



*Teaching
Genealogists AI™*
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Puerto Rican Slave Record Research

Module 2 – Finding and Navigating the Records

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Organization: Puerto Rican Genealogy Group

Website: <https://puertoricangenealogy.org>

Date Created: 2026-02-26

Estimated Time: 30–45 minutes

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will:

- Know how the 1872 registry is organized by district and municipality
- Identify the correct film for your target municipality
- Browse digitized images efficiently without a name index

- Know the access points for both FamilySearch and the related 1859–1880 collection

Step 1: Define Your Target

Before opening any records, write down:

- The municipality (*municipio*) where your ancestor lived, or your best guess
- An approximate age or birth year range
- Any known plantation, hacienda, or community connections
- Names of relatives, especially parents

If you have no name to start with, begin with the municipality and look for surnames that later appear among free families, godparents, or agricultural laborers in civil or church records.

Step 2: Identify the Correct District

The 1872 registry is organized by district (*departamento*) and then municipality. The surviving filmed coverage includes Districts 1, 2, and 4–6. Use the table below to find your municipality.

District	Municipalities Covered	FamilySearch Film
District 1	Dorado, Naranjito, Trujillo Alto, Trujillo Bajo, San Juan	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529154?cat=177782
District 2	Arecibo, Camuy, Ciales, Hatillo, Manatí, Morovis, Quebradillas, Utuado	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529155?cat=177782
District 4 (Part 1)	Añasco, Cabo Rojo, Mayagüez	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529156?cat=177782
District 4 (Part 2)	Mayagüez, Sabana Grande, San Germán	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529157?cat=177782
District 5 (Part 1)	Adjuntas, Barros, Coamo, Guayanilla, Juana Díaz, Peñuelas, Yauco	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529158?cat=177782
District 5 (Part 2)	Barranquitas, Ponce	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529159?cat=177782
District 6 (Part 1)	Arroyo, Cidra, Guayama	https://familysearch.org/search/film/007529160?cat=177782
District 6 (Part 2)	Agua Buenas, Caguas, Cayey, Cidra, Gurabo, Hato Grande (San	

District	Municipalities Covered	FamilySearch Film
	Lorenzo), Sabana del Palmar (Comerío), Salinas	https://familysearch.org/ search/film/007529161? cat=177782

Note: District 3 is not in the surviving filmed coverage.

Step 3: Browse the Digitized Images

The 1872 registry films are not name-indexed. You will need to browse them like a book.

Browsing strategy:

1. Open the correct film link in FamilySearch (free account required)
2. Use thumbnail view to scan for municipality heading or divider pages
3. Locate the section for your target town
4. Scan page by page for the person or owner you are researching

Tips:

- Entries within a municipality are often grouped by owner or hacienda
 - Page margins sometimes note the owner's name as a running header
 - Look for familiar surnames even if you cannot yet read all the Spanish
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The Related 1859–1880 Collection

FamilySearch has a partially searchable collection that overlaps with the 1872 registry:

Puerto Rico, Slave Registers, 1859–1880 Collection: [https://
www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/3755445](https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/3755445)

Use this collection when you want a searchable starting point. When you find an indexed entry, pivot to the full film images for surrounding context and to identify additional unindexed individuals who appear nearby (often family members or people enslaved by the same owner).

What Is Next

In Module 3 – Extracting and Preserving Evidence, you will learn how to document what you find, build a working citation, and use the Registry Extraction Form.

[← Module 1] [Course Overview] [Module 3 →]

