

PREFERRED NAME

PROCEDURE**A. Purpose**

1. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and Ridgewater College (RC) recognize and support the members of its community who wish to use preferred names where legally permissible. This procedure details the process by which RC students and employees may designate a preferred name to be used when a legal name is not required in the course of University business and educational pursuits.
2. The procedure has been developed pursuant to the [Minnesota State Board Preferred Name Procedure 1B.1.2](#).
3. Preferred names will appear where legal name is not required. RC will use preferred names where technically and legally possible. Examples include e-mail accounts, on-line directory, diplomas, class rosters, honor program lists, Desire2Learn (D2L) homepages, commencement programs, advisee lists, identification cards, and alumni records. This list is subject to change.

B. Preferred Name Requesting Process

1. To request a preferred name:
 - a. Students may add or update a preferred name in eServices under *Account Management/Name and Address Info*.
 - b. Employees will need to complete the Preferred Name Request form which is found under Employee Forms at www.ridgewater.edu. The completed form is to be turned in to the Human Resources Office.

Please note that a photo ID is required as part of the Requesting Process
2. A Student Services Office designee (usually the Registrar) will approve or deny requests from students. The Human Resources Office will approve or deny requests from employees (see denial reasons below). In the event a request is denied, a notice will be sent to the requestor. Notification will include the reason for the denial and will be sent to the requestor within ten (10) business days of receipt of the Request Form.
 - a. Students will receive notification of approval/denial through college email.
 - b. Employees will receive written notification of approval/denial from the Human Resources Office.
3. Following the processing of approved requests, use of the approved preferred name may take up to 72 hours in systems enabled for use of preferred name.

RC reserves the right to deny an inappropriate preferred name including, but not limited to, names that: avoid legal obligations, misrepresent, or violate other Minnesota State or RC policies, contain inappropriate or offensive language, or are being used for misrepresentation, etc. Preferred names may not be used for commercial or promotional purposes and thus may not be a company name, group name, or message.

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C. Appeal Process

1. Following the denial of any Preferred Name request, the student or employee has ten (10) business days from receipt of the denial to file a written appeal.
 - a. Students can access, complete and submit an appeal form found under Student Forms through the Student Portal at www.ridgewater.edu.
 - b. Employees can access the appeal form under Employee Forms and submit the completed form to the Human Resources Office.
2. A three-person team that includes the Dean of Students, the College Diversity Officer, and a faculty/staff representative, appointed by the President, will review and act upon any written appeals from students.
3. A three-person team that includes Vice-President of Student Success, the Vice-President for Finance and Operations, and the Chief Human Resources Officer will review and act upon appeals from employees.
4. Appeals will be reviewed and acted upon within ten (10) business days.
5. RC has the ultimate authority in determining the appropriateness of Preferred Names for RC students and employees and all decisions are final.

D. Additional Information

1. An employee's Preferred Name Request form will be retained as part of the personnel file for four (4) years after separation date.
2. A Preferred Name will remain in effect until the requestor asks that it be changed.
3. Preferred Name requests that include characters other than alpha-numeric symbols may not be compatible with all Minnesota State and RC technology systems.
4. For those students and employees who request a Preferred Name and are associated with more than one Minnesota State institution, please note that the timing of the appearance of your Preferred Name may vary at each institution based on each institution's available technical resources.

Questions regarding the Preferred Name Process should be directed to the appropriate office:

Employees:
Human Resources Office
H125 • Willmar | Rm 222 • Hutchinson
320.222.5211
keith.balaski@ridgewater.edu

Students:
Student Services
A108 • Willmar | Rm 117 • Hutchinson
320.222.5215
kelli.kienitz@ridgewater.edu

History:
09.15.15 Adopted
09.15.20 Proposed - Reviewed and Revised for Equity Compliance
02.05.21 Revised