

# Credit Reporting Industry: Helping Transgender and Nonbinary Individuals Prevent Potential Disruptions to Their Credit



Credit Bureaus Ramp Up Consumer Education on Legal Name Changes to Preserve Credit Histories of Individuals Transitioning Gender Identity

**NEWS RELEASE BY CONSUMER DATA INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

**Washington, D.C. | February 02, 2022 09:00 AM Eastern Standard Time**

The credit reporting industry has a long history of supporting consumers impacted by life's circumstances – for example, what to do in the cases of marriage, divorce, natural disaster, and identity theft, among others. In keeping with our work to assist and empower consumers, the Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) is offering guidance for transgender and nonbinary consumers seeking to preserve their credit history following the legal changing of first and middle names.

Since financial empowerment is a critical component of equity and as the primary body representing the credit reporting industry, CDIA is working to raise awareness about what people transitioning into their true gender identity can do to ensure a smooth credit update from their dead name to their new legal name.

"To ensure a smooth update of credit history, the most effective action a transgender or nonbinary person can take is to directly inform each of the three nationwide credit bureaus of new identifying information after completing a legal name change," said Eric J. Ellman, Senior Vice President for Public Policy & Legal Affairs at CDIA. "This small but important step provides the critical link to maintaining the integrity of their credit report during transition and potentially avoiding any misunderstanding with creditors or lenders."

The three nationwide credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) have committed to assist transgender and nonbinary consumers in protecting their creditworthiness. In recent years, the credit bureaus have found that sometimes following a legal name change, the credit report attached to the person's new name does not contain the credit history associated with their birth name.

Consumers can now find information on the name change process on each agency's website:

- **Equifax**
- **Experian**
- **TransUnion**

Traditional advice around last name changes advises that a person notify only their banks and creditors of their new legal name. This is typically sufficient if a person only changes their *last* name, such as after a marriage or divorce. In this situation, the credit bureaus will learn of the name change through the revision system from the lender or creditor and automatically update the person's credit file. However, in cases that involve changing more than just the last name, CDIA recommends an additional step to support transgender and nonbinary consumers seeking to change a *first* or *middle* name.

Informing each of the three nationwide credit bureaus of a first or middle name change can be done using their online customer support systems or by calling the credit bureaus directly. Either way, documentation of the new legal name may be required. Necessary documentation can include a court order, an updated Social Security card, or the updated Driver's License or state issued ID card with the new identifying information.

"CDIA and the credit reporting industry are in a unique position to address credit challenges facing people in the LGBTQ+ community and to advocate for their financial empowerment," added Ellman. "We are committed to continuing to spread the word about very simple steps individuals who are transitioning into their true gender identity can take to preserve their credit history and build their future."

**To learn more, visit <https://www.cdiaonline.org/lgbtqnamechanges/>.**

## **About the Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA)**

The Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) is the voice of the consumer reporting industry, representing consumer reporting agencies including the nationwide credit bureaus, regional and specialized credit bureaus, background check and residential screening companies, and others. Founded in 1906, CDIA promotes the responsible use of consumer data to help consumers achieve their financial goals, and to help businesses, governments and volunteer organizations avoid fraud and manage risk. Through data and analytics, CDIA members empower economic opportunity all over the world, helping ensure fair and safe transactions for consumers, facilitating competition and expanding consumers' access to financial and other products suited to their unique needs. Find us online at [www.cdiaonline.org](http://www.cdiaonline.org).

## **Contact Details**

### **Curley Company**

Lydia Niles

+1 773-677-5327

lydia@curleycompany.com

## Tags

PERSONAL FINANCE

LGBTQ

CREDIT REPORT

CREDIT SCORE

FINANCE EDUCATION

GENDER TRANSITION