

General FFP Policies and Procedures FAQs

The following FAQs provide general information about application policies and procedures. For guidance in documenting a lineage, see the [Research Guide & FAQs](#).

1. I am a current First Families member and want to complete an application for my children and grandchildren. Do they also need to be members of GSP?

Yes, according to the program rules, they do.

2. May I submit more than one application?

Yes, you may submit as many applications as you wish. A nonrefundable application fee of \$75 must be submitted with each individual application.

3. May I name more than one ancestor on a single application?

Yes, you may submit up to three ancestors for recognition as long as each one is part of the direct line between the applicant and the earliest ancestor named and they all fall into the same time period. An application may name as qualifying ancestors, for example, the qualifying ancestor, his child, and his grandchild.

4. What about adopted children?

The First Families program is only open to those who can prove blood line (biological) descent from the claimed ancestor.

5. What happens if I need to submit additional materials?

You may continue to add documentation to your application as long as it is active. Applications that more than two years old from the date of receipt at GSP are considered inactive.

6. May I submit my application via email?

Since application forms must be signed and accompanied by the appropriate documentation, there are no plans to allow online submission of application materials.

7. If my ancestor appears in the Ancestor Index, do I have to submit documentation for the generations I share with the application?

While you do not have to establish Pennsylvania residency for your ancestor, your application and supporting materials must document every generation in your own lineage from the ancestor to you. The exception is for a close relative as defined in FAQ #8.

8. A close relative has already had our joint lineage approved for First Families. Do I have to complete the entire application form?

GSP identifies the following as close relatives: parent, grandparent, siblings, aunts and uncles, and great-aunts and great-uncles. If your relationship falls into one of those listed, then you may use the “short form” procedure. You must submit a completed application form that describes the descent from the ancestor to yourself. However, you need submit documentation only for the generations that differ from your relative’s lineage. At the most recent generation that appears on both applications, you should note “See application of [name of relative],” approved on [date].”

9. I know my ancestor was in Pennsylvania by 1732. Why isn’t his name on the FFP list?

The only names on the FFP list are those for approved applications to First Families of Pennsylvania. Apply to FFP to have your ancestor’s name added to the list.

10. I think I have all of the documents that I need to apply to First Families. Can you look it over before I apply and give me feedback?

There is not a preliminary review process for First Families of PA. However, once the actual review process begins, reviewers do provide feedback about any additional materials that may be required and often suggest places to look for information.

11. I'd like to join FFP. I have a family tree that my uncle completed. Could you provide the information to document that?

FFP cannot do the actual research for individuals who wish to join FFP. That would be a conflict of interest because we will be reviewing your application. You can read the Research Guide on Documentation for more information about the documentation that is required. In addition to the resources at the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, there are a number of online resources as well as bricks and mortar places like public libraries, courthouses, and historical societies that can help you in your search. The Contact/Visit page on the GSP website has information on resources as well as a link to board certified professional genealogists who can help you.

12. On the Direct Ancestor Chart, what do you mean by "Link to gen"?

The link between the generations is the document that you use to prove the relationship between the two generations. For example, the link may be the birth certificate of Herman Smith showing that Peter Smith and Elizabeth, maiden name Jones, are his parents.

13. Do I have to renew my First Families of Pennsylvania membership every year?

No. Once your application is approved, you and your ancestor become a permanent part of First Families of Pennsylvania.

14. What will happen to my completed application form?

GSP plans to preserve the complete application and supporting materials in digital form as part of its mission to preserve genealogical materials. An index to applications (excluding individuals born after 1900 to address privacy concerns) is part of the plans for the future on the GSP web site and scanned applications (following the same restrictions) may appear in the Members Only portion of the web site in the future as access and copyright

issues are resolved. . As time and resources allow, the entire application package will be scanned for preservation.

15. I'm confused about the application process. What should I do?

Email us with your specific question at firstfamilies@genpa.org