

Repository Collection Policy – Template

Based off American Alliance of Museums *Developing a Collections Management Policy* (2012)

Mission

[State the mission of the repository and what it hopes to accomplish with its collections, such as research opportunities for students or researchers, and preserving collections]

Vision

[What you and others wish to see happen with the repository and collections, including current and future visions]

Statement of Authority

[Who manages the collections? Who assists with the collections? Where are they housed? Who is the governing body associated with the repository institution and collections? Answering these questions provides a line of authority and responsibility for the repository's collections, state-owned collections, and federal-owned collections]

Code of Ethics

[Both institutions and organizations follow different (or similar) ethics that are associated with collections, and historical and prehistoric materials – whether that be archival, archaeological, ethnographic, paleontological, environmental, or other applicable materials; these ethics can be searched online, with the Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics (June 2012) by the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) serving as a good outline for applicable ethics to an institution]

Scope of Collections

[Here is where you will state what the purpose of your institution is in regard to the collections you are currently housing, including archives, archaeological collections, museum collections, and associated documents or materials, as well as a brief overview of what is contained in your collections, which will be expanded upon in the next section]

Types of Collections

[This provides you the opportunity to state the collections you have, including archival or library collections, education (collections used for educational purposes), exhibition (collections used for exhibits), permanent (collections in the institution's care that will remain in their care), research (collections used by students or researchers for research), or collections held under a repository or management agreement (i.e., state- or federal-owned collections); also include how these collections are used, acquired, and cared for – a brief explanation will do, but enough to describe what is in your care]

Acquisitions/Accessioning

[State your policy for acquiring collections and accessioning them, legally adding them to an institution's database or collections; here, institutions will outline the criteria and decision-making process, and involved institution parties involved with acquiring and accessioning collections]

Deaccessioning/Disposal

[State your policy and reasoning behind deaccessioning/disposing of collections or materials, this will usually involve a collection not applying to an institution's mission, allowing the institution to deaccession and transfer collections to an institution that could make use of these collections, or disposing of these collection with proper reasoning or criteria met; also outline the methods of deaccessioning/disposal from databases, removing the physical collection, and documentation of the process]

Loans

[Outline how potential borrowers of institutional collections may loan out certain collections and which collections are available for loan – this will usually include a Loan Agreement Form (these can either be internal for research, teaching, or exhibition, or external for the same reasons); Condition Reports are also a good idea to document the collection/material before and after the loaning period]

Conservation/Care

[What do the rooms/areas where collections are stored look like? What is the environmental control for the room? Are there pest control methods? How do you conserve the collections or materials? How do volunteers and staff handle the artifacts? Providing this information gives a base line for storing and caring for collections in the institution]

Insurance and Risk Management

[Does the institution have insurance on the collections? What is the insurance policy for the collections? Fire detection and fire suppression? Security? Other risk management in the storage facilities? Mentioning an Emergency Response Plan here will also help and can provide more details on the brief summary provided here for risk management]

Documentation, Collection Records, Inventories, Objects in Custody, and Conservation/Care

[What documentation and records are there for collections? Are they physical and where they stored? Or are they on a database? Also, how will the institution handle objects that are abandoned or do not have a clear connection to a collection? How will the institution care and conserve objects and collections? This section provides further information on the collection and how the institution handles them, and the information associated with them]

Access

[Who has access to these collections and their records? Are they available to the public or researchers? Are they available for educational purposes? States who handles the collections for the institution/repository and who, outside of the institution/repository, is allowed to handle them]

Appraisals

[Appraisals can help with identifying parts of collection and insurance policies for the collections; outline who can appraise the collections and the process of bringing in a specialist for appraisal, if needed]

