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FOR NEW YORK

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DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES
FOR NEW YORK

Collection Management Policies

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DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE
& PRESERVATION SERVICES

FOR NEW YORK

Website: dhpsny.org



Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York is a five year initiative to deliver collections-related training, preservation surveys, archival assessments, and other services to the historical records community in New York.



COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Why Policies and Procedures?

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Support Standards / Best Practices

Formalize

Consistency

Guidance

Assign Responsibility



SAA Code of Ethics for Archivists

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“...Archives are created by a wide array of groups and provide evidence of the full range of human experience. Archivists endeavor to ensure that those materials entrusted to their care will be **accessible** over time as evidence of human activity and social organization. Archivists embrace principles that foster the **transparency** of their actions and that inspire confidence in the profession. A distinct body of ethical norms helps archivists navigate the complex situations and issues that can arise in the course of their work...”

<http://archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics>

International Council of Museum (ICOM) Code of Ethics

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Collections Care:

“The museum should establish and apply policies to ensure that its collections (both permanent and temporary) and associated information, properly recorded, are available for current use and will be passed on to future generations in as good and safe a condition as practicable, having regard to current knowledge and resources.”

Policy or Procedure?

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Concept	Policy	Procedure
Principles	General guidelines that regulate the institution's activities	Detailed method for performing an action
	Standard for exercising good judgment	Steps for implementing a standard as a professional practice
	Guidelines for decision-making	Protocol to follow when implementing the policy
Functions	Who, what, why	How
	Rule, standard, philosophy, guideline	Instruction, protocol, steps

Policy or Procedure?

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Concept	Policy	Procedure
Purpose	Broad philosophical statement; justification for decisions	Succinct directions for accomplishing a specific task
	What the rule is; why the rule exists; justification for the rule	Action steps necessary for implementing the rule
Scope and Content	When it applies	Conditions for action and alternatives
	Whom it covers	Procedural function. If this → then
	How to get help or interpretation	Instruction, protocol, steps, Direction
	Responsibility and Enforcement	Warnings; consequences

Getting Started

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- Assemble policy teams
- Determine necessary policies
- Review literature and samples





Collections Management Policy

Collections Management Policy

What is a Collections Management Policy (CMP)?

A series of policies that govern what a museum does to grow and care for their collections and make them available to the public.

Includes:

- Mission Statement/Statement of Purpose
- Acquisition and Accession
- Deaccession and Disposal
- Documentation
- Loans and Temporary Custody
- Collections Care
- Access and Use
- Risk management
- Intellectual Property
- Ethics

Collections Management Policy

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Purpose:

- Articulates professional standards
- Serves as a guide for staff
- Describes the relationship among the organization and its collections, its authorities and staff, and the outside world
- Provides legal and ethical framework

Collections Management Policy

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6 Basic Principles

- All acquisitions are properly documented
- Collections are stabilized for long term storage and housed in a proper environment
- Each specific collection element is put in a specific place
- Collections are inventoried and monitored regularly
- Collection storage environment is monitored regularly
- All collection related activities and monitoring are documented

Introductory Sections

Mission Statement

Purpose

Scope of Collections

Vision

History

Stewardship



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Mission Statement

Mission Statement

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A mission statement should:

- **Communicate identity**
- **Define the purpose of the institution**
- **State the audience**
- **Role and responsibility of the institution**



Mission Statement: Musical Box Society International

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The mission of the Society is to:

- Foster a genuine public interest in the collection, restoration, preservation and creation of automatic music instruments.
- Publish information about automatic music instruments.
- Cooperate with individuals and other organizations in exhibiting automatic music for the education of the general public.
- Collect and preserve for posterity examples of automatic music instruments and historical and current information about automatic music including books, pamphlets, catalogs, manuscripts, films, tapes and other recordings and make such information accessible to museums, educational institutions, students and collectors.
- Disseminate information regarding the mechanism and the repair of automatic music instruments.

For purposes of this statement, automatic music instruments include musical boxes (instruments which play music via the plucking of teeth on a tuned steel comb through various mechanisms); musical automata; orchestrions; player and reproducing pianos and organs; phonographs; and self-playing stringed, wind, and percussion instruments of any kind.

