

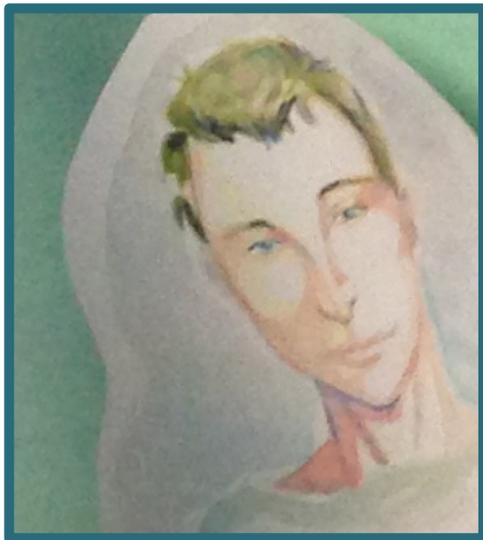
## Josh's Story ~ Part 2

As told to John Woods

*A few weeks ago, we brought you the story of Josh transitioning from female to male. We followed his story as he found – and then lost – a group of soul mates in a Toronto-based organization called sprOut.*

*Here we pick up his story as he navigates the bureaucratic maze.  
**Once you know who you are, how do you convince the system?***

In 2013, I decided to get my ID changed. My BCID and my Certificate of Citizenship still had my old name and my old gender on it. Changing my name on my BCID wasn't that hard, but changing my gender on my Certificate of Citizenship was. And I couldn't change my gender on any other ID until it was changed there. I'm not really into bars, but there have been a few times that I decided not to go out somewhere because I didn't want to get ID'd and have the door person go "HUH!!??" when they saw "Female" on my ID.



Changing all the ID was expensive. I had an art show and earned about \$300 selling my work. That all went to getting the paperwork done.

It was also really hard. One thing with my autism is I hate touching paper. I also hate the feeling of liquid on my fingers. And I'm scared of being around police officers. The last thing we had to do before we sent off the package to Citizenship Canada was go to the police station, dip my fingers in ink, then press them on paper to be finger-printed. The fact that I was willing to do that shows how important it was to me.

So we sent off my old Certificate and this package to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. It was supposed to take 6-8 weeks for them to send a new one back to me. Then we got a message from them. The gender change was an unusual request and it could take up to two years. I think my support worker was more pissed off than I was when that happened. I'm just used to being told 'no' or 'later' all the time in my life.

Not having my ID wasn't a big deal until I got an invitation to go speak about being trans and having autism at a conference in the USA in summer 2014. I couldn't renew my passport without my Certificate of Citizenship, so I couldn't leave the country. We tried to make it work, but they said I was going to have to

go to a doctor and have them examine me and confirm I was male if I wanted a passport. I didn't want to do that, so I just said "forget it" to going to the conference. That was disappointing.

It wasn't until the spring of 2015 that my new certificate finally arrived. It was exciting to see my real name on the front and especially "Gender: Male" on the back.

Now I can start getting all my other ID changed to "Male." It's annoying that I have to spend so much of my own time and money to make my ID match the truth about me, but it's almost done now.