Legal and Ethical Considerations

[A brief examination of laws that pertain to holding collections and objects may be helpful for this section, such as NAGPRA (1990), NHPA and Section 106, and local or state regulations; for a brief summary of some of these laws, they refer to objects or artifacts that are: stolen, looted or reappropriated art, archaeological material removed from federally owned or controlled land, and issues relating to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA); also a place to state that no selling of collections or objects will be considered or carried out for profit]

Intellectual Property

[Addresses copyright and intellectual property laws that pertain to certain objects or collections, being aware of said laws, and how the institution will handle accepting (or not accepting) these objects or collections]

Review/Revision

[A section identifying when and why updates may need to be applied to an institution's collection management policy, and who will carry out this process of review and revision]

Glossary

[A brief glossary of terms and vocabulary used in the collections management policy for staff, volunteers, and board members to review]

For State Collections: *Section 9 (2017)*

Section 9 of the Historical, Prehistorical, and Archaeological Resources Act of the State of Colorado provides rules and procedures for housing State Collections by a State Repository (note that Section 9 is available for review at historycolorado.org under “State-Approved Museums and Curatorial Repositories”). Below is listed a summary of Section 9 and should be considered or referred to before any memorandum, agreement, or consideration to house a State Collection. What your institution plans to do with State Collections, whether current or future, should be stated within your Collection Policy. When the next chance to update your Collection Policy appears, any addition of a State Collection (in general) should be stated and addressed accordingly. Section 9 details this process, but here is a condensed guide on what needs to be considered when preparing for a State Collection (note that State Collections WILL BE held in perpetuity – pay attention to this in any contract, memorandum, or agreement; *be prepared for this*):

State Repository Curation:

- Colorado owns any collections (historical, prehistorical, and archaeological) from areas owned by the state or any of its political subdivisions;
- Institutions who wish to enter a partnership for State Repository-status will also be entering a collaborative partnership with the State of Colorado in interpreting, preserving, and education (if applicable) of these collections;
- These collections, unlike Federal Collections, must be accessible to the public and available free of charge for study by qualified students and researchers, this includes:
 - Having a relevant insurance policy relating to the institution regarding fine art or material culture, or acknowledging that State-Owned collections are covered for liability from any loss or damage, as they are state property;
 - Intent-to-Curate agreements by State Repositories to third-party researchers must have their agreement language approved by the State Archaeologist or his/her staff;
 - Within 10 days refer all written or oral transfers or repatriations of a state collection to the State Archaeologist of Colorado;
 - DO NOT release any location information on the Collection to any third party, except to qualified researchers or receiving written permission from the State Archaeologist of Colorado;
 - Be open and subject to inspection by the State Archaeologist or his/her designee at least once every three years;
 - Accept State Collections related to specific regional or local area guided by these rules and the State Repository’s Collection Management Policy;

- Annually report the State Collections condition, insurance policy changes, loan agreement status, and “any other tracking requirement methods adopted by the society and the Office of the State Archaeologist”
- Properly maintain State of Colorado property associated with the care of the State Collection
- Maintain proper storage practices, such as acid-free storage or packaging
- Must receive written permission from the State Archaeologist to: repatriate, not sell, transfer, assign, pledge, encumber, discard, or otherwise dispose of any part or the whole of the State Collection;
- Established Collections Management Policy and Emergency Management Plan

Approval for State Repositories:

- Must apply through the State Archaeologist;
- Fill out a *Request to Serve as an Approved Museum or Curatorial Repository for Held-in-Trust Collections*
- Approval of a State Repository shall be effective for 5 years, after which time the Repository may apply for renewal through Section 9 procedures
- An official deposit receipt of State Collections and agreement must be signed to acknowledge that the State Repository is in-holding of the State Collection

For Federal Collections: 36 CFR 79 (2012)

