

UPPER SOUTH REGIONAL RESOURCES

This region covers the states of Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

This is a non-comprehensive overview of some record types, resources, and strategies that may be covered on the ICAPGen regional exams. Use it as a starting point to direct your studies and to compile research reference guides.

IMPORTANT RECORD TYPES

Must Know Very Well	Good Working Knowledge	Some Familiarity
<p>Cemetery Records</p> <p>Census Records (Federal, State, Special i.e. Military, Mortality, Agriculture, etc.)</p> <p>Land Records (County, State, Provincial)</p> <p>Military Records (History, Benefit Pension-Bounty Land, Service)</p> <p>Probate Records (Guardianship, Intestate: Administrator Bonds, Inventories, Settlement, etc.), Testate: Executer Bonds, Wills, Codicils, Settlement, etc.)</p> <p>Tax Records Land, Personal Property, Poll Tax (Head or Capitation)</p> <p>Vital Records Availability varies (Birth, Marriage, Death)</p>	<p>Biographies</p> <p>City Directories</p> <p>Church Records (Baptism or Christening, Marriage, Death or Burial, Membership, Meeting Records)</p> <p>Collections or Manuscripts</p> <p>Emigration, Immigration, and Migration</p> <p>Histories (Local-Town or City, County, Family, State)</p> <p>Maps, Gazetteers and Historical Geography</p> <p>Naturalization Records</p> <p>Obituaries</p>	<p>Adoption Records</p> <p>African American Records</p> <p>American Indian</p> <p>Bible Records</p> <p>Court Records (Civil, Criminal, Jurisdiction)</p> <p>Ethnic and Minority Records</p> <p>Law</p> <p>Newspaper</p> <p>Voting Records</p>

NOTE: The exams are open book, including the Internet. Paper and/or digital research reference guides may be used during the test. Digital research reference guides on USB drives will be copied to the facility computer and deleted from that computer at the end of the test session. Research reference guides may also be accessed through a cloud account such as Dropbox, Google, OneDrive, etc.

RESOURCES

Repositories

Some repositories important for Upper South Region genealogical research are shown. You will also want to be familiar with repositories specific to smaller local areas where you do most of your research.

- Archives & Libraries
 - State Archives
 - Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, <https://kdla.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
 - State Archives of North Carolina <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/>
 - Tennessee Secretary of State, Tennessee State Library and Archives <https://sos.tn.gov/tsla>
 - Library of Virginia <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/>
 - West Virginia State Archives <http://www.wvculture.org/history/archives/wvsamenu.html>
 - For more for each state see
 - FamilySearch Research Wiki article "United States Archives and Libraries" <https://bit.ly/2TkfkaH>.
 - Digital State Archives, <http://www.digitalstatearchives.com/>
 - National Archive Branches
 - National Archives at Atlanta <https://www.archives.gov/atlanta> (Records for Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee)
 - National Archives at Philadelphia <https://www.archives.gov/philadelphia> (Records for Virginia & West Virginia)
- Courthouses
 - Kentucky Court of Justice, <https://courts.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
 - North Carolina Judicial Branch, <https://www.nccourts.gov/locations>
 - Tennessee State Courts, <https://www.tncourts.gov/courts>
 - Virginia's Judicial System, <http://www.courts.state.va.us/courts/home.html>
 - West Virginia Judiciary, <http://www.courtswv.gov/>
- Genealogical and historical societies
 - Cyndi's List <https://www.cyndislist.com/> > U index page> United States> (state name) > Societies & Groups
 - D'Addezio.com, A Directory of Historical Societies in the United States, Canada and Australia <http://www.daddezio.com/society/hill/index.html>
 - Federation of Genealogical Societies <https://fgs.org/>
 - GenealogyDig.com, List of USA Genealogical and Historical Societies <http://www.genealogydig.com/genealogical-societies.html>
 - National Genealogical Society <https://www.ncgenealogy.org/>
 - Your favorite search engine

Websites

Many repositories have websites that include some record indexes and/or images. Volunteer groups and individuals also place useful content online. The following are good starting points to find useful websites.

- Cyndi's List <http://www.cyndislist.com/> categories for each of the states
- Facebook genealogy pages for the region, use search field to locate specific groups
- FamilySearch Research Wiki article, "United States Online Genealogy Records by State" <https://bit.ly/2Vhd5Hb> select state of interest from map or state links listed under "State-wide Collections."
- USGenWeb Project <http://www.usgenweb.org/>
- USGenWeb Archives <http://www.usgwarchives.net/> (select state of interest from home page.)
- Your favorite search engine

Finding aids

Finding aids listing the sources that repositories hold is often available online, but not always. Knowledge of such collections not listed online can often be obtained through local experience, visits to repositories, and conversations with local experts.

