



Consolato Generale d'Italia

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www.conschicago.esteri.it

RECOGNITION OF ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP FOR PEOPLE OF ITALIAN DESCENT BORN IN THE USA (*Jure sanguinis*)

Italian Citizenship is based upon the principle of “ius sanguinis” (blood right) meaning that the child born from an Italian father or mother is an Italian citizen regardless of the place of birth.

In order to be recognized as an Italian citizen, you have to prove that your Italian ancestor born in Italy was **not** a naturalized US citizen before his son/daughter's birth in the USA (see categories 1-5 listed on the next page for more details).

This is the reason why we strongly suggest you start with acquiring your ancestor's Italian birth certificate and his/her naturalization paper.

ONLY IF YOU ARE SURE THAT HIS/HER NATURALIZATION DIDN'T HAPPEN BEFORE YOUR INTERMEDIATE ANCESTOR'S BIRTH, YOU MAY COLLECT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS.

Please follow the instructions described as “Guidelines for all categories” to know how to proceed in this matter.

IMPORTANT:

- **A person born before 01/01/1948 can claim Italian citizenship only from his/her father**, who was not a naturalized citizen of another country before his child's birth.
- **A woman can transfer citizenship only to her children born after 01/01/1948**, if she was not a naturalized citizen of another country before her child's birth.
- **"Italian citizen at the time of the descendant's birth"** means that he/she did not acquire any other citizenship through naturalization before his/her descendant's birth.
- **If your great grandfather became a naturalized U.S. citizen before June 14, 1912** you are not entitled to the Italian citizenship, even if your ancestor was born before your great grandfather's naturalization.

BEFORE COLLECTING ALL THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS YOU MUST KNOW:

- You can submit your application to this Consulate General if you are a PERMANENT RESIDENT of the following States: Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Wyoming (**Legal Aliens must submit the Permanent Resident Card**).
- Your application is individual and must be presented PERSONALLY together with all the supporting documents.
- In order to present your application and related documents you need to take an appointment (Consular Services – citizenship – booking online system).
- If a family member, residing in our jurisdiction, is interested in submitting in the future the application for the recognition of the Italian citizenship, the same ancestors' original documentation will apply, but he/she must present his/her original certificates.
- Residents of Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Wyoming, whose family members have obtained the recognition of the Italian citizenship at a different Consulate or Comune, must submit at this Office all original documentation from the Italian ancestor.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT THE PROCEDURES INDICATED MAY AFFECT YOUR U.S. CITIZENSHIP, YOU SHOULD CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE U.S. AUTHORITIES.

RECOGNITION OF ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP THROUGH JURE SANGUINIS

Documents to prove your eligibility
in accordance with the personal situation and
to be collected before your scheduled appointment

Category n. 1:

Father born in Italy, an Italian citizen at the time of your birth.

1. FATHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE **from Italy**;
2. MOTHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE;
3. PARENTS' MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE;
4. FATHER'S CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION or his permanent resident card.
5. **If the above document is not available, please see all the information in "THE USA NATURALIZATION"**;
6. FATHER'S DEATH CERTIFICATE (if applicable) OR HIS CURRENT ADDRESS.
- 7.

REMINDER: IF YOUR FATHER BECAME A NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZEN BEFORE YOUR BIRTH, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP.

ATTENTION:

In the event of discrepancies and/or lack of information in the certificates/documents presented, this Consulate General may request additional documentation.

Category n.2:

Mother born in Italy, an Italian citizen at the time of your birth. Applicant's date of birth after January 1st, 1948.

Follow the instructions as indicated in **Category n.1**, but in this case the documents will be regarding your mother.

REMINDER: You can apply through your mother only if you were born after January 1st, 1948. IF YOUR MOTHER BECAME A NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZEN BEFORE YOUR BIRTH, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP.

ATTENTION:

In the event of discrepancies and/or lack of information in the certificates/documents presented, this Consulate General may request additional documentation.

