

Why Hire a Board-Certified Genealogist?



BCG

BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION
OF GENEALOGISTS®

**The Hallmark of Quality,
Professionalism, and Service**

Since 1964

The BCG Mission

Since 1964, the Board for Certification of Genealogists has promoted standards for competence and ethics in genealogical research. It conducts educational workshops and webinars, co-sponsors institutes, certifies qualified applicants, and maintains an online register of certified persons. Its credentials are internationally recognized. Those who hold them may qualify as expert witnesses in the courts of law.

The BCG Code

All genealogists certified by BCG must sign a code of ethics and conduct. Violation of the code can be grounds for decertification. The full code is available at the BCG website, <http://www.BCGcertification.org>.

The BCG Administration

BCG is an independent board administered by national and international leaders of the field. The Board consists of fifteen trustees, a professional executive director, and a panel of judges. Trustees are elected by the certified associates and serve three-year terms. Officers (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and executive committee member-at-large) are elected annually by the trustees. Trustees and officers are certified, and serve without compensation.

Mediation & Arbitration Services

BCG offers consumers a mediation and arbitration service. Should a problem arise with the performance of a Board-certified genealogist, BCG will assist in achieving a satisfactory resolution.

Board-certified genealogists agree to submit to the Board's dispute resolution process to resolve complaints. The process starts with mediation but can proceed to final arbitration that is binding.

The Board-Certified Professional

Board-certified genealogists demonstrate excellence in research, evidence analysis, problem solving, and communication. They are thorough, analytical, and innovative.

AS RESEARCHERS: They know the records available in the areas where they work. They are proficient in reading the handwriting of earlier eras. They know and apply sound practices in abstracting and transcribing records, compiling data, and documenting all work they produce.

AS ANALYSTS: They are well grounded in the laws, customs, and terminology of past societies in order to properly interpret the records they find. They understand the principles that differentiate sources, information, and evidence, and they apply these principles critically. They soundly weigh all findings and exercise caution in reaching conclusions.

AS COMMUNICATORS: They are articulate. They present problems clearly, identify their resources thoroughly, and provide the rationales for all their conclusions. Their research reports, narratives, and presentations are professional in their construction and well targeted to their audience and purpose.

Your Peace of Mind

Choosing a Board-certified genealogist provides you with quality assurance in three important areas:

- Your genealogist offers proved expertise, established through rigorous evaluation of problem-solving skills.
- Your genealogist offers continued professional learning and growth to stay abreast of new resources and techniques.
- Your genealogist ascribes to a rigorous code of ethics, backed by BCG's mediation and arbitration services.

Costs?

Fees charged by Board-certified genealogists vary according to the same factors that influence all professions—including locale, experience, and type of assignment. BCG does not set a fee scale. Many of its certificants offer websites that detail their fees, services, and contracts. Visiting their sites is an excellent approach to market research before making any decision as to the best genealogist for your needs.

Identifying Board-Certified Genealogists

Genealogists certified by the Board for Certification use two distinct credentials. Both are trademarks or service marks to which BCG has held proprietary rights since 1964:

- **CERTIFIED GENEALOGIST (CG)**
- **CERTIFIED GENEALOGICAL LECTURER (CGL)**

For more detail see back panel, “The Credentials.”

Finding a Board-Certified Professional

BCG maintains a directory of Board-certified genealogists at its website (<http://www.BCGcertification.org>). The directory may be searched by name, location, or special interests and offers e-mail and website links.

Consumer Education

Many individuals who employ researchers are uncertain as to the nature and quality of the work product they should expect. BCG offers free guidance at its website in the form of articles on skills and standards and sample client reports and genealogies.

Additionally, BCG’s manual, *Genealogy Standards* (Nashville, Tennessee: Ancestry, 2014), codifies genealogical standards for documenting, researching, writing, teaching and continuing education.

The Certification Process

The certification process of the Board for Certification of Genealogists is portfolio based and standards based. Candidates for the **CERTIFIED GENEALOGIST (CG)** credential submit numerous work samples to demonstrate their skill levels in four areas:

- **DOCUMENT WORK**, demonstrating their ability to transcribe, abstract, analyze, interpret, and develop work plans;
- **RESEARCH REPORTS**, demonstrating their knowledge of a wide range of sources and their skills in analyzing and reporting their findings in a professional manner;
- **CASE STUDIES**, demonstrating their ability to resolve research problems involving indirect evidence or conflicting evidence, when direct evidence cannot be found or is flawed;
- **KINSHIP-DETERMINATION PROJECTS**, demonstrating their ability to prove relationships and assemble family units.

Candidates for the **CERTIFIED GENEALOGICAL LECTURER (CGL)** credential, who must first attain the Certified Genealogist (CG) credential, submit recordings of lectures, with outlines, visual aids, and handout materials to demonstrate their ability to communicate and their knowledge of subject matter.

Three to four judges individually and independently use rubrics based on the standards defined in *Genealogy Standards* to objectively evaluate the work samples. All judges serve *pro bono*.

Genealogists certified by the Board are entitled to use their credentials as postnominals and to use the Board logo on their stationery. Each certification is for a five-year period, and genealogists must renew their credentials every five years by submitting a satisfactory renewal application that provides material evidence of continued quality and growth.

The Credentials

The Board for Certification of Genealogists offers two credentials—a core research category and a supplemental teaching category.

RESEARCH

- **THE CERTIFIED GENEALOGIST (CG)** credential is awarded to one who is proficient in all areas of genealogical research and analysis. Those who hold this credential conduct broadly based projects whose goals are to find and interpret evidence, assemble proof of identity and relationships, and prepare sound reports and historical accounts of families, past and present.

TEACHING

- **THE CERTIFIED GENEALOGICAL LECTURER (CGL)** credential is awarded to one who is proficient in public addresses of an educational nature on specific genealogical topics or related subjects pertinent to establishing identity and tracing kinships. A candidate for the CGL credential must also pass requirements for the Certified Genealogist (CG) credential.

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Post Office Box 14291

Washington, DC 20044

<http://www.BCGcertification.org>