

DEATH WITHOUT OFFICIAL MICHIGAN RECORD
A Michigan Genealogical Council Project

DWR – MGC
P.O. BOX 80953
LANSING, MI 48908-0953

Primary Sources are defined as contemporary and/or government records made at the time of the event by the parties involved. These records are acceptable sources in proving relationship from one generation to another:

1. Census Records Federal Census Mortality schedules. Taken 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880. Prints from the film should accompany the registration form. Transcripts from films are not acceptable as proof.
2. Probate Records Wills/estates (testate-with will; intestate-without will); guardianship lists of heirs and relationship; name changes; and sometimes transfer of real estate. Records begin at the formation of the county and are found in the Probate Court where the event occurred.
3. Land Records and Plats Purchase and sale of property often shows residency and marital relationship. Available from the county where the land was owned, records may be maintained by the Register of Deeds. Some proofs of death may occur here.
4. Tax Records Taxes were paid on property owned on a yearly basis. Records are available from the time of the county's formation. Records may be located in the Register of Deeds and/or Treasurer's office in county where land was located or in township record repositories. Changes in ownership may determine time of death.
5. Military Records Records include muster-in and muster-out, pay vouchers, pension papers, and military bounty land warrants (before 1856) for: WWI (1914-1918), Spanish-American War (1898-1899); Civil War (1861-1865); Indian and other wars (1816-1898); Mexican War (1845-1849); War of 1812 (1812-1815); Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Records are available from the National Archives and Records Service, 8th and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC, 20408; or Michigan History Division, 717 W. Allegan, Lansing, MI, 48918. Indexes of Michigan Civil War soldiers are available. Pension applications, granted or refused, are acceptable as proofs.
6. Church Records Church records often contain birth, death, marriage, and funeral information on their membership.
7. Cemetery Records Actual records of church, city or township sextons. The Library of Michigan published the *Michigan Cemetery Atlas* and the *Michigan Cemetery Source Book*.
8. Mortuary Records Actual records of funeral home may include death date, burial date, location of interment, obituaries and miscellany.
9. Burial and Transport Found in village, city, and township halls or county health departments. Information varies from death date to personal comments.
Records
10. Court Records Civil, criminal, divorce, and naturalization records begin from formation of the county and may be located in circuit court or superior court where the event occurred. Some proofs of death may be found in this group.

See acceptable secondary sources on reverse side.

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Secondary Sources are any sources in print that do not come from a contemporary or government. One of these records alone might not be acceptable at proof of a death without official Michigan record.

1. **Bible Records** Dated and/or undated. Include photocopies of the pages showing the publisher, date of publication, names, date, and events. Identify current owners of the Bible when known. This must be accompanied by a residence location.
2. **Obituaries** Dated with name of newspaper and location. Most libraries contain copies of local newspapers. The Library of Michigan has extensive holdings of microfilmed Michigan newspapers available through interlibrary loan to Michigan libraries. Photocopies of original articles are requested. Prints from unidentified films or photocopies of unidentified obituaries do not serve as proof, but are accepted as supplemental material.
3. **Newspaper Clippings** Dated with name of newspaper and location. Clippings may include anniversaries, biographical sketches, awards, marriage notices, reminiscences, etc. Prints from films or photocopies of actual clippings are requested.
4. **Family Histories/
Genealogies, Published** When submitting this type of material include a copy of the title page, pages showing direct ancestral descent and state location of the book. The Library of Michigan has a large statewide collection. Local libraries may have some local genealogies.
5. **County Histories/Portrait
and Biographical
Histories, Published** Almost every county in Michigan has at least one county history with biographical sketches. The Library of Michigan published the **Guide to the Michigan Genealogical & Historical Collections** at the Library of Michigan and the State Archives of Michigan (published 1996 by the Michigan Genealogical Council, PO Box, 80953, Lansing, 48908-0953) listing Michigan census, county histories and vital records, transcribed and original materials.
6. **City/County Directories** The Library of Michigan has an extensive statewide collection of Michigan city directories with out-of-state directories prior to 1860 on microfiche and from 1861 forward on microfilm.
7. **Personal Papers/
Manuscripts** Unpublished written data include letters, diaries, journals, reunion records, and manuscripts. For example, the Library of Michigan has 450 boxes of manuscripts.
8. **Tombstone Inscriptions** Photographs or transcriptions of the stones. Locations of Michigan cemeteries are shown in the **Michigan Cemetery Atlas** and companion volume, the **Michigan Cemetery Source Book**, published by the Library of Michigan.
9. **Atlas/Landowners** The Library of Michigan has an extensive statewide collection of landowner plat books. Look also at local libraries.

See acceptable primary sources on reverse side.

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REGISTRATION FORM

This Michigan Genealogical Council Project is accepting registrations for persons who died in or before 1900, and left no Michigan official record. Persons may be registered who lived in Michigan, had lived in Michigan and died elsewhere, died in Michigan and were not usual Michigan residents, or were children of lifetime Michigan residents.

AFFIDAVIT: To the best of my knowledge there is no official State or County of Michigan death record for the person I am registering. I release all rights to these materials to the Michigan Genealogical Council for archiving, creation of a database, and sale of copies (this in no way affects my personal use of said material.) I understand that depositing any number of "Proof of Death" records entitles me to receive an equal number of other "Proof of Death" records from the database free.

SIGNATURE: _____

IF THERE IS AN OFFICIAL DEATH RECORD ELSEWHERE (outside of Michigan), SHOW THE PLACE IT IS REGISTERED AND IF POSSIBLE PROVIDE A COPY OF THE RECORD (*Please print or type*)

NO RECORD: _____ RECORD AND LOCATION: _____

All events must have occurred on or before 1900. Use the format "9 September 1880" for all dates.

1. DECEDENT'S NAME, WITH MAIDEN NAME FOR MARRIED WOMEN.

NAME: _____ MAIDEN NAME: _____

2. BIRTH AND MARRIAGE DATES AND PLACES FOR DECEDENT IF AVAILABLE.

Birth date: _____ Place: _____

Marriage date: _____ Place: _____

3. DECEDENT'S DATE AND PLACE OF DEATH. Give location, city or township, county, state, country, or any appropriate geographical description.

Death date: _____ Place: _____

4. PLACE OF DECEDENT'S BURIAL. Give location, city or township, county, state, country, or any appropriate geographical description.

Burial date: _____ Place: _____

5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION (for above.) Refer to primary and secondary sources list. Copies of sources must be attached to this registration form.

6. PARENTAL FAMILY OF DECEDENT WITH SOURCES. A family group sheet may be attached if wished.

7. DECEDENT'S FAMILY WITH SPOUSE AND CHILDREN WITH SOURCES. A family group sheet may be attached if wished.

**ALL PROOFS MUST BE PHOTOCOPIES OF ORIGINAL RECORDS: NO TRANSCRIPTIONS OF RECORDS WILL BE ACCEPTED. PHOTOGRAPHS OF TOMBSTONES ARE ACCEPTABLE.
SEND TWO COPIES OF THIS COMPLETED FORM AND ALL PROOFS. DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL RECORDS!**