Category n.3:

Father born in the United States, paternal grandfather born in Italy, an Italian citizen at the time of your father's birth

1. PATERNAL GRANDFATHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE **from Italy**;
2. PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE;
3. GRANDPARENTS' MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE;
4. GRANDFATHER'S CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION;
5. **If the above document is not available, please see all the information in "THE USA NATURALIZATION"**;
6. PATERNAL GRANDFATHER'S AND/OR GRANDMOTHER'S DEATH CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE);
7. FATHER'S AND MOTHER'S BIRTH/MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE;
8. FATHER'S AND/OR MOTHER'S DEATH CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).

REMINDER: IF YOUR GRANDFATHER BECAME A NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZEN BEFORE YOUR FATHER'S BIRTH, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP.

ATTENTION:

In the event of discrepancies and/or lack of information in the certificates/documents presented, this Consulate General may request additional documentation.

Category n.4:

Mother born in the United States, maternal grandfather born in Italy, an Italian citizen at the time of your mother's birth, you were born after January 1, 1948.

Follow the instructions as indicated in **Category n.3**, but in this case the documents will be regarding your maternal grandfather.

REMINDER: IF YOUR GRANDFATHER BECAME A NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZEN BEFORE YOUR MOTHER'S BIRTH, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP.

ATTENTION:

In the event of discrepancies and/or lack of information in the certificates/documents presented, this Consulate General may request additional documentation.

Category n. 5:

Paternal or maternal grandfather born in the United States, paternal or maternal great grandfather born in Italy: Italian citizen at the time of your paternal or maternal grandfather's birth.

1. PATERNAL/MATERNAL GREAT GRANDFATHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE, **from Italy**;
2. PATERNAL/MATERNAL GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE;
3. PATERNAL/MATERNAL GREAT GRANDPARENTS' MARRIAGE AND DEATH CERTIFICATE;
4. PATERNAL/MATERNAL GREAT GRANDFATHER'S CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION;
If the above document is not available, please see all the information in "THE USA NATURALIZATION";
5. PATERNAL/MATERNAL GRANDFATHER'S AND GRANDMOTHER'S BIRTH/MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE AND DEATH CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE);
6. FATHER'S AND MOTHER'S BIRTH/MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE AND DEATH CERTIFICATE (IF AVAILABLE).

REMINDER: IF YOUR PATERNAL/MATERNAL GREAT GRANDFATHER BECAME A NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZEN BEFORE YOUR PATERNAL/MATERNAL GRANDFATHER'S BIRTH, YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP (unless you fit into another category).

ATTENTION:

In the event of discrepancies and/or lack of information in the certificates/documents presented, this Consulate General may request additional documentation.

Documents referring to the applicant:

1. **APPLICATION FORM AND DECLARATIONS** THAT YOU AND YOUR INTERMEDIATE ANCESTOR/S HAVE NEVER RENOUNCED ITALIAN CITIZENSHIP BEFORE ANY ITALIAN AUTHORITY;
2. BIRTH CERTIFICATE;
3. LICENSE/MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE (if applicable): please follow the instructions in "VITAL RECORDS".
4. MINOR CHILD'S (if applicable) BIRTH CERTIFICATE: please follow the instructions in "VITAL RECORDS".
5. ORIGINAL and a photocopy of the U.S. PASSPORT, DRIVER'S LICENSE and a utility bill.
6. **If not a U.S. citizen:** original and a photocopy of national PASSPORT and permanent resident card.
7. A set of photocopies of documents referring to the applicant must be presented together with the originals.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The application forms 1-2-3 and/or 4 must be filled out before coming for the scheduled appointment.
- The forms 1-2 and 4 must be signed before the Consular Officer.

Please click the link "FORMS" to download the Forms 1-2-3-4.

