

Railroad Retirement Board

§ 219.43

§ 219.39 Evidence of relationship by legal adoption—parent or child.

(a) *Preferred evidence.* Preferred evidence of legal adoption is—

(1) A copy of the decree or order of adoption, certified by the custodian of the record;

(2) A photocopy of the decree or order of adoption; or

(3) If the widow or widower adopted the child after the employee's death, the evidence described in paragraph (a)(1) or (2) of this section; the widow's or widower's statement as to whether the child was living in the same household with the employee when the employee died (see §§ 219.50 and 219.51); what support, if any, the child was getting from another person or organization; and if the widow or widower had a deemed valid marriage with the employee, evidence of that marriage (see § 219.33).

(b) *Other evidence of legal adoption.* In some states the record of adoption proceedings is sealed and cannot be obtained without a court order. In this event, the Board will accept as proof of adoption an official notice received by the adopting parents at the time of adoption that the adoption has been completed or a birth certificate issued as a result of the adoption proceeding.

§ 219.40 Evidence of relationship by equitable adoption—child.

(a) *Preferred evidence.* If the claimant is a person who claims to be the equitably adopted child of the employee (or of the employee's wife, widow, widower, or husband), as defined in part 222 of this chapter, the Board will ask for evidence of the agreement to adopt if it is in writing. The Board will also ask for written statements from the child's natural parents as well as adopting parents concerning the child's relationship to the adopting parents.

(b) *Other evidence.* If the agreement to adopt was not in writing, the Board will require other convincing evidence about the child's relationship to the adopting parents.

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§ 219.41 Evidence of relationship of grandchild or stepgrandchild.

If the child is the grandchild or stepgrandchild of the employee, the Board will require the kind of evidence described in §§ 219.36-219.38 that shows that child's relationship to his or her parents and his or her parents' relationship to the employee.

§ 219.42 When evidence of child's dependency is required.

Evidence of a child's dependency on the employee is required when—

(a) The employee is receiving an annuity that can be increased under the social security overall minimum (see part 229 of this chapter) by including a child, grandchild or a spouse who has a child in his or her care;

(b) A wife under age 65 applies for a full spouse annuity because she has a child or a grandchild of the employee in her care; or

(c) A child or someone in behalf of a child applies for a child's annuity based on the deceased employee's record.

§ 219.43 Evidence of child's dependency.

(a) *When the dependency requirement must be met.* Usually the dependency requirement must be met at one of the times shown in part 222 of this chapter.

(b) *Natural or adopted.* If the child is the employee's natural or adopted child, the Board may ask for the following evidence:

(1) A signed statement by someone who knows the facts that confirms that the child is the natural or adopted child.

(2) If the child was adopted by someone else while the employee was alive but the adoption was annulled, the Board may require a certified copy of the annulment decree or other convincing evidence of the annulment.

(3) A signed statement by someone having personal knowledge of the circumstances showing when and where the child lived with the employee and when and why they may have lived apart; and showing what contributions the employee made to the child's support and how the contributions were made.

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(c) *Stepchild*. If the child is the employee's stepchild, the Board may ask for the following evidence;

(1) A signed statement by someone having personal knowledge of the circumstances showing when and where the child lived with the employee and when and why they may have lived apart.

(2) A signed statement by someone having personal knowledge of the circumstances showing what contributions the employee made to the child's support, the child's ordinary living costs and the income and support the child received from any other source during the relevant time as required by §222.55 of this chapter.

(d) *Grandchild or stepgrandchild*. If the child is the employee's grandchild or stepgrandchild, the Board will require the evidence described in paragraph (c) of this section. The Board will also require evidence of the employee's death or disability.

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§219.44 Evidence of relationship of a person other than a parent or child.

(a) *Claimants other than child or parent*. When any person other than a child or parent applies for benefits due because of the employee's death or because of the death of a beneficiary, the Board may ask the claimant for evidence of relationship.

(b) *Evidence required*. The type of evidence required is dependent upon the amount payable and the claimant's relationship to the deceased employee or beneficiary.

(c) *More than one eligible and claimants agree on relationship*. If there is more than one person eligible for benefits, and all eligible persons agree on the relationship of each other eligible person, only one of the persons will be asked to furnish proof of relationship. For example, if brothers and sisters of a deceased employee file applications for the residual lump sum or annuity payments due but unpaid at death, only one of them need file proof of relationship if their applications indicate that there is no dispute as to who are the brothers and sisters of the employee.

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Subpart D—Other Evidence Requirements

§219.50 When evidence of “living with” is required.

Evidence of “living with” (see part 222 of this chapter on Family Relationships) is required when—

(a) The employee's spouse applies for a spouse's annuity as a deemed spouse; or

(b) The employee's legal widow or widower applies for a lump-sum death payment, annuity payments due the employee but unpaid at death, or a residual lump-sum death payment on the basis of that relationship, or the employee's deemed widow or widower applies for a widow's or widower's annuity.

§219.51 Evidence to prove “living with”.

The following evidence may be required:

(a) If the employee is alive, both the employee and his or her spouse must sign a statement that they are living together in the same household when the spouse applies for a spouse's annuity as a deemed spouse.

(b) If the employee is dead, the widow or widower must sign a statement showing whether he or she was living together in the same household with the employee when the employee died.

(c) If the employee and spouse, widow or widower were temporarily living apart, a signed statement is required explaining where each was living, how long the separation lasted, and the reason for separation. If more evidence is required to remove any reasonable doubt about the temporary nature of the separation, the Board may ask for sworn statements of other persons having personal knowledge of the facts or for other convincing evidence.

(d) If the employee and spouse, widow, or widower were not living in the same household, the Board may ask for evidence that the employee was contributing to or under court order to contribute to the support of his or her spouse, widow, or widower. Evidence of contributions or a certified copy of the order for support may be requested. The court order for support must be in effect on the day the spouse applies for