Under 36 CFR 79, the Federal Government issues and manages federal collections that of historical or archaeological significance and need to be properly processed, cataloged, and stored in a federally-recognized repository or storage facility. Below is listed a summary of 36 CFR 79 and should be considered or referred to before any memorandum, agreement, or consideration to house a Federal Collection. What your institution plans to do with the Federal Collections, whether current or future, should be stated within your Collection Policy. When the next chance to update your Collection Policy appears, any addition of a Federal Collection (in general) should be stated and addressed accordingly. 36 CFR 79 details this process, but here is a condensed guide on what needs to be considered when preparing for a Federal Collection (note that Federal Collections CAN BE held in perpetuity – pay attention to the length of storage in any contract, memorandum, or agreement; *be prepared for this possibility*):

Federal Repository Curation:

- Must be identified by a Federal Agency Official to be eligible to become a Federal Repository and hold federal collections. The Official shall review and evaluate the curatorial services of preexisting collections at eligible institutions.
- Federal Collections and Repositories may be examined and reviewed by a Federal Agency Official. If the Federal Repository does not have the ability to house preexisting Federal Collections any longer, the Federal Agency Official may:
 - Amend an existing agreement with the Repository to:
 - Outline specific actions that need to be taken to eliminate issues explained by the Official;
 - Indicate a reasonable period of time and a schedule to complete said actions;
 - Funds needed to carry out these specified actions provided by the Repository, relevant Federal Agency, or appropriate third-party funding;
 - Or remove collections from the Repository and move them to another Federal Repository
- New collections, meanwhile, can be deposited to a Repository if:
 - Said Repository can provide long-term curation for Federal Collections;
 - Curatorial polices are in line with Federal Regulations based off 36 CFR 79;
 - With Indian or Native American collections, receive a written consent of disposition from the Indian landowner and Indian tribe having jurisdiction over the lands where the collection originated from;
 - Proper processing of these materials (cleaning, sorting, labeling, cataloging, stabilizing, and packaging) has been completed and proper documentation included with the Federal Collection

- Records of depositing the Federal Collection shall be held by the Federal Agency Official, including:
 - Name and location of the Repository;
 - Copy of the contract, memorandum, agreement, other appropriate writing, and amendments between the Repository, Official, and any associated party;
 - Catalog of the contents in the Federal Collection;
 - List of any other Federal Personal Property given to the Repository as part of any agreement involved with the Collection;
 - Reports documenting inspections, inventories, and reports/investigations of loss, damage, or destruction;
 - Any permanent transfer of a Federal Collection

Memorandum, Contracts, and Agreements with Repositories:

- A brief breakdown of any document that shall be signed by Federal Officials or Agencies with a Repository to hold a Collection. This will give a preview of what to expect when entering into consideration for holding a Federal Collection:
 - Statements:
 - Identifying a collection or group of collections and any other Federal Furniture to be overturned to a Federal Repository;
 - Who owns and has jurisdiction over the Collection;
 - Work to be performed by the Repository;
 - Responsibilities of the Federal Official(s) or Agency
 - Term of the contract, memorandum, or agreement; procedures for modification, suspension, extension, and termination;
 - Costs associated with these agreements and fund or resources provided by the Official or Agency, Repository, and any associated party;
 - Special procedures and restrictions for handling, storing, inspecting, inventorying, cleaning, conserving, and exhibit the Collection;
 - Terms and conditions for making the Collection available for scientific, educational, and religious uses;
 - Instructing a restricting of access to information relating to nature, location, and character of the resource from which the Collection originated from;
 - Copies of publications relating to said Collection;
 - Any request for transfer or repatriation of the Collection shall be directed from the Repository Official to the Federal Agency Official;
 - The Repository shall not transfer, repatriate, or discard any part of the Federal Collection without written permission of the Federal Agency;
 - The Repository shall not sell the Collection;
 - The Repository shall provide curatorial services in accordance with the regulations in 36 CFR 79