GUIDELINES

FOR ALL CATEGORIES

- **HOW TO REQUEST THE ANCESTOR'S BIRTH/MARRIAGE/DEATH CERTIFICATES FROM ITALY**

1) Write to the "Comune" where the Italian ancestor was born, requesting a birth certificate in "formato internazionale" or the "estratto per riassunto" (showing his/her father's and mother's names), enclose a stamped, self addressed envelope. Search the address of the Comune on the page: www.comuni.it.

Address your request to:

COMUNE DI _____
Ufficio Anagrafe – Stato Civile
(Zip code) _____ **(City)** _____ **(Province of)** _____
ITALY

A form "to request vital records at the "Comune" for Italian citizens" can be found in the section "VITAL RECORDS"

- **HOW TO REQUEST THE ANCESTOR'S BIRTH/MARRIAGE/DEATH CERTIFICATES IN THE U.S.A.**

All certificates must be "LONG FORM" in a "CERTIFIED COPY". These certificates may be requested from the Office of Vital Statistics of the County or of the State where the birth/marriage/death took place. Please check that the birth certificate lists the **city of birth, parents' names**, and that it was issued by a government agency. Certificates reporting only the "County" of birth will not be accepted.

For **the list of Vital Records Offices** please click the link in the section "VITAL RECORDS".

An accurate, complete and typed translation of all certificates is required.

Please be informed that we don't provide a list of professional translators.

You can choose any person who is able to translate correctly into Italian.

- **APOSTILLE**

U.S. Birth/Marriage/Death records related to the "Italian side" (starting with your ancestor and ending with you - including the "intermediate" ancestors who are not applying for citizenship - and any Italian born spouses) must be legalized with an "APOSTILLE" by the Secretary of State of the State in which the document has been issued: it is not a stamp on the certificate.

The Certificate of Naturalization and/or similar documentation doesn't need to be legalized by the "APOSTILLE".

THE APOSTILLE doesn't need to be translated.

For **the list of the Secretaries of State** click the link in the section "VITAL RECORDS".

- **VITAL RECORDS IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ITALIAN**

Birth, marriage, death certificates **relating to the whole Italian side** (i.e. from your ancestor up to you, including the ones relating to "intermediate" ancestors who are not applying for citizenship) **must be translated into Italian**. Documents that **do not** need to be translated are **those relating to the "non-Italian" side** and the **U.S. Certificate of Naturalization or any statement releasing information on the naturalization status of the ancestors**.

- **DOCUMENTS ISSUED IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE U.S.A. OR ITALY**

Visit the webpage of the Italian Consulate/Embassy responsible for the area where the certificate has been issued to know how to proceed for the legalization of the certificate and translation. A list of all Italian Consulate/Embassies abroad is available at www.esteri.it ("Farnesina" - "Rappresentanze Diplomatiche" - "Ambasciate e Consolati" – Country).

- **IF YOU ARE MARRIED**

You have to submit a certified copy of the **"Marriage license/certification"**: please check that your marriage certificate lists both groom and bride's **city of birth, parents' names, date and place of the marriage**. If not, you must provide in addition a certified copy of the **"Marriage application and record"**. Both the marriage license and the certificate must be legalized with the **"Apostille"**. Please provide a simple certified copy of **your spouse's birth certificate** (no translation and Apostille are required for it) with a photocopy of his/her American passport or ID card/driver's license.

Fill out the **"Application Form to register marriage certificates in Italy"** that can be found in the section **"VITAL RECORDS"**.

- **IF YOUR MARRIAGE TOOK PLACE BEFORE APRIL 27, 1983** and your wife expresses a will to be recognized as an Italian citizen, she needs to come PERSONALLY to your scheduled appointment. She has to submit a certified copy of her "long form" birth certificate, translated into Italian and legalized with the "Apostille". An ID with a photo and utility bill is required. A form must be filled out and signed before an Official of the Consulate General.

- **DISCREPANCIES**

Check carefully all the documents **word for word** to make sure that no discrepancies appear.