Short Mission Statements

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- “The purpose of our museum is to preserve for public benefit the natural, historical, and artistic heritage of our region.”
- “The purpose of our institution is to increase understanding and appreciation of the particular heritage of our (ethnic, racial, or religious) group.”
- “The purpose of our institution is to elucidate the history of our community from the time of original inhabitants to the present.”

■ *Taken from George, Gerald and Cindy Sherrell-Leo, Starting Right: A Basic Guide to Museum Planning.*

- “The New York State Archives leads efforts, on behalf of all New Yorkers, to manage, preserve, ensure open access to, and promote the wide use of, records that support information needs and document the history, governments, events and peoples of our State.”
- “The objectives of the Dryden Town Historical Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of the Town of Dryden in the State of New York.”

■ *Real world examples*

Introductory Sections

Statement of Purpose

- Describes the mission of the institution
- Summarizes the goals of the collections management policy

“This Collections Management Policy is intended as a public statement of the principles and procedures which underpin all aspects of collection care. The policy provides guidelines for the HMRC’s archival collections-related activities, insuring that these activities meet high professional standards. The HMRC collections policy is a public statement of HMRC’s commitment to care for and manage its collections properly.”

- Houston Metropolitan Research Center

Introductory Sections

Scope of Collections

- **GEOGRAPHY** – regional area of interest.
- **SUBJECT** – subject area of interest.
- **TIME** – chronological period of interest.
- **THEME** – subject related themes (e.g. voting rights, medical developments, community history) that cut across time and geography.
- **USE** – intended use of collections; it is generally accepted that collection material will not be collected if it will not be used.

Introductory Sections

Statement of Authority

- Who is responsible for making collections management decisions
- Who is responsible for implementing collections-related policies
- Names the individual or groups involved
- Summarizes their roles regarding the collections

Introductory Sections

Statement of Authority

Howland Stone Store Museum (excerpt)

II. Collections Committee

Committee Charge/Purpose

The Collections Committee will monitor the Collections Committee Policy including the scope and emphasis of current collections:

1. monitor collection care, storage, cataloging, use and maintenance;
2. work with the Board of Trustees on de-accessioning inappropriate items;
3. make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on any special collections management issues;
4. recommend expenditures related to oversight of the collection.

http://www.howlandstonestore.org/HSSM_Collections_Management_Policy.pdf



Acquisition & Accessions

Acquisition

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- n. ~ Materials received by a repository as a unit; an accession.
- - v. ~ 2. To take legal and physical custody of a group of records or other materials and formally document their receipt. - 3. To document the transfer of records.

Accession

- n. ~ 1. Materials physically and legally transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time; an acquisition.
- - v. ~ 2. To take legal and physical custody of a group of records or other materials and to formally document their receipt.

Acquisition Policy

- Guides staff and persons interested in donating their records or papers
- Outlines conditions or terms that affect the acquisition or materials
- Defines who makes acquisition decisions
- States collections categories

Acquisition Policy

Acquisitions may be made by:

- ☐ Gift
- ☐ Bequest
- ☐ Purchase
- ☐ Field collections
- ☐ Conversion/Found in collections
- ☐ Transfer from within the institution

Acquisition Policy

The Mint Museum

Internal collections: Internal collections will be added to the Mint Museum Archives by means of deposits according to the organization's established records management program. The records management system for the museum facilitates the management of active records and the transfer of inactive ones to the Archives. Retention and disposition schedules created for each department clarify the record keeping responsibilities and ensure that valuable records are saved and outdated files with no archival value are routinely destroyed or discarded. Standards were developed in collaboration with museum staff and legal counsel in order to accommodate the administrative needs of each department and the fiscal and legal obligations of the museum. The records management process is reviewed every two years.

External collections: External collections may be added to the Mint Museum Archives by means of gift, purchase, bequest, promised gift, exchange, or abandonment, and are initially approved by the Archivist, in consultation with the Librarian and appropriate museum staff. Every potential acquisition of archival material will undergo rigorous scrutiny, with close consideration given to the following guidelines...

