Delayed Certificates Can Take Time—Ciaccio

Persons born in Louisiana who do not have a birth certificate and wish to obtain a delayed birth certificate for proof of age must apply at the Louisiana Bureau of Vital Records.

Applicants for the delayed birth certificate will be asked to fill out an "Application for Certified Copy of Record," which includes birth data, parents' names and marriage information, and pay a fee of $1 to have the records researched.

If no record of birth for the applicant is found, then the applicant will be asked to fill out a "Delayed Certificate of Birth" and attach three documents as evidence of the birth date.

ADVISES CHECKS WITH SS

Anthony Ciaccio, director of the Division of Public Health Statistics, stated that persons wishing to establish proof of age to qualify for Medicare benefits should not apply for a delayed birth certificate but should instead work through the Social Security administration.

Delayed birth certificates sometimes take as much as a year to obtain, he said, and once the records are filed with the department he is not at liberty to make them available to the Social Security administration, should they wish to consult them.

Delayed birth certificates are sometimes not accepted as adequate proof of age by the United States government, he pointed out, even though it is possible sometimes for the applicant to obtain a delayed birth certificate within a matter of days.

The recording of birth dates did not become mandatory in Louisiana until 1914, and many persons born prior to that time may wish to obtain delayed birth certificates for proof of age in applying for Medicare and for other reasons.

Spokesmen for the Social Security Administration in New Orleans confirmed that a delayed birth certificate is not necessarily the best document to use as proof of age when applying for Medicare. An original birth certificate or baptismal record is not available.

OTHER DOCUMENTS

Documents other than an original birth certificate or a baptismal record that will be accepted as proof of age in applying for Medicare include:

An early school record established before applicant was age 11.

A U.S. Census Record for the first census after birth.

A "Delayed Certificate of Birth" if the original record has been destroyed.

The 1890 Census records were destroyed by fire.

AN APPLICANT for Medicare who does not have an original birth certificate or baptismal record may establish his or her birth date through a U.S. Census Record. This form may be obtained through the local Social Security office or by writing to the Bureau of Census, Pittsburg, Kan.

The requirements will not prevent anyone from filing a claim.