



# Pioneer Family of Osceola County, Florida

## 1 Eligibility

To be considered eligible for “Pioneer Family of Osceola” recognition, proof of residency after county establishment on May 12, 1887 and prior to December 31, 1910 must be submitted.

Anyone having direct or collateral descent from an Osceola County founding resident may apply. Collateral descent must be through a brother or sister of the founding resident. Collateral descent must be explained on the Line of Descent Chart.

## 2 Instructions

These instructions guide you through the steps to prepare your Pioneer Family application and the related documents. The materials that you will submit to establish Pioneer Family status are as follows:

1. Certificate Application Form with check. Use full name of your ancestor and include both maiden, if known, and married name for women. Do not use the titles Mr. or Mrs., however, Sr. or Jr. is acceptable.
2. Line of Descent Chart
3. Supporting Documentation

Stated below are some general instructions for preparing your application and related documentation.

- Input the information for the Line of Descent Chart either from your computer onto the form, which is preferable, or by hand, printing legibly in blue or black ink. Begin with yourself as Generation 1.
- Capitalize all surnames. For example, John Daniel JONES.
- For “where”, enter town/city, county/parish and state (abbreviations acceptable) when known. If only state is known, enter only that information.

- Record dates as day month year. For example, 3 March 1885. It is acceptable to enter approximate dates. Use c. or @ as an abbreviation for circa, which means about. If a date is known but you have no documentation for it, place the date in ( ).
- If a person is still living, in the space for “died” write “living” and enter the town, county/parish and state they currently reside in.
- Use maiden names for women when supported by documentation.
- Documents should be printed on one side of 8 ½ x 11 paper. Double-sided documents are not permitted. On the back of each document, write the Generation # that it applies to and what it proves. For example, Generation 3, birth of female or Generation 2, marriage.
- Underline pertinent names and dates in red ink or red pencil on the documents to assist the reviewers in their evaluation of your submission. Please do not use highlighters.
- Provide a transcription for a photocopy that is difficult to read; however, also include a copy of the original.
- Provide a translation for a document not written in English; however, also include a copy of the original. Indicate the name and contact information of the translator.
- It is acceptable to include an enlargement of a section of a document for ease of review, but a copy of the entire document should also be included.
- Do not alter a document if an error exists within the document. Include a separate statement explaining the error along with any additional supporting documents.
- Do not use paperclips, staples, binders or sheet protectors.
- Acid-free paper is recommended, but not required.
- Do not send original documents.

### 3 Proof of Descent

#### **Relationships must be proven with acceptable documentation.**

You are asked to provide sufficient evidence to prove the information you state in the Line of Descent Chart of your application. The standard for proof is either one record based on primary evidence or two records based on secondary evidence such as Bible records, census records, birth and death certificates, tombstone records, obituaries, published biographical records and county histories, probate records, land records, city directories and newspaper articles. The definitions of primary and secondary evidence are as follows:

- **Primary Evidence:** A record that was created at or near the time an event took place based on information provided by someone closely associated with the event.
- **Secondary Evidence:** A record created sometime later than when an event took place or based on information provided by someone not closely associated with the event.

**Example 1:** A birth certificate is primary evidence with respect to the name of the child and its parents and the date and location of birth because it was prepared at the time of the birth based on information provided by individuals (parents, physician) present at the birth.

**Example 2:** A death certificate is primary evidence with respect to the name of the decedent and the date and location of death because the attending physician usually provides the information. A death certificate is secondary evidence with respect to the name of the parents and the date and location of birth because the information is usually provided by someone not present at the birth or provided many years after the event.

**Example 3:** A tombstone is secondary evidence with respect to birth and death dates because the information could have been provided by someone not associated with either event or supplied many years after either event occurred. The usual inability to verify who provided the information for the tombstone relegates the information to secondary status.

**Example 4:** A family Bible that contains entries that appear to be made near the time of recorded events is primary evidence. This Bible would have a copyright date earlier than the first recorded entry. Entries transcribed into a more recently published Bible, absent of any evidence of the original source, are neither primary nor secondary evidence. If using a family Bible, the copyright page must be included.

**Example 5:** Written family histories, whether written by family members or not and whether published or not, are generally neither primary nor secondary evidence. A family history that ties back to primary or secondary evidence and cites the sources of the information could be acceptable secondary evidence.

## 4 Submitted Materials

All applications and verifying material become the property of the Osceola County Historical Society. Materials may be used in OCHS publications, including all qualifying applications. Applicants are encouraged to include historical photographs and biographical information on their founding Osceola County ancestors. All materials will be deposited at the Spence Research Library for future research.

## 5 Application & Review Process

Download the Application from the Osceola County Historical Society (OCHS) website ([www.osceolahistory.org](http://www.osceolahistory.org)) and save it to your computer. Input the information requested into the boxes provided on the application.

**Contact Information and List of Applicants.** In the section labeled Principal Applicant provide the contact information requested. Most applications have only one applicant. However, if you desire to include your siblings or children on your application, decide who will be the principal contact person in your family and enter the name and contact information for that individual.

The next section asks you to list each applicant included in your application (e.g., yourself, your siblings, and your children) as you would have the name appear on the certificate. For each applicant included on the application, a separate Line of Descent Chart should be filled out, but the only additional documentation needed is proof of those additional applicant's birth and marriage (if applicable).

**The \$35 application fee is due at the time of submission.** You may pay this fee by sending a check with your application payable to the Osceola County Historical Society or by using a credit card. You should include \$5 for each additional applicant. If you would like to receive a Pioneer Family Official Plaque of Recognition, there is an additional fee of \$40, plus shipping fees.

One or more ancestors in the same direct line may qualify for a Pioneer Family Certificate. Applicants may include all eligible ancestors at the time of submission of application for the first ancestor. For each

additional ancestor, there will be a fee of \$15. For example, \$35 for husband and \$15 for wife; \$15 for each sibling of husband and/or wife who may qualify. Also note that the lineal descent must be through the direct bloodline. Applications for adopted descendants are unfortunately not accepted. For each additional ancestor, fill out a separate Additional Pioneer Family Application and include the appropriate amount on each.

We encourage each applicant to become a member of OCHS in order to enjoy the benefits the OCHS offers, although membership in OCHS is not a requirement for receiving a Pioneer Family Certificate. For further information on becoming an OCHS member please visit the **Membership Section** on the OCHS website.

**Overview of the Review Process.** You will be notified by the Pioneer Family Records Administrator upon receipt of your application. Two members of the Committee will then conduct independent reviews of your submitted materials. When both reviewers have completed their reviews, they will compare their assessments and identify any additional work that needs to be done. This process normally takes four to six weeks. You will then be notified as to what may still be needed or that your application is complete. **Deadline: 1 year to finalize application from the date of application submission. Extension will be considered upon request.** If you have any questions about the application or review process, please send an e-mail to Kayla Smith at [kayla@osceolahistory.org](mailto:kayla@osceolahistory.org). We wish you the best in completing your Certificate Application!

Applications, Line of Descent Charts and photocopied proof of descent accompanied by a check or money order in the amount of all applicable fees, which is non-refundable, payable to the Osceola County Historical Society should be mailed to:

Pioneer Family Committee  
Osceola County Historical Society  
PO Box 421996  
Kissimmee, Florida 34742