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## Biographical Form Instructions

Thank you for your interest in helping document the lives and activities of individuals associated with Iowa's Underground Railroad history through the Iowa Freedom Trail Project. Your contributions are vital to our understanding of the scope and nature of Underground Railroad activities throughout the state.

The Iowa Freedom Trail Project is an active research file at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines. The project began in 2002 when the state received funding from the National Park Service's Network to Freedom grant project to research the people and places associated with the Underground Railroad. Grant funding ended in 2013, but volunteers at the State Historical Society of Iowa have continued to research individuals associated with the Underground Railroad. This research opportunity is now available to anyone in the state of Iowa with access to historical documents and the willingness to research, regardless of ability to travel to the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa History Research Centers in Des Moines and Iowa City.

The list of individuals and places associated with Underground Railroad activities grows as researchers discover new leads. See the current [list of individuals](#) to determine who and what still needs research. Avoid any names in bold typeface, which indicates that research has already been completed.

Do you know of someone or something not on the list that should be? Contact [history.research@iowa.gov](mailto:history.research@iowa.gov) with information on the individual and we may add it to the list.

## Completing and Submitting the Biographical Form

All requested information within the application should be completed to the best of your ability and the availability of historical documentation. Fields may be left blank if no information was located for one or more sections. View a [sample of a completed biographical form](#).

Research should focus on primary sources, which provide first-hand evidence of historical events that were created at the time the event occurred, such as newspaper articles, property records, maps, photographs, church records, tax lists, letters, journals, court documents, and censuses. Information on using and citing primary sources can be found on the [Library of Congress website](#). Secondary sources, such as books, essays, or articles about the subject, may be used as additional documentation but should not be the sole focus of research. Avoid the use of Wikipedia and other similar compilations of information as a source of information.

### *Example citations:*

Doe, John. "Mr. Johnson to Build Factory in Anytown." *Anytown Chronicle*, 9 May 1883: page 4. (Accessed November 21, 2017, newspaperarchive.com.)

1860 U. S. Census, Washington County, Iowa, population schedule, page 12, G. B. Colman household; digital images, FamilySearch (<http://www.familysearch.org>, accessed November 21, 2017).

"Brig. Gen. Thomas J. McKean," *Portrait and Biographical Album of Linn County, Iowa* (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1887), pp 197 – 198.

When completed, forms may be emailed to [history.research@iowa.gov](mailto:history.research@iowa.gov) . All forms and the information contained become the property of the State Historical Society of Iowa. They may be accessed by other researchers during open hours at the [Research Center at the State Historical Building in Des Moines](#).

## **Questions?**

Questions about the Iowa Freedom Trail Program, the Underground Railroad in Iowa, or filling out the biographical form can be directed to [history.research@iowa.gov](mailto:history.research@iowa.gov).