Deed of Gift

- This is a legal document
- Owner needs to have legal title
- Copyright information
- Clarify any restrictions
- Institution requirements and rights

“An agreement transferring title to property without an exchange of monetary compensation.”

- *SAA Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*

Accession Policy

- Formal process used to legally accept an object and to record it as part of a collection
- Creation of a permanent record
- Includes everything acquired at the same time from the same source
- Calls for a unique, identifying control number to be assigned to an object, marked on the object (if possible) and used in all documentation
- Outlines how the institution obtains custody, right or title

Accession Policy

Accession Number

“a number or code assigned to uniquely identify a group of records or materials acquired by a repository and used to line the materials to associated records.”

28	4	3	31	35	10
36	18	21	24	11	1
7	23	12	17	22	30
8	13	26	19	16	29
5	20	15	14	25	32
27	33	34	6	2	9



Deaccession & Disposal

Deaccession & Disposal

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Acceptable reasons to deaccession

- Change in collections scope
- Unable to provide proper care
- New information regarding provenance or title
- Determined to be a fake or forgery

Deaccession & Disposal

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Responsibilities and Basic Procedures

- board or collections committee approval
- outline clear title
- remove accession numbers
- retention of deaccession number

Deaccession & Disposal

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Methods of disposing of deaccessioned collections materials:

- Educational, study or use collections
- Exhibition prop
- Transfer to another institution
- Sale
- Physical destruction



Deaccession & Disposal

“ Proceeds from the sale of nonliving collections are to be used consistent with the established standards of the institution's discipline, but in no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections.”

AAM Code of Ethics for Museums

Abandoned Property

<http://www2.archivists.org/groups/acquisitions-appraisal-section/abandoned-property-project>

Consolidated Laws New York, Education Law, Part 1, Section 233-AA, Article 5

The object has been at the institution for at least 10 years.

- ❖ **Known Lenders:** Letter by certified mail, with return receipt requested to the lender's last known address, response requested within 120 days, second notice sent, 120 days later becomes property of the institution.
- ❖ **Unknown Lenders:** Publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the institution's county, after 180 days posted online with the Comptroller, 210 days later becomes property of the institution.
- ❖ **Unsolicited Property:** If items were left at the institution after 1/1/2009, they become property of the institution if no claims are made within 90 days.

