

GG 2018-2019 Email #2 to State Points of Contact 27 November 2018

Genealogy Policy Manual & Application Preparation Manual.

Updated versions of both of these documents are now available on the SAR website. The major changes to the Policy Manual reflect actions taken at the 2018 Fall Leadership Meeting and include:

- Policy 3.5003 - Removal of acceptance of Chapter DAR RCs as supporting evidence. Only official copies of DAR RCs are acceptable in compliance with DAR policies regarding the use of their proprietary records.
- Policy 6.1001, footnote 1 - Applications must be typed or computer-printed with black print." includes an understanding that the application shall be neat and not smudged but may contain very minor corrections in ink. *Applications that are messy, blurred, or which have several inked-in corrections should be reprinted before submission or they may be returned to the State Society for reprinting.*
- Policy 6.1002a – The provision that the Genealogist General has the authority to permit an adult other than an applicant, parent, or guardian to sign on behalf of an applicant has been removed.

Note also that only the current versions of the four application forms containing the revised certification, the deletion of applicant's children, and the Genealogist General's signature block are now acceptable. The NSSAR website provides links to all four application types.

Access to Genealogical Records

There is a national initiative being proposed by an organization of State vital records Registrars with the aim of lengthening the time frames for public access to vital records. The National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems is seeking a consensus by the States on this issue and is recommending records be closed for 125 years for birth records, 75 years for death records, and 100 years for marriage and divorce records to protect the identity of individuals. Some jurisdictions are considering closing these records to anyone other than direct descents closer than great-grandchildren. Should these recommendations become reality, that could have a significant impact on the ability to obtain needed documents for membership proofs. This would be a good time to consider obtaining those official family vital records that might be needed for future application support not only for you but also for your children and grandchildren.

Membership & Application Status

Currently, the que for processing new applications is 7 ½ weeks and the que for supplemental applications is 10 weeks. As of this date, there are over 37,250 active members in the National Society. The number of applications approved since I was elected Genealogist General last July is 1,771 (1,237 new, 528 supplemental, and 6 memorial applications). There have also been 188 applications that have been pended (some of these have been subsequently resolved and approved). These figures indicate that around 10% of submitted applications are being pended, many for reasons that should have been caught before submission to National. Thus staff is using their valuable

time to make a brief attempt to resolve issues and/or preparing pended notices back to State Points of Contact.

One of the problems resulting in the pending of an application is claiming a patriot with the proper name found living in a vicinity without verifying that there are no other persons in that vicinity with the same name, and thus not providing sufficient evidence to show that the ancestor named was actually the patriot and not one of the other persons with that name. Working on a recent appeal involving this issue, I discovered 5 men of the same name, whose ages were all of the proper age to have served, living in the same town where the claimed patriot resided. It turned out that actually 2 of these men provided military service but the source for one of them only indicated the county but not the town of residency. It took over 20 hours of work to determine which of these 5 men were the two patriots and which was the ancestor listed in the application. This is not the type of work that staff does. If they determine that there is more than one possibility, they will appropriately pend the application. It is the applicant's or their sponsor's/Registrar's responsibility to check for these situations before merely deciding that there is a record that shows a patriot with the correct name and claiming that person is the same person as the proven ancestor without considering the other possibilities.

Print fonts on applications

The Genealogy Staff is receiving some applications that are printed using very small fonts that are difficult to read. For use of the PDF, MS Word, and SARApAid versions, the font size should be set at a minimum of 10 pt . 12 pt is preferred. For the on-line SAR Application, set the scale on the print setup in the range of 90 to 110. A scale smaller than 90 will increase the margins and shrink the font size on the printout making it very difficult to read. For the on-line system, trying different scale sizes between 90 and 110 can fix the page break between page 1 and page 2 of the application so the break falls properly between generations.