Traditional names are considered a **name used before attending a residential school, or a name given at a cultural naming ceremony.**

Legally reclaiming your traditional name can be a part of your healing journey and help you express your identity.

Resources

- **Service New Brunswick**
  1 (888) 762-8600
  snb@snb.ca
  www2.snb.ca
- **Service Canada**
  1 (800) 622-6232
  www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/service-canada.html
- **Indigenous Services Canada**
  1 (800) 567-9604
  infopubs@sac-isc.gc.ca
  www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada.html

Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc.

New Brunswick Law Foundation
Fondation pour le droit au Nouveau-Brunswick

For more details on how to legally recover your or your child's traditional name, visit our website.

Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc.

New Brunswick Law Foundation
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How to Legally Reclaim Your or Your Child's Traditional Name

Step 1:
Am I Eligible?

The name change fee is waived until July 2027 for:

- Residential school survivors who have lived in New Brunswick for at least three months;
- Descendants of residential school survivors (children, grandchildren, spouses/partners) meeting the same residency requirement;
- Parents/guardians can apply for children under 16, provided there are no ongoing custody disputes.

Step 2:
Fill Out the Application

1. Call Vital Statistics New Brunswick at (506) 453-2385 (option #4) to request a **fee waiver application** and **Change of Name application** (also available online);
2. Complete both forms, providing:
   a. Personal details (birthdate, place of birth, current name, proposed name, etc.);
   b. Name details from residential school records;
   c. A signed statement confirming the information.

Step 3:
Gather the Required Documents

Include the following with your application:

- **Birth certificate** (long form required for surname changes or a child's name change);
- **Previous name change documents** (if applicable);
- **Custody order** (for a child's name change, if applicable);
- **Fingerprint-based criminal record check** (for applicants 18+).

Step 4:
Obtain a Criminal Record Check

- Contact your local police department;
- The **federal fee is waived** for residential school survivors;
- Many police services also waive local fees — confirm with your local police department;
- Complete a **written request** form (available at fingerprinting locations or the RCMP website) to waive fees;
- A criminal record check will determine if you have been charged or convicted of a crime. If a criminal record exists, your new name is added to it.

Step 5:
Submitting Your Application

Mail completed forms and supporting documents to a Vital Statistics Office.

Once your application has been received and approved, you will be sent a Change of Name certificate with your reclaimed name.

Step 6:
Update Your Records

Eligible applicants can update these documents at no cost:

- **Service New Brunswick:** Driver's license, birth certificate, marriage license, Medicare card;
- **Service Canada / Indigenous Services Canada:** Passport (until May 30, 2026), status card, Social Insurance card.

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