



*Teaching
Genealogists AI™*
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Genealogical Spanish Glossary

Puerto Rican Genealogy Group

Website: <https://puertoricangenealogy.org>

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Common Spanish terms found in Puerto Rican genealogical records — civil registration, church records, census enumerations, and notarial documents.

Vital Record Terms

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
acta de nacimiento	birth certificate	civil registration, 1885–present
partida de bautismo	baptismal record	church records
acta de matrimonio	marriage certificate	civil registration
partida de matrimonio	marriage record	church records

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
acta de defunción	death certificate	civil registration
partida de entierro / de sepultura	burial record	church records
bautizo / bautismo	baptism	
matrimonio	marriage	
entierro / sepultura	burial	
velorio	wake / vigil	
folio	folio / page	location within a volume
tomo / volumen	volume	
libro	book	
fecha	date	
lugar	place	
domicilio	residence / address	
declarante	declarant / informant	
testigo	witness	
padrino	godfather	
madrina	godmother	
párroco / cura	parish priest	
juez del registro civil	civil registry judge	
legítimo/a	legitimate — born in wedlock	
ilegítimo/a / natural	illegitimate / born outside marriage	
expósito/a	foundling / abandoned child	

Relationship Terms

Spanish Term	English Meaning
esposo / marido	husband
esposa / mujer	wife
cónyuge	spouse
padre / madre	father / mother
hijo / hija	son / daughter
hermano / hermana	brother / sister
abuelo / abuela	grandfather / grandmother
bisabuelo / bisabuela	great-grandfather / great-grandmother
tatarabuelo / tatarabuela	great-great-grandfather / great-grandmother

Spanish Term	English Meaning
tío / tía	uncle / aunt
sobrino / sobrina	nephew / niece
primo / prima	cousin
cuñado / cuñada	brother-in-law / sister-in-law
suegro / suegra	father-in-law / mother-in-law
verno	son-in-law
nuera	daughter-in-law
padrino / madrina	godfather / godmother
ahijado / ahijada	godson / goddaughter
compadre / comadre	co-godparent (male / female)
viudo / viuda	widower / widow
difunto / difunta	deceased (adjective)
soltero / soltera	unmarried / single
casado / casada	married
natural de	native of / born in
vecino/a de	resident of
oriundo/a de	originally from

Occupations

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
jornalero	day laborer	most common in census records
agricultor	farmer (general)	
labrador	agricultural laborer	
hacendado	plantation / estate owner	
propietario	property owner	
comerciante	merchant / trader	
artesano	craftsman	
carpintero	carpenter	
herrero	blacksmith	
sastre	tailor	
zapatero	shoemaker	
barbero	barber	
comadrona / partera	midwife	
médico / doctor	doctor / physician	
farmacéutico	pharmacist	
maestro / maestra	teacher	

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
sacerdote / cura / párroco	priest / parish priest	
alcalde	mayor	
escribano / notario	notary	
soldado / militar	soldier / military	
esclavo / esclava	enslaved person	pre-1873 records
liberto / liberta	freed person (formerly enslaved)	post-1873
peón	unskilled laborer	
sirviente / criado/a	servant	

Locations and Administrative Terms

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
barrio	neighborhood / administrative ward	sub-division of a municipio
municipio	municipality	
parroquia	parish	
pueblo	town	
hacienda	estate / plantation	
finca	farm / rural property	
calle	street	
ayuntamiento / alcaldía	town hall	
registro civil	civil registry	
juzgado municipal	municipal court	
iglesia	church	
cementerio	cemetery	
campo	countryside	

Archive and Record Terms

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
archivo	archive	
padrón	household census register	Spanish-era
censo	census	
registro	registry / record	
protocolo notarial	notarial record	

Spanish Term	English Meaning	Notes
testamento	will / testament	
inventario	inventory of estate	
partición	estate division among heirs	
expediente	dossier / case file	
legajo	bundle of documents	
índice	index	
copia certificada	certified copy	
marginal	marginal note	

Common Abbreviations in Handwritten Records

Abbreviation	Full Term	Meaning
h.l. / h.n.	hijo legítimo / hijo natural	legitimate / natural child
v° de	vecino/a de	resident of
nat. de	natural de	native of
d° / dho	dicho / dicha	said / aforementioned
q.e.p.d.	que en paz descanse	may he/she rest in peace
p.p.	por poder	by proxy

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