

Application Process

Virginia Society of Mayflower Descendants

1. The process starts with completing and returning the [Preliminary Review Form](#). You will be provided a Draft Application you can use to keep track of the dates, places, and documents/sources used to verify the lineage. An Assistant Historian will help you through the process.
2. You are expected to exercise every reasonable effort to procure **Primary Source** documentation. When published family genealogies or local histories are being included with the application, the Title Page should also be submitted. The Mayflower Society expects birth, marriage, divorce (must be documented using first or second pages showing the parties and date) and death certificates (where applicable) as the main source of documentation. When obtaining birth, marriage and death certificates for you and your spouse, your parents and your grandparents, make sure they are long form (parents shown), when available. If this is not possible, a written statement by the applicant must be submitted with a reason as to why not. DO NOT alter any of the documents, highlight information, or write notes like generation numbers on them.
3. The Assistant Historian will provide the completed draft application and supporting information to the VA Historian who will then contact the applicant if additional information is needed. Once finalized, the application will be mailed to the applicant for signature and payment application fees, outlined below.
4. The VA Historian sends the signed application and documentation to the Historian General of the General Society at Plymouth, MA for approval. This process currently takes about 4 months.
5. When your application is approved by the General Historian, the applicant will be informed by the Historian of their General Society and Virginia State numbers and a Mayflower certificate and Welcome Package will be mailed by the Virginia Secretary.

Application Fees and Membership Dues

- Initial application - \$175
- Supplemental applications - \$125
- Annual membership dues - \$38

Acceptable Primary Source

- Vital records of birth, marriage, and death – these are normally town, county and/or state records.
- Church records
- Bible records (with title page) that show family relationships. Records without a title page will be considered “Family Record” and treated as a Secondary Source.
- Marriage bonds and licenses
- Deeds
- Probate records, guardianships or orphan's court records
- Military and pension records
- Cemetery and funeral home records
- Contemporary family letters and diaries (contemporary, in this context, means contemporary with the time of the event, not contemporary with the time of application to the Society)

Acceptable Secondary Sources:

- County/Town histories – include copy of Cover Page (needs to include author and copyright)
- Family genealogies (published only) - copies of original material (genealogies, probate, land, church, town record, etc), include copy of Cover Page (needs to include author and copyright)
- Federal and state census records. Note: If they do not show family relationships, as is the case with any pre-1880 Federal Census, two sequential census records should be submitted and will then only be considered circumstantial evidence. Be aware that a single, pre-1880 Federal Census, will NOT be considered ample proof of parentage without at least one additional secondary source proof.
- Newspaper obituaries (paper name, date) – readable full page expected, if possible
- Newspaper marriage accounts (paper name, date) – readable full page expected, if possible
- Photos (usually gravestones) – include identification of cemetery name, town and state
- Affidavits (dependent on time period)

Additional Virginia Sources

- DAR Library, Washington DC – <http://www.dar.org>
- US National Archives, Washington, DC – www.archives.gov
- Library of Congress, Washington, DC – www.loc.gov
- The Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA – www.lva.virginia.gov
- Internet Archive (genealogical ref books) <https://archive.org/>
- Family History Centers (LDS Church) – www.familysearch.org
- Virginia Room, Fairfax Regional Library, Fairfax, VA
- Library of Virginia, Richmond, VA

Other sources

- Town clerks – usually have vaults with material you can access in person
- Local Historical Societies – local information you might not find anywhere else
- State Libraries - have good genealogical sections with material unindexed
- Ancestry.com
- Fold3.com - focused on military references and pension records
- Archive.org – published Family Genealogies that are over 100 years old
- American Ancestors (New England Historic and Genealogical Society) – <http://www.americanancestors.org/home.html>
- MyHeritage.com
- Vital Records – <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm>

Professional Genealogist

Assoc. of Professional Genealogists – www.apgen.org

Board for Certification of Genealogists – www.bccertification.org