

Application Process for the Forensic Genealogist Credential

The Council for the Advancement of Forensic Genealogy (CAFG) is the credentialing body governing the **Forensic Genealogist CredentialedSM** credential (which is to be abbreviated as FGCSM). Membership in CAFG is a requirement for application. Members enjoy the benefits of access to additional useful information as well as the ability to connect and network with colleagues in the field.

The Application Process

Part I

The Part I Application includes each of the following:

- A. Contact info@forensicgenealogists.org to arrange to pay the non-refundable Part I Application fee of \$100. Upon notification of fee payment, applicant will receive instructions for submitting the following items B, C, and D electronically.
- B. Resume, which should include the following:
 - i. Educational background
 - ii. Credentials, if any (e.g., CGSM or AG®)
 - iii. Licenses and memberships
 - iv. Additional training
 - v. Work experience in the field of genealogy generally and in the specialty of forensic genealogy including names and websites (if any) of any employers or partners, dates of work experience, and places of employment or work
 - vi. Teaching or lecturing experience
 - vii. Publications
 - viii. Court testimony, including dates and court
- C. Spreadsheet or list indicating at least 750 client hours of substantial and continual work as a forensic genealogist completed within the past ten years. 150 hours of the 750 hours may be pro-bono. Include all that apply:
 - i. Probate and estate cases – known heirs, unknown heirs, missing heirs
 - ii. Heirs and beneficiaries of trust, insurance, and unclaimed property accounts
 - iii. Due diligence affidavits
 - iv. Next of kin in guardianship cases, youth transitioning from foster care, adoption
 - v. Capital mitigation in death sentence cases
 - vi. Immigration and citizenship cases
 - vii. Civil pension, Social Security, and veteran's benefits
 - viii. Land issues involving title, adverse possession, rights of way, lis pendens, or muniment of title
 - ix. Oil, gas, and mineral royalties
 - x. Identification and location of next of kin or DNA donors in matters involving unclaimed decedents or POW/MIA personnel repatriation

Application Process for the Forensic Genealogist Credential

- xi. Identification of next of kin prior to cemetery removals
- xii. Provenance, class action claimants, intellectual property-rights
- xiii. Applying and interpreting DNA for kinship in legal matters
- xiv. Lecture time specific to forensic genealogy

D. The Part I Application form to be completed and signed

Typically an applicant will be notified within three weeks as to whether their submission passes Part I of the credentialing process. If an applicant passes, an additional non-refundable \$150 fee will be due at that time in order to proceed to Part II. If the criteria necessary to pass Part I has not been met, the application will be returned with comments regarding deficiencies and one may reapply after six months.

Part II

After receipt of the additional non-refundable \$150 application fee, the applicant will be given access to the questions and materials needed to complete Part II, which includes submission of the following four sections.

A. **Research Report, Affidavit or Article.** Submit one complete copy of a forensic genealogy research report, affidavit, or an article (including its enclosures, attachments, and exhibits) that applicant has prepared that demonstrates the applicant's knowledge and skills. It may be a report or affidavit prepared for a client, or one written specifically for this application. CAFG members are permitted to use reports previously submitted for membership advancement as long as they appear without modifications. Submissions will be rated on the following criteria:

1. Expert-level quality of content
2. Genealogical facts are supported by quality sources
3. Logical flow of ideas
4. Content focused on the report's stated purpose
5. Well-reasoned explanations
6. Records were used in a logical order
7. Elements of good writing (good sentence structure with few spelling, grammatical, and typographical errors)
8. Client's written permission included, unless the submitted documents were filed in court or with an agency, which makes them a public record. Alternately, client's name and contact information is redacted as well as all names of living persons (the names of the living persons may be replaced by a made up name for purposes of context)
9. Portions of the research or writing that were conducted by another are stated as such and that contributor is identified
10. Proper use of any terms used for sources (original, derivative, or an authored work), information (primary, secondary, undetermined, or a combination), and evidence (direct, indirect or negative)

Application Process for the Forensic Genealogist Credential

11. Any subheadings, charts, and tables are clearly applicable to the presentation
12. The submission under this section should not exceed fifty pages. If the original writing was more than fifty pages and one is reasonably able to omit some portions of it (such as some of the exhibits or attachments), the candidate may do so, clearly identifying what portions are omitted

- B. Critique of CAFG-supplied Affidavit.** The applicant is to review an affidavit and answer specific questions about it.
- C. Document Discussion.** The applicant will select one of the following CAFG-supplied documents to discuss: Death Certificate, Obituary, Will, Deed, or Naturalization. The applicant will fully discuss the criteria related to the selected document in less than 1000 words.
- D. Eleven Short Answer Questions.** In this section the applicant will be provided with a series of questions that can be answered with a few sentences. These questions will test knowledge of subjects and methodologies with which all forensic genealogists should be acquainted. Applicants may use any research sources to answer the questions, but the research and writing of the answers must be the applicant's own work.

Evaluation

Each section will be independently reviewed by two evaluators. Applicants must make an overall passing grade of at least 80%. If the judges have additional questions regarding your application, you may be asked to participate in an oral interview with a third evaluator.

Deadline

All sections of Part II must be submitted within six months of the initial application date.

Notification to Successful Applicants

Applicants who have successfully completed all sections of Part II with at least a grade of 80% will be notified that they may begin using the designation of **Forensic Genealogist CredentialedSM** or post nominal of **FGCSM** after their name. A numbered certificate suitable for framing will be sent to the applicant. Applications are typically reviewed within six months of submission.

Appeal Process

If an applicant is denied and wishes to appeal the decision, the results of the original evaluators (and the results of the oral interview if you were asked to participate in one) will be passed to a new judge who will determine whether the applicant should be accepted. Unsuccessful

Application Process for the Forensic Genealogist Credential

applicants (either initial or renewal) must notify the President or Secretary of their appeal within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the disapproval of your application, of their appeal. The decision of this judge is final. If the applicant is denied they may reapply after six months with a new application packet addressing any deficiencies noted in the original packet along with a new application fee.