

Press Release – 03/05/18

## **New Website Offers Name Change Assistance to Transgender Community**

*The new online tool will help transgender Floridians prepare name change petitions and update gender markers on vital documents.*

**GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA March 5, 2018** –Southern Legal Counsel (SLC) has partnered with Florida Justice Technology Center (FJTC) to build a free online tool for those seeking assistance with name and gender marker changes. The new tool – [FloridaNameChange.org](http://FloridaNameChange.org) – was unveiled at [Trans Con Miami](#) on Saturday, marking the official launch of this much-needed resource. Representatives from both SLC and FJTC were onsite to demonstrate the new website and lead a workshop that instructed trans individuals on how to change name and gender markers on government-issued identification documents.

Name and gender marker changes have historically proved challenging for the transgender community, presenting both financial barriers as well as a complex process that can be difficult to navigate. While the name change petition is consistent throughout Florida for example, the forms and petitioning process vary from county to county. This can be intimidating, especially for transgender individuals who often already face the challenges of discrimination and misinformation on a regular basis. The burdensome court process, expenses and complicated paperwork are the reason that 68% of transgender individuals have not updated any of their identification documents to reflect their preferred name and gender.

“For Transgender individuals, a lack of accurate identification is one of the most significant barriers to accessing necessities such as employment, education and housing,” said Simone Chriss, attorney at Southern Legal Counsel and Director of the organization’s Transgender Identification Initiative. “We’re so excited to offer this resource to Florida’s transgender community. FloridaNameChange.org includes the accurate and required forms and procedures for all 67 counties in Florida, making it the first resource of its kind and ensuring that this tool can assist all Florida residents.”

FJTC built the website using the substantive content developed by SLC, and will continue to manage it, working in partnership with SLC’s legal team to update and add new content as needed. Funded by the Florida Bar Foundation, the project has also attracted notable partners in the transgender community, including [Trans Social](#), a trans-led organization focused on creating unity within the transgender community and increasing visibility and understanding in surrounding communities.

The site is also fully mobile-responsive, making it easy to access regardless of device. “We’re extremely proud of the tool we’ve created,” said Joyce Raby, Executive Director for FJTC. “It seems like such a simple thing to have identification that reflects who you are and yet, we have this large portion of our population that has been denied that basic necessity. This type of assistance is long overdue and we’re excited to partner with SLC and make it a reality.”

You can see the new website at [FloridaNameChange.org](http://FloridaNameChange.org).

### **About Florida Justice Technology Center**

FJTC is an independent statewide 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, devoted to increasing access to justice through the innovative use of technology.

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### **About Southern Legal Counsel**

SLC is a Florida statewide not-for-profit public interest law firm that is committed to the ideal of equal justice for all and the attainment of basic human and civil rights.

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