- If a Collection from Indian/Tribal Land:
 - Confirmation of disposition and transfer to the Repository by Indian Landowner and Indian Tribe having jurisdiction of the land where the collection was originally from;
 - Terms and conditions requested by said Indian Landowner or Indian Tribe
 - Note: they will also state if the collection is from religious or culturally important land of an Indian Tribe that have historical or aboriginal ties to these lands; this will turn over to terms and conditions considered under other laws/statutes: 43 CFR part 7, 36 CFR 296, 18 CFR part 1312, and 32 CFR part 229 (if such is the case, make sure to overview these laws/statutes)

Repository Standards for Long-Term Curatorial Services of Federal Collections:

- Determination when the Repository is able to:
 - Accession, label, catalog, store, maintain, inventory, and conserve the Federal Collection on a long-term basis – sometimes this does mean in perpetuity, keep that in mind and read the contract, memorandum, or agreement for this;
 - Comply with:
 - Maintaining complete and accurate records, including: acquisition records; artifact inventory lists; information such as field notes, site forms, and reports; photographs, negatives, and slides; information on location, such as maps; conditional information, including conservation treatments; approved loans; inventory and inspection of records; environmental monitoring records; records on lost, deteriorated, damaged, or destroyed Government property; and deaccession, transfer, repatriation, or discard records approved by the Federal Agency Official;
 - Dedicating proper facilities, equipment, and space to properly store, study, and conserve the Collection
 - Keep the collection secure, including: meeting local electrical, fire, building, health, and safety codes; having fire detecting and suppression systems; operational intrusion detection and deterrent systems; an emergency management plan; additional security for fragile or vulnerable items; limiting and controlling access to keys, the collection, and the physical storage space; and inspection of the storage space for weaknesses in the any of the previously-stated criteria;
 - Requiring qualified museum professionals managing the collection;
 - Handling, storing, cleaning, conserving, and exhibiting the collection, considering: nature of the materials and records; protecting them from breakage and deterioration from such things as temperature, humidity, visible light, ultraviolet radiation, dust, soot, gases, mold, fungus, insects,

rodents, and general neglect; and preserving data that may be studied in future analyses;

- Storing documentation associated with the collection, such as site forms, field notes, inventories, computer disks and tapes, catalog forms, and a copy of the final report to protect them from detrimental effects;
- Inspecting for damage or deterioration of the collection;
- Conducting inventories of the materials and collection; and
- Providing access to the collection in accordance with 36 CFR 79

Other Useful Aspects of 36 CFR 79 for Federal Repositories:

- Other sections of 36 CFR 79 may provide more information on what is expected of a Federal Repository before, during, or after acquiring a Federal Collection, such as:
 - 79.10: Use of collections
 - Details using collections by the Federal Repository and what to expect from housing a Federal Collection
 - 79.11: Conduct of inspections and inventories
 - Details on how to conduct inspections or inventories of Federal Collections by a Federal Agency Official, but can still provide ideas and outlines for Federal Collection on both inspections and inventories if not yet considered by the Repository
 - Appendix A: Example of a Deed of Gift
 - Provides an example of a written-up deed of gift for Federal Agencies and Repositories
 - Appendix B: Example of a Memorandum of Understanding for Curatorial Services for a Federally-Owned Collection
 - An idea of what to expect when receiving, reading, or writing a contract, memorandum, or agreement between a Federal Agency Official, Federal Repository, and any associated parties
 - Appendix C: Example of a Short-Term Loan Agreement for a Federally-Owned Collection
 - Provides an example of a Repository loan agreement of a Federal Collection to a Borrower

Resources Cited:

American Alliance of Museums (AAM)

2012 *Developing a Collections Management Policy*.

Department of Higher Education of Colorado

2017 *Historical, Prehistorical, and Archaeological Resources Act: Section 9. Curation of Collections in Approved Museums*, electronic document.

<https://www.historycolorado.org/state-approved-museums-and-curatorial-repositories>,

accessed October 16, 2019.

National Park Service, Department of the Interior

2012 36 CFR 79 Ch. I: Part 79—*Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered
Archaeological Collections.*