Book-length research guides

It is recommended that you study guides on topics such as genealogical research, analysis, writing, and records types. Whether you are an expert or a beginner, reading research guides for your states, repositories, record types, and topics of interest, will help advance your region-specific knowledge. General guides are so plentiful that any list could quickly go out-of-date and would risk overlooking some. The following list serves as an introduction.

- National Genealogical Society, Research in the States Series <https://bit.ly/2s6Qqjm>
- FamilySearch Research Wiki <https://bit.ly/2zJRxZ6> and search "[name of state] for Further Reading."
- If needed, ask genealogists in your community or on social media for additional recommendations.

The following guides apply to all U.S. regions.

- *Becoming an Excellent Genealogist: Essays on Professional Research Skills*. ICAPGen, 2012.
- *Mastering Genealogical Proof*. National Genealogical Society, 2015.
- *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 4th ed. Genealogical Publishing Co. Inc., 2017.

Flier-length research guides

Flier-length research guides for your area may be available from many organizations, in series such as the following.

- Family Tree Magazine's State Research Guides <https://bit.ly/2GTg0CL> various series on states (\$)
- Legacy Family Tree's Legacy QuickGuide™ <https://bit.ly/2VqLELO> series on states (\$)
- The In-Depth Genealogist's In-Brief Research Guides <https://bit.ly/2C2m6et> series on states (\$)

STRATEGIES

SPECIFIC FOR UPPER SOUTH RESEARCH

- Know the date vital statistics were first recorded for each state in the region and the laws that affected their recording. In Kentucky, for example: state wide recording of births and deaths did not begin in Kentucky until 1911. “Kentucky law required counties to record births, marriages, and deaths as early as 1852. Unfortunately, this law was repealed in 1862. Registration was again attempted from 1874 to 1879 and sporadically from 1892 to 1910. Although compliance with the early registration laws was inconsistent, the records which do exist are a good resource for genealogists,” [FamilySearch Wiki article, “Kentucky Vital Records” section “Birth and Death Records.”]
- Vital statistics being scarce in the Upper South Region may require you to use substitute records to find birth, marriage, and death information. Substitute Records include
 - “Church Records: Depending on the denomination, church records may contain information about birth, marriage and death.
 - Cemetery Records: Cemetery records are a rich source of birth and death information. These records may also reveal family relationships.
 - Census Records: Census records are a valuable source for birth and marriage information. You may also determine approximate time of death when the individual disappear from the census. This is a good place to begin a search. [Search all applicable census records to find complete families.]
 - Newspapers: Besides obituaries, local newspapers may contain birth and marriage announcements and death notices. Also check newspaper social columns for additional information.
 - Periodicals: Local genealogical and historical societies often publish periodicals which may contain abstracted early birth, marriage and death information.
 - Military Records: Military pension records can give birth, marriage and death information, soldiers' homes records can include this same information.

- Probate Records: If no death record exists, probate records may be helpful in estimating when an individual has died. Probate records in the 20th Century often contain the exact death date.
- History: Local histories, family histories and biographies can all be sources of birth, marriage and death information. Often this information is found in county-level records or in surname searches of the FamilySearch Catalog,” [FamilySearch Research Wiki, Kentucky Vital Records, Substitute Records <https://bit.ly/2s5au5Q>.]
- Tax records can substitute for missing census records. Their availability and format vary between the states. For example: Kentucky's tax records are unique in that the owner paid taxes on all land owned in his county of residence whether the property was physically located in that county or not.

FOR GENERAL UNITED STATES RESEARCH

- Use original records, when possible, created at the time of the event. These might be found at various jurisdictional levels (such as town, county, state/province, federal/national).
- Keep a research log of all records searched, including any searches for which nothing was found.
- Verify generational links.
- Evaluate each record. Resolve any conflicting information. Correlate findings.
- Understand your family in historical context, including wars and jurisdictional boundary changes. To learn about these important elements, see FamilySearch Wiki article United States History <https://bit.ly/2Axqpya> and the state links for each state in your accreditation region.
- If indirect evidence is used, assemble it correctly to support your conclusions. If needed use the FamilySearch Research Wiki article, United States Record Finder <https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/> for further research suggestions to locate other records and evidence that might aid your research.
- Substitute records might be used when there is a lack of records or record loss. An event might be recorded in multiple ways. For example, a marriage might be recorded civilly, by the church, or in a newspaper. Each should be checked.
- Source each event in each person’s life. Capture the information about each source to facilitate proper citation when writing the report.
- Understand applicable economics, religion, ethnicity, prejudices, and laws. For example: Know availability of records for major religious denominations in each state.

- Watch for persons with the same name (e.g. parents with the same name on a census or other record). Consider all variants of spelling for the name along with ways a name could be misspelled when searching indexes and online resources. See FamilySearch Research Wiki article Name Variations in United States Indexes and Records <https://bit.ly/2CQb0Q5> for suggestions.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR UPPER SOUTH REGION RESEARCH

English is the only language tested in this region.