

4.1.1 Documentary Evidence

Refer to [FOM 1 905.5](#) for acceptable evidence submitted in support of an applicant's claim.

Facsimile (Fax) - Accept a fax of an original document if it meets the requirements in [FOM 1 910](#)

4.1.2 Preservation of Original Documents

Preserve original documents in their original condition. Do not date-stamp, fold, staple, punch, mark, or deface them in any manner. Do not remove a document that is part of a bound volume from its binder.

All original documents should be returned as soon as possible after the information has been entered into our permanent record.

4.1.3 Processing Original Documents

Process original documents as follows:

- A. Medical Records - Route X-ray film and similar medical data to DBD.
- B. English Language Documents – Essential data from the original document should be transcribed to APPLE.
- C. Foreign Language Documents - Foreign language proofs needed to adjudicate pending applications that can be translated by headquarters personnel should be transcribed to APPLE.

Other foreign language correspondence or documents that cannot be translated in headquarters must be forwarded to the PEMS-Management Services translation service.

On each document to be translated, in pencil, write "RRB", the claim number and the employee's name. Have a photocopy made of the document and sign the photocopy to certify its correctness.

Multiple documents may be submitted and a photocopy of the document(s) should be imaged. Attach the document(s) and the envelope in which it was received to the original and forward this packet on a G-26 to PEMS-Management Services, 6th Floor, ATTN: Administrative Officer. If the document(s) was not received through the mail from the country of origin (such as a foreign document filed at an RRB office), write on a slip of paper the name of the country of origin and attach the slip to the document(s).

When the document has been translated and returned, PEMS-Management Services will:

- Send it to the examiner who prepared the packet if a name and unit are shown;
- Send it to the unit indicated on the G-26 route slip if no examiner name and unit are shown.

If the document has not been returned within 30 days from the date it was sent to PEMS-Management Services, send a photocopy to PEMS-Management Services. Show "Foreign Language Document Outstanding 30 Days," on the G-26.

If the DOB or DOM shown in the translation does not agree with the one claimed by the applicant, forward a photocopy of the document to PEMS-Management Services by G-26 with this remark, "(Applicant/Annuitant) claims (DOB/DOM) of _____". PEMS-Management Services will send the photocopy of the document back to have the translation rechecked.

NOTE: After the proof document has been translated, the field office that secured the translation should enter the proof onto APPLE.

4.1.4 Requesting Photocopies

With the exceptions of a U.S. passport, naturalization or immigration record, obtain a photocopy of any original document that requires review and return the document. A photocopy is preferable to a G-91 if the evidence must be re-examined to resolve conflicts or discrepancies. If the document cannot be copied, summarize the evidence on form G-91 as explained in [RCM 11](#)

4.1.5 Return Of Documents

Do not immediately return a document when there is any doubt as to its authenticity. In such cases, refer the document to your supervisor for inspection and approval.

- A. Original and Foreign Documents - Return original or foreign documents by REGISTERED mail using an RL-158 as a transmittal letter. Prepare the RL-158 together with either an envelope or mailing label (depending on the number and bulk of documents to be returned).

If the material is placed in an envelope, seal it before placing in the outgoing mail. Otherwise, route the material to the mailroom for enclosure in a mailing folder and release. Prepare a G-244 (see [RCM 10.2](#), "Processing Correspondence") and attach it to the envelope or material routed to the mailroom.

- B. Certified Copies - Return certified copies by regular mail using an RL- 158 as a transmittal letter together with either an envelope or mailing label (depending on the number and bulk of documents to be returned).

If the material is placed in an envelope, seal it before placing in the outgoing mail. Otherwise, route the material to the mailroom for enclosure in a mailing folder and release.

4.1.6 Acknowledging Proofs Filed In Advance Of Application

Examine proofs filed in advance of an application in accordance with the instructions for determining their acceptability and handle as in A or B below.

- A. Original Documents - Return original documents submitted as POA, POM, or POM/S as shown in 1 and 2 below.
1. Acceptable Evidence - If the evidence submitted is acceptable as POA or POM, enter the necessary information on APPLE and return the document using RL-103a as a transmittal for POM and POA. Insert the following on an RL-103a in the space above the last paragraph: "Enclosed is the document you submitted".

If an appropriate APPLE screen does not exist, transcribe the information to Form G-91 and return the evidence to the customer. Image the G-91.
 2. Unacceptable Evidence - If the evidence is unacceptable obtain a photocopy and return the document with a letter explaining why it is not acceptable. Point out that acceptable evidence should be obtained but it need not be submitted until an application is filed.
- B. Certified Copies - Handle certified copies of documents submitted as POA, POM, or POM/S as shown in 1 and 2 below.
1. Acceptable Evidence - If the evidence submitted is acceptable, transcribe the pertinent facts to the appropriate APPLE evidence screens and return the document(s) to the person.

If an appropriate APPLE screen does not exist, transcribe the information to Form G-91 and return the evidence to the customer. Image the G-91.
 2. Unacceptable Evidence - If the evidence is unacceptable, obtain a photocopy and return the document with a letter explaining why it is not acceptable. Point out that acceptable evidence should be obtained but it need not be submitted until an application is filed.

4.1.7 List of State Sources and Fees for Birth, Death, Marriage, and Divorce Records

A complete list of state sources and fees for birth, death, marriage, and divorce records can be found at the website for the National Center for Health Statistics in the Center for Disease Control. The name of the Internet page is Where to Write for Vital Records. (Click on the link to access.)

