



Acceptable Proofs of Marriage

Are original proof of marriage documents required?

Generally, copies are acceptable. However, PBGC may request the original or a certified copy for any proof document.

What document(s) are acceptable as proof of marriage?

PBGC accepts any of the following documents:

- Preferred Proof of Marriage
 - A Marriage Certificate.
 - Public record of the marriage: A copy of or statement as to a public record of the marriage certified by the custodian of record.
 - Religious record of the marriage: A copy of or statement of the religious record of the marriage certified by the custodian of record.
 - Foreign records: A foreign document based on church or civil records that show the participant and spouse as married.

- Secondary Proof of Marriage (two documents needed from this section)
 - A signed statement from the religious or civil official who performed the marriage ceremony.
 - Evidence a marriage ceremony took place (e.g., photos taken at the ceremony).

- o Newspaper account of the wedding.
- o Notarized statements from at least two people who have knowledge that the marriage ceremony took place, indicating in the statement the relationship of the person to the parties of the marriage and providing details of how the person knew of the ceremony.
- o Excerpts from naturalization certificates, deeds (e.g., joint tenancy by the entirety), immigration records, insurance policies, or passports that indicate the parties as married.
- o An IRS tax return showing status as married, filing jointly, or married filing separately (financial information is not needed and should be blocked out to preserve privacy).
- o Records showing marital relationships, such as business, employment, bank, fraternal, school, labor, church, or birth records, including pension plan records and documents.
- o Official records from other government agencies indicating a marital relationship, such as Social Security Benefit award notice.
- o Purchase agreements, contracts, or leases executed by parties, letters to both parties, or letters from one party to the other indicating a marital relationship.
- o Automobile titles made out jointly in the names of the parties.
- o Wills naming the other party as a spouse
- o Any other evidence indicating a spousal relationship, such as birth certificates of children born of the relationship, a death certificate or obituary that indicated the marital relationship.