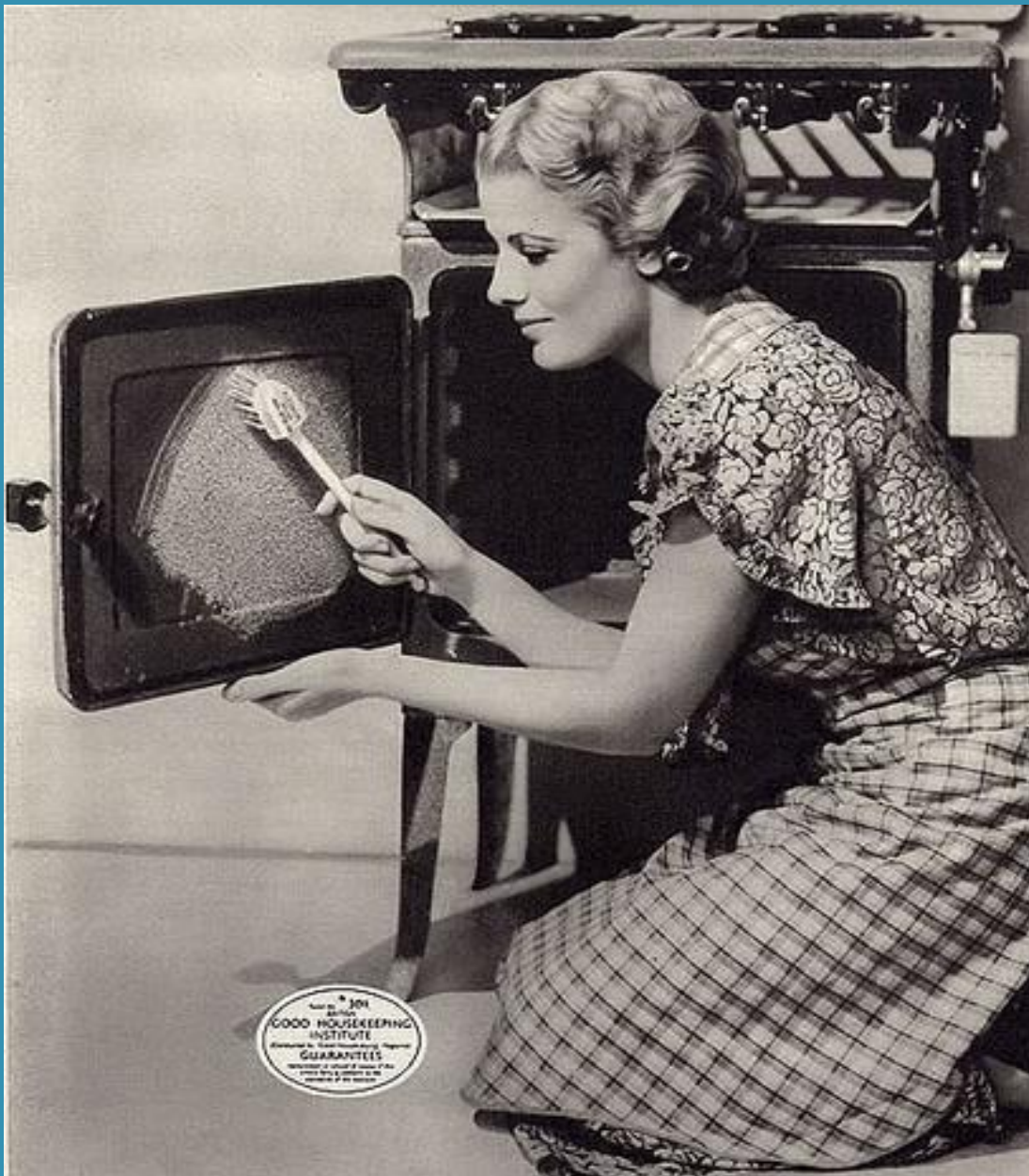
Loan Policy

Incoming Loans

- Why materials may be borrowed
- Acceptable uses for borrowed materials
- Who may request materials to borrow
- Length of time materials may be borrowed
- Emergency conservation of damaged borrowed materials
- Packing, transportation and insurance
- Loan documentation

Outgoing Loans

- To whom the institution will make loans
- Acceptable purposes for loaned materials
- Who is responsible for approving and monitoring outgoing loans
- Length of loan
- Emergency conservation of damaged loaned materials
- Packing, transportation and insurance
- Restricting some collections materials from all loans
- Loan documentation
- Requirements of borrower



Collections Care

Collections Care

Purpose of Policy

- Establishes minimum standards for collections storage and exhibition environments
- Establishes a system of preventive conservation for collection
- Establishes intervals for collection inventories
- Allows for allocation of resources

Components

- Staff responsibility
- Preventive conservation
- Handling
- Conservation treatment
- Packing and shipping
- Storage environments
- Pest control
- Off-site storage
- Collections inventories

Inventory

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- ❖ Transmittal inventory – An inventory of a gift or loan being transmitted to the museum
- ❖ Time-based (i.e. annual or seasonal) inventory
- ❖ Random sample or spot inventory
- ❖ Section inventory or inventory of one collection, one physical area, or one exhibit
- ❖ Complete wall-to-wall inventory

This is a bit different from a collection survey – in which you might be determining preservation needs, processing priorities, reformatting priorities, etc.





Housekeeping Policy

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Purpose:

- To inspect condition and housing of historic material.
- To control or remove dust, soil, cobwebs, dead insects and other debris.
- To maintain clean floors, ceilings, walls, windows, and woodwork surfaces.
- To identify and report current or potential problems and damage. Corrective action can be taken before problem worsens or has damaging effects on collections or the building.

