§ 404.716 Type of evidence of age to be given.

(a) Preferred evidence. The best evidence of your age, if you can obtain it, is either: a birth certificate or hospital birth record recorded before age 5; or a religious record which shows your date of birth and was recorded before age 5.

(b) Other evidence of age. If you cannot obtain the preferred evidence of your age, you will be asked for other convincing evidence that shows your date of birth or age at a certain time such as: an original family bible or family record; school records; census records; a statement signed by the physician or midwife who was present at your birth; insurance policies; a marriage record; a passport; an employment record; a delayed birth certificate, your child’s birth certificate; or an immigration or naturalization record.

§ 404.720 Evidence of a person’s death.

(a) When evidence of death is required. If you apply for benefits on the record of a deceased person, we will ask you for evidence of the date and place of his or her death. We may also ask for evidence of another person’s death if this is needed to prove you are eligible for benefits.

(b) Preferred evidence of death. The best evidence of a person’s death is—

(1) A certified copy or extract from the public record of death, coroner’s report of death, or verdict of a coroner’s jury; or a certificate by the custodian of the public record of death;
(2) A statement of the funeral director, attending physician, intern of the institution where death occurred;
(3) A certified copy of, or extract from an official report or finding of death made by an agency or department of the United States; or
(4) If death occurred outside the United States, an official report of death by a United States Consul or other employee of the State Department; or a copy of the public record of death in the foreign country.

(2) A wife’s benefit and you have the insured person’s child in your care;
(3) A mother’s or father’s benefit; or
(4) A disability benefit (or for a period of disability) and neither your eligibility nor benefit amount depends upon your age.

(b) If you apply for wife’s benefits while under age 62 or if you apply for a mother’s or father’s benefit, you will be asked for evidence of the date of birth of the insured person’s children in your care.

(c) If you apply for benefits on the earnings record of a deceased person, you may be asked for evidence of his or her age if this is needed to decide whether he or she was insured at the time of death or what benefit amount is payable to you.

§ 404.721 Evidence to presume a person is dead.

If you cannot prove the person is dead but evidence of death is needed, we will presume he or she died at a certain time if you give us the following evidence:

(a) A certified copy of, or extract from, an official report or finding by an agency or department of the United States that a missing person is presumed to be dead as set out in Federal law (5 U.S.C. 5665). Unless we have other evidence showing an actual date of death, we will use the date he or she was reported missing as the date of death.

(b) Signed statements by those in a position to know and other records which show that the person has been absent from his or her residence and has not been heard from for at least 7 years. If the presumption of death is not rebutted pursuant to §404.722, we will use as the person’s date of death either the date he or she left home, the date ending the 7 year period, or some other date depending upon what the evidence shows is the most likely date of death.

(c) If you are applying for benefits as the insured person’s grandchild or stepgrandchild but the evidence does not identify a parent, we will presume the parent died in the first month in