



## Genealogical Materials and Interlibrary Loan

*This document provides WISCAT participating libraries with more information about requesting genealogical materials through interlibrary loan.*

Genealogical materials owned at libraries seldom circulate. Items that contain any form of the words "genealogy" or "family history" in the title or subject lines of the bibliographic record can rarely be borrowed through interlibrary loan. It is essential that libraries help their patrons understand the limitations on borrowing genealogical materials.

## Requesting Genealogical Materials

A patron may request that information be copied from genealogical material. The bibliographic record will indicate if the title has an index from which something may be photocopied. Requests for photocopies of information on individuals may be submitted by giving the full names and any additional relevant information such as birth and death dates.

The federal census, a few state censuses, and a variety of other genealogical materials are available online in free and subscription databases. Check on your library's access to genealogy databases such as HeritageQuest Online (a BadgerLink resource) and Ancestry Library Edition. Check for electronic resources available through state historical societies. For example, the Wisconsin State Historical Society website's genealogy section includes [searchable Wisconsin digital research collections](#).

Interlibrary loan at the Wisconsin Historical Society Library is handled by UW-Madison. Photocopy requests have a 50 page limit and microfilm loans are limited to 6 reels per request.

If access to the online genealogy databases is not possible, the following information may help when requesting:

- **Non-Circulating Census Microfilm for Wisconsin** - Indexes and Census Schedules: There is one circulating copy of the Wisconsin census materials at the Wisconsin Historical Society. If the circulating copies are in use, photocopies of specific information may be requested from the non-circulating copies.
- **The 1890 federal census** was destroyed by fire before it could be microfilmed and does not exist at any location.
- Requests for **Wisconsin Federal or Wisconsin State census index or soundex** information should contain the type of census index (Federal or State), and also the year, city or county, state, districts or precincts (for larger geographical areas, such as Milwaukee), name of person being searched. The soundex code need not be included.
- Requests for **Wisconsin Federal or Wisconsin State census** should contain the type of census (Federal or State), year, city or county, state, districts or precincts (for larger geographical areas, such as Milwaukee), index citation (reel and page), and name of person being searched.

- **Federal census index or soundex** information should contain the type of census (federal), year, city or county, state, districts or precincts (for larger geographical areas), name of person being searched. The soundex code need not be included.
- **Federal census** requests should contain the type of census (federal), year, city or county, state, districts or precincts (for larger geographical areas), name of person being searched.
- **Archival material on microfilm** owned at the Wisconsin Historical Society only may be used on-site. Requests include the name or topic needed so photocopies can be made. Patrons may need to travel to the [Wisconsin Historical Society](#) or an [Area Research Center \(ARC\)](#).
- **City Directories**: Requests should include the city, state, name, and date.
- **Regimental Histories**: Requests include complete bibliographic information (if known) and name being searched. Additional information such as which arm of the service as well as any other information (i.e. infantry, etc.) is helpful.
- **Passenger Lists**: Several of the National Archives' microfilm series of passenger lists and indexes are owned at the Wisconsin Historical Society. There may also be print indexes and lists available. For those not owned at the State Historical Society, the patron for a fee can obtain copies directly from the National Archives. There were no lists kept for Milwaukee, Chicago, and other ports on the Great Lakes. Requests should contain the port of entry, date (as close as possible, including the month), ship name and shipping line, name being searched, ship's point of origin.
- **Plat Maps**: Requests include the year or time period, city, township, county and state.
- **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**: Requests include the year or time period, city, township, county, and state.

Sometimes patrons' needs are better met through avenues other than interlibrary loan. Patrons may need to do more research on their own or travel to the [Wisconsin Historical Society](#) or one of the [Area Research Centers](#) before using interlibrary loan. A local [LDS Family History Center](#) may provide another alternative for the patron to consider. LDS Centers may charge fees for some services.

Please [contact DPI WISCAT staff](#) with questions.