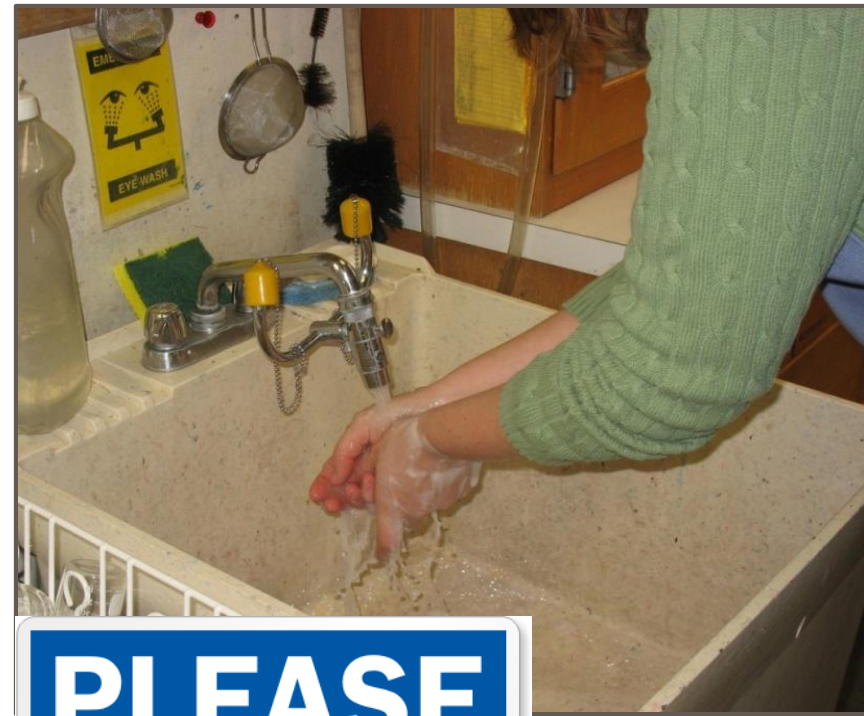
Procedure:

- Select a single room or area to clean.
- Inspect all surfaces and all historic objects.
- Plan housekeeping tasks, movement of objects, and equipment needed.
- Clean and put away equipment and supplies.

