**Section 1650.280 Evidence of Marriage**

a) Applicants claiming benefits as a surviving spouse shall submit as evidence of marriage a copy of the public record of marriage. If the record is unavailable due to loss or destruction, then a copy of the religious record of the marriage shall be submitted.

b) If no such records exist, the following will be accepted for consideration:

1) A copy of the federal income tax return for the year preceding the death.

2) A notarized statement from the individual who performed the marriage.

3) Notarized statements from at least two individuals in attendance of the marriage.

4) Written certification from the Social Security Administration of acceptance of the marriage and its date.

5) Such other documentation found by the System to be trustworthy, such as that produced by independent third parties.

c) The only document acceptable as evidence of dissolution or invalidity of marriage is a certified copy of the declaration or decree entered by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(Source: Amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 13534, effective August 6, 2008)