

Tips for Recently Married or Divorced Taxpayers with a Name Change

If you changed your name after a recent marriage or divorce, the IRS reminds you to take the necessary steps to ensure the name on your tax return matches the name registered with the Social Security Administration. A mismatch between the name shown on your tax return and the SSA records can cause problems in the processing of your return.

If you took your spouse's last name - or if you hyphenated your last names, you may run into complications if you don't notify the SSA. When newlyweds file a tax return using their new last names, IRS computers can't match the new name with their Social Security number.

If you recently divorced and changed back to your previous last name, you will also need to notify the SSA of this name change.

Informing the SSA of a name change is easy. Simply file a Form SS-5, Application for a Social Security Card, <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>. You must also include with the form a recently issued document as proof of your legal name change. Your new card will have the same number as your previous card, but will show your new name.

If you adopted your spouse's children after getting married and their names changed, you will need to update their names with the SSA also.