the entry is contained in the Gender Recognition Register"

This course of action has been agreed following correspondence from a firm of solicitors acting on behalf of someone who has obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate from the Gender Recognition Panel raising concern that certified copies of entries contained in the GRR may be identified as such and may therefore contravene paragraph 5(4) of schedule 3 to the Act. Their argument is that while a certified copy does not openly disclose the origins of the entry it can be deduced by comparing such a certificate with all other forms of birth certificate issued by this office. We have accepted that the current format of entry and therefore certified copies issued from them require amendment in order to remove any doubt about compliance with the Act.



The amendment to the current regulations will ensure that the entries created replicate the format of the original birth record (including the birth register entry number and, if the birth was originally registered between 1969 and 1995, the original National Health Service number allocated to the child), but showing their acquired legal gender and, where appropriate, their new name. The changes will include the addition of the name and qualification of the informant to the original birth registration and the name of the registrar who created the entry.

It is proposed that regulation 3 of the 2005 regulations is revoked. This regulation allows a person to choose to have their surname included in an entry in the GRR though their birth was registered prior to 31 March 1969. The surname of the child is usually only included in a record relating to a birth after 31 March 1969 and therefore the inclusion of the surname in a record relating to a birth prior to that date could be regarded as disclosive.

### **Changes to the 'series' number recorded on the certificate**

This change is to address some concern from the community as to the ability to identify that a certificate has been issued from the GRR. The change— which will involve the use of existing series numbers— will ensure that no difference exists between those certificates issued from the GRR and certificates issued from other birth records held by this office.

### **Timing of these changes**

It is envisaged that both the changes to the format of the entry and the series number will take place in May.

### **Further information**

Any person who has recently received a Gender Recognition Certificate or is currently in the process of obtaining one will have the opportunity of delaying their record being created in the Gender Recognition Register until the new regulations come into force.

In regard to any person who already has a certified copy of their birth record in the GRR and is concerned about the format, it is proposed that a birth certificate in the revised format will be made available once the new regulations come into force. Certified copies that have already been issued may however continue to be used for official purposes in the future.

Any person who has concerns regarding the format of the entry, or the certificate they already have, should contact the General Register Office at the address above (marking the envelope 'Private and Confidential'). Correspondence sent to this address will be handled by a dedicated team within the General Register Office.

A dedicated helpline is also available on +44 (0)151 471 4821 or +44 (0)151 471 4683, between 9am and 4pm.

### **Comments**

If you have any comments on the proposed changes you can write to The General Register Office, Room C202, Smedley Hydro, Trafalgar Road, Southport, Merseyside PR8 2HH or email [GRCorrespondence@ips.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GRCorrespondence@ips.gsi.gov.uk)



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