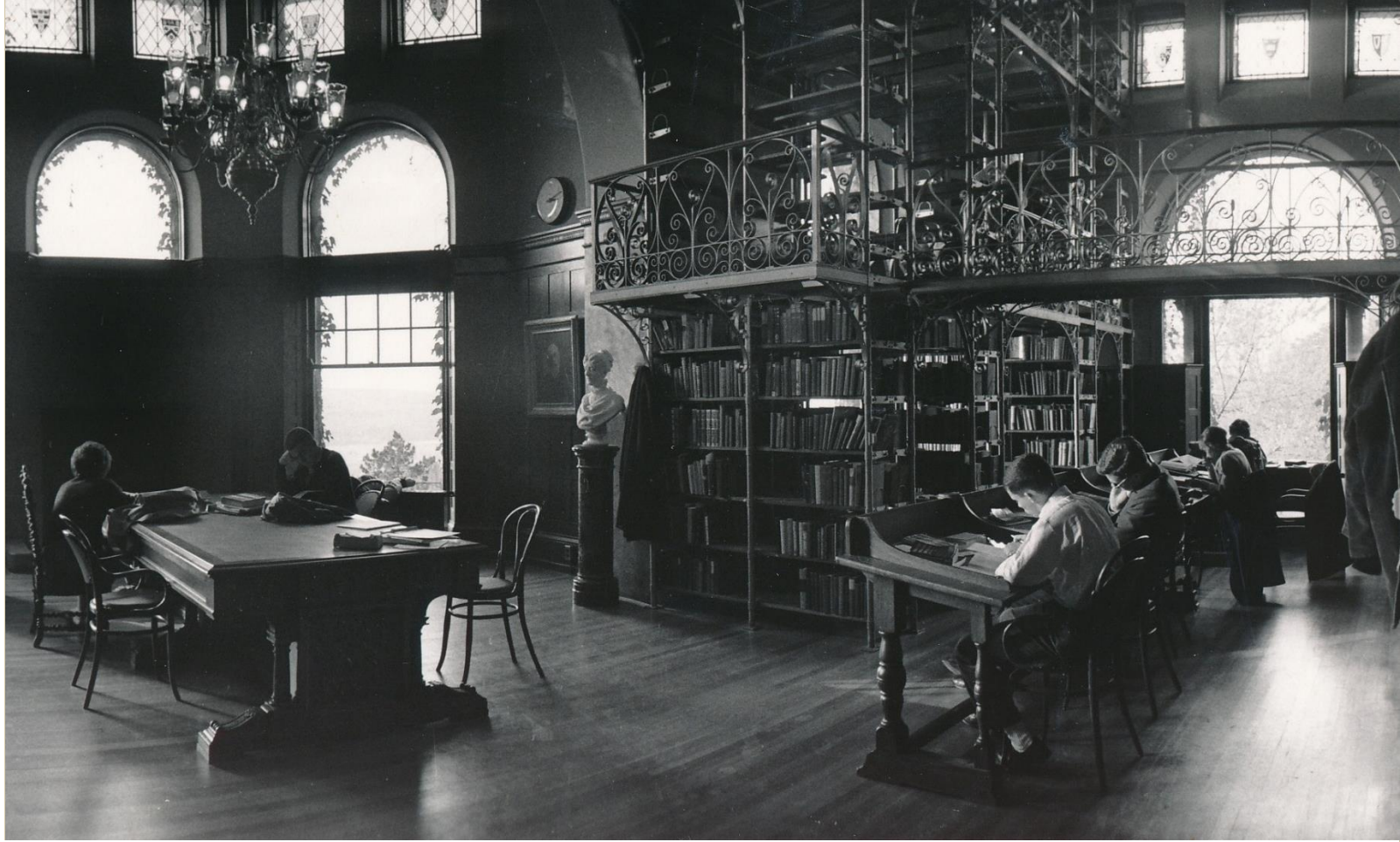
Handling Guidelines

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- Who may handle collections materials
- Necessary training
- What materials may be used around collections
- To use or not to use gloves
- Transportation and moving collection material
- Mounts for transport/use
- When materials will be restricted



PLEASE
WASH YOUR
HANDS



Access Policy

Access & Use

Can include:

- Who may have access
- What collections/records can be used
- How collections can be accessed
- Acceptable uses for collections
- Any restrictions

Access Policy



Issues to consider:

- Physical facilities
- Staffing
- Funding and other resources
- Restrictions by donors or internal limits
- Types of collections materials
- Types of users

Access Policy

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- Addresses procedures for visiting an institution and accessing its information and/or collections
- Outlines rules for whom, and under which terms and circumstances, may use the collections.

Access to records in the New York State Archives

The mission of the New York State Archives is to preserve and ensure access to those records created by state government that have been determined to have enduring value...

The law also authorizes the State Archives to acquire and make available the records of local government entities as well as public benefit corporations. Upon transfer of official custody, the State Archives assumes responsibility for administering access to those records.

Most records held by the State Archives are open to research to the public without access restrictions. Approximately two thirds of the State Archives 6,000 have record series no legal access restrictions. Less than 5 percent have access restrictions.

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Risk Management Policy

Includes:

- Physical defenses
- Alarm systems
- Fire detection and suppression
- Collections security
- Emergency preparedness
- Climate control
- Pest management
- Outside contractors
- Inventories

Risk Management Policy

Insurance

- ❑ Insurance on owed or borrowed materials
- ❑ Responsibility for maintaining policy
- ❑ Records and documentation for claims
- ❑ Reporting and recording loss or damage
- ❑ What will and will not be insured

Environmental Management Policy

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- Environmental management team
- System capabilities
- Establish set points
- Maintenance
- Monitoring methods and protocols
- System adjustments
- Different parameters for different materials

Environmental Management Policy

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Monitoring:

- ▣ Room Inspection
- ▣ Ceilings
- ▣ Light Fixtures
- ▣ Walls
- ▣ Vent Grilles
- ▣ Window Blinds and Shades
- ▣ Window Panes
- ▣ Window Coverings and Bed Hangings
- ▣ Woodwork
- ▣ Hardware
- ▣ Fireplaces
- ▣ Floors
- ▣ Floor Coverings
- ▣ Visitor and Door Mats

Environmental Management Policy

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	Recommended Goal	Recommended Range
Temperature	59 - 77°F	
Relative Humidity	45 - 55%	+/- 5%