Discrepancies are typographical errors, missing middle names, use of nicknames, etc.

Each change or error found in your ancestor's documents must be corrected, wherever possible, through an official "affidavit to amend a record" at the Vital Statistics Office that issued that document. You can also ask for an "a.k.a." (also known as) with all the names that your ancestor used during his/her all life. The Vital Records Office can provide it adding them on the original certificate.

Any discrepancies in your own documents must be amended and corrected.

This includes your own name, your spouse's name, and your parents' names.

If relevant discrepancies are found in your own certificates your application will not be accepted.

- **THE U.S.A. NATURALIZATION**

The Naturalization of your ancestor born in Italy is crucial for the recognition of your Italian citizenship.

An accurate search has to be performed on this matter.

If your ancestor is still alive and is not an American citizen, you can present **his Italian passport and current U.S. permanent resident card ("green card")**.

Otherwise, you must present:

The CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION and/or a certified copy of his "petition for naturalization" and "oath of allegiance" (which is an official document bearing the red ribbon and gold seal of NARA).

If you cannot acquire a certificate of naturalization or a petition, you must provide an **Official statement** of no record (**original, not a photocopy, and with the Office Seal**) to be requested to each Office contacted.

Here is a list of the Offices to be contacted:

VERY IMPORTANT:

When submitting your request, please provide your Italian ancestor's full name (and aliases, nicknames and any other names appeared on any official documents), possible places and dates of birth which he may have declared during his life, according to his documents that you have collected.

Conduct a search that covers the time of the arrival of your Italian ancestor in the USA, to the birth of his child born in the USA, and support it with Official statements.

1. **The USCIS** in Washington D.C. (<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>). This Office can provide a Certificate of Naturalization or a **certification of nonexistence of a specific record.**
2. **Court County in which he resided and in which his child was born.** It can also provide the Certificate of Naturalization.
3. **The USCIS Genealogy Program**, in Washington, DC (www.uscis.gov/genealogy). This office can send you a copy of your ancestor's certificate or alien registration card, which must be supported by a County or NARA record, because USCIS will only release a certified copy to the person who received citizenship.
4. **The National Archives** in Washington, DC (www.nara.gov). This office collects documents from all over the United States: you could obtain a certified copy of your ancestor's "petition for naturalization" and "oath of allegiance" from the National Archives. Documents from NARA must be certified copies, bearing the red ribbon and gold seal of NARA. **If no record is found, they should issue a letter stating this.**
5. **The Regional Office of the National Archives.** This office keeps Federal documents related to the States in their area of jurisdiction. You can also obtain a certified copy of your ancestor's "petition for naturalization" and "oath of allegiance". Documents from NARA must be certified copies, bearing the red ribbon and gold seal of NARA.

If the Research shows NO RECORD, NARA can issue the alien registration card.

6. **Census record.** It may provide additional information relevant to your case even if based on the information provided by the individual: Immigration Records, Naturalization Records, Ship Passenger Lists, Military records, the U.S. Passport applications, Voter List Records and others (www.census.org). Ask for the first U.S. Census dated after the birth of the Italian-born ascendant's child.
7. **IF YOUR ITALIAN ANCESTOR WENT TO A COUNTRY OTHER THAN THE U.S.A. YOU MUST PRESENT THE NATURALIZATION RECORD ISSUED BY THAT COUNTRY.** For more information see the website of the competent Italian Consulate/Embassy. A list of all Italian Consulate/Embassies abroad is available at: www.esteri.it ("Farnesina" - "Rappresentanze Diplomatiche" - "Ambasciate e Consolati" – Country).

Please note: All the documents referring to the Naturalization do not need to be translated.

If the search performed shows NO RECORD, most likely your ancestor was never naturalized.

If this case occurs, please note that we need to receive additional proof attesting non naturalization, by way of supporting documents. This will substantially increase the chances that your application will be accepted.