

## TIPS FOR SUBMITTING PIONEER/CENTURY FAMILY CERTIFICATE APPLICATIONS

The WSGS must ask for clarification or additional documentation for some Pioneer/Century Certificate applications. This tip sheet is intended to help identify the most common problems. Reading and following the instructions is the most important step in submitting a successful application.

Below are listed some tips we hope will make the instructions crystal clear and the submission of an application easier:

1. Complete the application form legibly and completely. Print or type. Complete all pages.
2. The authorization granting WSGS permission to publish and release data submitted must be signed for the application to be processed.
3. Enter dates in standard genealogical format, for example, 12 Feb 1901. Do not use numerals for the month; use three letter abbreviations. Use all four digits for the year.
4. Each application form must have a Pedigree Chart attached. The starting individual, number 1 on the Pedigree Chart, must be the person to whom the certificate is to be issued as identified on the application form. The chart should extend at least through the generation that includes the Pioneer/Century ancestor. Make the chart as complete as possible. Use continuation sheets if necessary.
5. Immediately after the Pedigree Chart, attach your evidence to show when and where the Pioneer/Century ancestor or ancestral couple settled in Wisconsin. Normally this will be one document; perhaps a census schedule, a marriage record, or a deed. Acceptable forms of proof are discussed in the instructions.
6. Next, attach the evidence to establish each link in the chain of descent. Start with the Pioneer/Century ancestor and attach the document(s) that shows that he or she was the parent of the next person in the chain. Do the same thing for each generation in the chain of descent: for example, if Johann Schmitt, the pioneer ancestor, was the great great grandfather of Susan Ellen Jones, the person to whom the certificate is to be issued, you should provide proof to link Johann to whichever son or daughter of his was Susan's great grandparent, and then proof to link that great grandparent to the grandparent, next to the parent, and finally to Susan. See the instructions to see what is acceptable proof.
7. When you have provided the evidence for date and place of settlement and evidence for each link in the chain of descent, stop there. Do not submit extraneous materials. Do not submit Family Group Sheets; they do not prove anything. Do not submit books, pamphlets, or genealogies compiled by you, a relative, or a professional genealogist, regardless of how well documented they may be. We want to see the actual proof.
8. When you have direct evidence, most of what you submit will consist of only one document for each fact or link to be proved. When the evidence is indirect or inferred, you must provide corroboration. For example, our instructions tell you that because census records often contain errors, an 1860 Milwaukee County population schedule

enumerating a 14-year-old child born in Wisconsin, does not prove that the family settled in Milwaukee in 1846. If you were able to find an 1870 population schedule listing that same child, now 24 year old and having been born in Wisconsin that would be corroborating evidence. You should submit copies of both schedules.

9. Be sure that every document you submit is properly labeled as to what it is, where it came from, and where the original can be found. In almost all cases you will be submitting copies. Please be sure all copies are legible, especially census records. Try to keep the copies to 8 ½ x 11 inches in size. Do not send anything you want returned. Your application and supporting documentation will become part of a permanent genealogical database created by the WSGS.
10. When submitting a set of applications for certificates to be issued to more than one person, such as for yourself and your children based on the same ancestor, you do not have to provide copies of all the evidence with every application. Enclose a complete set of evidence for one application, such as for yourself, and then provide only the additional evidence to complete the chain of descent for each of the remaining applications. In our example that would be a birth certificate or other such evidence for each of the children.
11. Evaluate your entire submission before sending it in.
12. Remember to enclose your check with the application(s).