Location	lux	UV content (microwatts/ lumen)
Storage	10 – 50 lux	< 0
Reading/ Work Space	330 – 660 lux	< 0 - 75
Display/ Exhibitions	55 – 165 lux	< 0 - 20



Integrated Pest Management Policy

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- Prevention
 - ▣ Take necessary measures to prevent the need to use chemical extermination
 - Facilities, Environment, Housekeeping
- Early Detection
 - ▣ Consistent monitoring and inspection
- Elimination
 - ▣ Take necessary actions to eliminate pests, preferably through non-chemical means





Rights and Reproductions

Rights & Reproductions

Intellectual Property

Some policy considerations:

- Establish that the institution owns the copyright of the requested object, image or document
- Request must be made in writing
- Single use or multiple use permitted
- Required caption and credit to the institution
- Institution receives copies of any printed materials
- Collect fees for all users; for-profit users only; or do not charge reproduction fee for any users
- Determine responsibility for obtaining copyright for reproduction if not owned by institution

Rights and Reproductions

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- Copyright status of materials in the collections
- Policies and procedures regarding permissions for use and reproduction of collections
 - ▣ Request must be made in writing
 - ▣ One-time vs. multiple use
 - ▣ Fair use vs. commercial use
 - ▣ Required caption and credit to the institution
 - ▣ Fees
 - ▣ Responsibility for obtaining copyright for reproduction if not owned by institution.
 - “The Huntington Library does not require that researchers request permission to quote from or publish images of this material, nor does it charge fees for such activities. The responsibility for identifying the copyright holder, if there is one, and obtaining permission rests with the researcher.”
- Institution’s obligation and commitment to respect and adhere to copyright, fair use, and other intellectual property rights laws

Rights and Reproductions

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- Copyright Genie
<http://librarycopyright.net/resources/genie>
- Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States
<http://copyright.cornell.edu/resources/publicdomain.cfm>
- Columbia University Copyright Advisory Office
<http://copyright.columbia.edu/copyright>
- Stanford University Copyright & Fair Use Center
<http://fairuse.stanford.edu>
- Hirtle, Peter B., Emily Hudson, and Andrew T. Kenyon. *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for U.S. Libraries, Archives, and Museums*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2009.
[http://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/14142/2/Hirtle-Copyright final RGB lowres-cover1.pdf](http://ecommons.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/14142/2/Hirtle-Copyright%20final%20RGB%20lowres-cover1.pdf)



Not exactly policies...

Collections Management Policy

Documentation

Types of Records

- ❑ Entry records
- ❑ Accession records
- ❑ Catalog records
- ❑ Finding aids
- ❑ Location records
- ❑ Loan records
- ❑ Marking and labeling
- ❑ Validation/ownership records (deeds of gift, bills of sale)
- ❑ Donor information
- ❑ Use records (condition, exhibition, conservation)
- ❑ Inventories

Collections Management Policy

Documentation

- ❑ Types of records to be kept
- ❑ How long will the information be retained
- ❑ Kinds of information recorded
- ❑ Who is responsible for keeping the records
- ❑ How often the documentation will be updated
- ❑ How frequently and where documentation will be duplicated and retained off-site.

Policy Review

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Policy revisions are needed when:

- The policy is inadequate
- The policy no longer accomplishes its intended purpose
- Professional standards change
- New professional standards are recognized
- The institution's mission changes
- The institution changes its collections plan
- The institution initiates new programs or activities that raise new policy issues

An annual review by collections staff is recommended in the absence of a formal review process

Resources

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Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, ***Collections Conundrums: Solving Collections Management Mysteries***. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2007.

Reibel, Daniel B., ***Registration Methods for the Small Museum***, Fourth Edition, Lanham, MD: Alta Mira Press, 2008.

Simmons, John E., ***Things Great and Small, Collections Management Policies***, Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2006.

Delaware Connecting to Collections Policy Examples

<http://libraries.delaware.gov/services/ctcpolicies.shtml>

Ohio Connecting to Collections Model Preservation Policies

<http://www.ohiomemory.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16007coll7>

Society of Georgia Archivists, Forms Forum

<http://www.soga.org/resource/forms>



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