

NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL RESOURCES

This region covers the states of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

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 and Territorial, Special (Agricultural, Indian, Military, School, Mortality Schedules, etc.)</p> <p>Histories: City or town, County, Family, State, Territorial</p> <p>Jurisdictional History (Including boundary changes)</p> <p>Land and Property Records: County & Federal</p> <p>Military Records: Draft Registration, Service Benefit (Pension, Bounty Land, Cemeteries, etc.), History</p> <p>Probate Records: Intestate (Administrator Bonds, inventories, Settlement, etc.), Testate (Executer Bonds, Wills, Codicils, Settlement, etc.)</p> <p>Vital Records: Birth, Marriage, Death</p>	<p>Biographies</p> <p>Church Records: Baptism, Christening, Marriage, Burial, Membership</p> <p>Court Records: Civil, Criminal, Divorce, Guardianship, Adoption</p> <p>Directories: City, County, Specialty</p> <p>Immigration and Migration: Passenger Lists, Naturalization, Passports, Migration Trails</p> <p>Maps, Gazetteers, and Historical Geography</p> <p>Newspapers: Obituaries, Community Happenings, Notices</p> <p>Periodicals: Genealogical, Historical, & Ethnic</p>	<p>Bible Records</p> <p>Business/Commerce Records</p> <p>Ethnic, Minority, and Native Races Records</p> <p>Funeral Home Records (Burial transmits in Iowa)</p> <p>Manuscript Collections</p> <p>Pension Records</p> <p>Pioneer Collections</p> <p>School Records</p> <p>Tax Records</p> <p>Voting Records</p>

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

For the North Central Region research some basic German and Swedish language skills are required. It is important to be able to identify a German and Swedish document (birth, baptismal record, marriage, or death/burial record) and be able to abstract important genealogical data such as name, parent's names, dates, places, etc.

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 North Central 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 [list one for each state]
 - Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs: <https://iowaculture.gov/> (includes State Historical Society of Iowa, State Archives)
 - Minnesota Historical Society: www.mnhs.org (includes Minnesota State Archives)
 - Nebraska State Records: <https://nebraska.staterecords.org/>
 - State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck, North Dakota (includes the state archives): <http://www.history.nd.gov/archives/index.html>
 - South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, South Dakota (includes the state archives): <https://history.sd.gov/Archives/>
 - Libraries (public, private, and university)
 - The State Library of Iowa: <https://www.statelibraryofiowa.org>
 - Minnesota Genealogical Society Library and Research Center: <https://mngs.org>
 - History Nebraska (formerly Nebraska State Historical Society), Lincoln, Nebraska: <https://history.nebraska.gov/>

- University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota: <https://www.usd.edu/library/>
- Center for Western Studies, Augustana University, Sioux Falls, South Dakota: <http://www.augie.edu/center-for-western-studies/>
- North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo, North Dakota: <https://library.ndsu.edu/>
- National Archives' branches of this region
 - National Archives at Denver, CO (North Dakota and South Dakota): <https://www.archives.gov/denver>
 - National Archives at Kansas City, MO (Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota): <https://www.archives.gov/kansas-city>
 - National Archives at Chicago, IL (Minnesota): <https://www.archives.gov/chicago>

For more for each state see

- FamilySearch Research Wiki article "United States Archives and Libraries" <https://bit.ly/2TkfkaH>.
- Genealogical and historical societies (state, regional, county, and local)
 - State Historical Society of Iowa: <https://iowaculture.gov>
 - Minnesota Historical Society: www.mnhs.org
 - *American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Lincoln, Nebraska*: <https://www.ahsqr.org/default.aspx>
 - *Danish American Archive and Library, Blair, Nebraska*: <http://danishamericanarchive.com/>
 - *History Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska*: <https://history.nebraska.gov/>
 - *State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck, North Dakota (includes the state archives)*: <http://www.history.nd.gov/archives/index.html>
 - *South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, South Dakota (includes the state archives)*: <https://history.sd.gov/Archives/>

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."

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- 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 some 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.”
- Ask genealogists in your community or on social media for additional recommendations.

The following guides apply to all US 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 NORTH CENTRAL REGION RESEARCH

- Know the date vital statistics were first recorded for each state in the region and the laws that affected their recording. For example: South Dakota began statewide registration of birth, marriage, and death records in 1905 with general compliance realized in 1932.
- Each state in this region has important state census collections. Know the years of each state census for each state.
- Know what special census collections exist for the states in this region. For example, Dakota Territory and Nebraska were included in the 1885 federal census.
- Compare results of all federal, state, and special censuses.
- Understand the various territories that each of the states of this region were part of prior to statehood and where those territorial records might be found.

FOR GENERAL UNITED STATES RESEARCH

In addition to the strategies specific to this region discussed above the strategies below apply to all US regions.

- Search all applicable census records to find complete families.
- 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).
- Understand your family in historical context, including wars and jurisdictional boundary changes. To learn about these important elements, see *FamilySearch* Research Wiki article, “United States History” <https://bit.ly/2Axqpya>. See the state links for each state in your accreditation region in this article.
- If indirect evidence is used, assemble it correctly to support your conclusions. If needed use the *FamilySearch* Research Wiki article, “United States Record Selection Table” <https://bit.ly/2RtPX9m> for further research suggestions to locate other records and evidence that might aid your research and form conclusions.
- Evaluate each record. Resolve any conflicting information. Correlate findings.
- 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.
- Keep a research log of all records searched, including any searches for which nothing was found.
- Verify generational links.
- Understand applicable economics, religion, ethnicity, prejudices, and laws. For example: Know availability of records for major religious denominations in each state.

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- 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* Family History Research *Wiki article*, “Name Variations in United States Indexes and Records” <https://bit.ly/2CQb0Q5> for suggestions.