

Polish Genealogical Society of America



Polish Letter Writing Guide

Polish genealogical research often requires writing to Poland for information. This is especially true when the Genealogical Library does not have records for the locality where your ancestor lived or when the microfilmed records at the library do not cover the time period you need.

In order to get information from local parishes, you must write directly to the parish. When writing to local parishes, it is best to write in Polish. All Polish state archives can be reached by writing in English to the Directorate of State Archives. You can also get information from local civil records offices by writing in English to the Directorate of State Archives. The Directorate will forward your request. If you wish to write directly to the local civil records office, you should write in Polish.

If you need to write a letter in Polish, use this Letter-Writing Guide. Read the sentences in English and choose those that best express what you want to say. Be sure your sentences are consistent and fit logically together. It is best not to ask for too much at once (one or two items, particularly in your first letter). Be sure to give your own return address.

How to address your letter

Local parish:	Catholic: Parafia Rzymsko-Katolicka Orthodox: Parafia Prawosławna Lutheran: Parafia Ewangelicko-Augsburska [Post Code*] [Town], woj. [Province*] POLAN D	Local Civil Records Office: Urząd Stanu Cywilnego [Post Code*] [Town], woj. [Province**] POLAND
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* Use the Post Code (ZIP) if you have it; otherwise make sure that you include the województwo [Province].
The Post Code can be obtained from the Oficjalny Spis Poczтовых Numerów Adresowych.

**To determine the Province [województwo] use the latest administration map of the Polish Republic.

<i>Examples:</i>	Parafia Rzymsko-Katolicka 36-140 Sokołów Małopolska POLAND	<i>or</i>	Parafia Rzymsko-Katolicka Sokołów Małopolska woj. Rzeszów POLAND
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Remember, if you address your letter to a parish or local records office, you must write the letter in Polish.

Directorate of State Archives:	Naczelną Dyrekcją Archiwów Państwowych ul. Długa 6, skr. poczt. 1005 00-950 Warszawa POLAND
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You may write in English to the Directorate of State Archives and your request will be forwarded to the appropriate local civil records office.

How to send Money

This Letter-Writing Guide includes several sentences regarding payment or the sending of money. When writing to the Directorate of State Archives or to the local civil records office, do not send money. They will bill you for their services which can be quite expensive. When writing to a local parish you may send money, if you wish. A donation of \$10 or \$20 is appropriate. The safest way to send money is in the form of a New York bank draft that you can obtain at your local bank. Some researchers send cash. If you do not feel comfortable sending money through the mail you may indicate your desire to make a donation and ask how they would like to receive it. Money should not be sent to parishes as payment, but always as a donation.

Names of months: (Dates are written day-month-year e.g., 21. marca 1885 r.)

January	stycznia	May	maja	September	wrzesnia
February	lutego	June	czerwca	October	października
March	marca	July	lipca	November	listopada
April	kwietnia	August	sierpnia	December	grudnia

Greetings:	Dear sir,	Szanowny Pan,	[Civil Records Official]
	Dear Father,	Drogi Księżę,	[Catholic or Orthodox]
	Reverend Priest,	Szanowny Księżę	[Catholic or Orthodox]
	Dear Pastor,	Drogi Pastorze,	[Protestant]

General form to be used with the specific information forms:

I live in the U.S.A. and am preparing a history of my ancestors who came from Poland. I would appreciate receiving any help you may be able to give me with this project.

The information on the enclosed form (forms) is all the data about this individual (family) that I have. Please send me the information you have in your records for this person (persons).

I thank you in advance for your assistance. Enclosed is \$(amount) as an offering for your parish.

Mieszkam w Stanach Zjednoczonych i pracuję nad historią swoich polskich przodków. Będę bardzo wdzięczny [or for a woman, wdzięczna] za wszelką pomoc w tej pracy.

Podaję na załączonym formularzu wszystkie dane jakie posiadam o tej osobie (rodzinie). Proszę o przesłanie mi wszystkich danych znajdujących się w aktach parafii o tej osobie (o tych osobach).

Dziękuję uprzejmie za pomoc. Załączam \$____ jako ofiarę na parafię.

Closings: **with regards,** Z wyrazami szacunku,
 respectfully, Z poważaniem,

My address:

Mój adres:

The following may be used to thank the individual:

Thank you for the information you have sent. It has helped me very much.

Dziękuję za informacje, które mi Państwo przesłaliście. Bardzo mi one pomogły.

The Genealogical Library.
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