

Subpart 2-Administrative Rules

Chapter 15- Agriculture and Forestry Museum Collection Policy and Procedure

100. Introduction.

100.01 Purpose of Collections Policy

The purpose of the collections policy is to provide guidelines for the Museum's collections-related activities, insuring that these activities meet high professional standards. The collections policy is a public statement of the Museum's commitment to caring for and managing its collections properly.

100.02 History, Vision, Values, and Mission

The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is a division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC), a state agency established in 1906. The Department of Agriculture and Commerce is governed by the Commissioner of Agriculture who is elected to the position every four years.

The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum was founded in 1983. Effective July 1991, the Commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce granted permission to change the name to the Jim Buck Ross Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum (hereinafter referred to as the Museum).

The vision of the Museum is to cultivate an appreciation for Mississippi agriculture and create a memorable experience that inspires the community as a whole. The values of the Museum are: enjoyable, relationships, quality, trust, and creativity.

The mission of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is to create an environment that communicates the value of past and present of Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance to the future of all people.

100.03 Types and Status of Collections:

The term *Collections* is used for all material holdings of the Museum.

Specific collection categories are defined as follows:

1. Permanent Collection:

The permanent collection consists of those significant objects which directly relate to the purpose of the Museum. Objects accessioned into the permanent collection are cataloged, documented, preserved, and managed according to prescribed procedures meeting current professional museum standards. The preservation of this collection is the responsibility of the Director of Collections and Programming.

2. Interpretive/Education Collection:

The interpretive collection consists of those expendable objects which contribute to the educational programs of the Museum and which are available directly to the public for examination. Objects in the interpretive collection are readily available or are objects that duplicate those already in the permanent collection and are not accessioned into the permanent collection. These objects are inventoried in their own separate collection and maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

3. Prop/Equipment Collection:

The prop/equipment collection consists of those expendable objects which do not relate directly to the purpose of the Museum but which contribute to and enhance the visual and educational impact of exhibits or the site. (Examples of such items: a mannequin that helps interpret an exhibit, or an older cotton gin that is used during demonstrations, or equipment that is used to maintain the site.) Objects in the prop collection are not accessioned into the permanent collection. These objects are inventoried in their own separate collection and maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming and the Director of Maintenance.

100.04. Scope of Permanent Collection:

The scope of the collection shall be artifacts of Mississippi agriculture, forestry, agricultural aviation, and objects that would be relevant to the interpretation of Small Town Mississippi. Objects acquired by the Museum shall represent material culture in Mississippi. The collection shall include documentation of individuals and objects which illustrate the significance of agriculture and its importance to Mississippi.

100.05 Delegation of Responsibility for Implementation of the Collections Policy:

The Director is responsible for supervising the proper implementation of the collections policy. The Director has delegated the day-to-day care and management of the collections to the Director of Collections and Programming. Comprehensive collections care and management procedures (accessioning, cataloging, deaccessioning, documentation, access, loans, handling, etc.) are outlined in the collections management manual maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming. Specific emergency collections care and management procedures are outlined in a disaster preparedness manual maintained by the Director of Operations.

100.06 Provision for Review and Revision of Collections Policy

The collections policy will be reviewed by the Acquisitions Committee (consisting of the Director, Director of Operations, and the Director of Collections and Programming) at least every five years and, when necessary, appropriate revisions will be presented for approval to the Collections Committee (Director, Commissioner or his/her designee, and the President of the Museum's Foundation Board or his/her designee).

The collections policy and any subsequent revisions will be reviewed by an attorney to ensure the policy is in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann. § 69-1-1 et seq.*

101. Acquisition.

101.01. Policy

The Museum may acquire objects by donation, by bequest, by purchase, or by transfer. Authority for the acquisition of objects for the permanent collection is held by the Director, the Director's designee, or the Commissioner of Agriculture upon approval of the Acquisitions Committee (consisting of the Director, Director of Operations, and the Director of Collections and Programming) at its monthly meeting.

101.02. Criteria for Acquisition

The following criteria have been established for the acquisition of objects:

1. Objects must be relevant to, and consistent with, the Museum's purposes and activities:
 - a. chiefly research,
 - b. preservation,
 - c. exhibition, and/or
 - d. interpretation.
2. The Museum must be able to provide proper care and storage for objects in keeping with professionally accepted standards.
3. It is intended that objects in the permanent collection shall remain in the collection as long as they retain their physical integrity, their authenticity, and their relevance and usefulness for the purposes and activities of the Museum.
4. The Museum and its staff shall be in full compliance with state, federal, and international laws and regulations governing the acquisition, sale, and transfer of cultural properties.
5. Title to all objects acquired for the permanent collection shall be obtained free and clear without restrictions to use or future disposition.
6. The present owner shall have a clear and verifiable title of ownership to the object and shall have obtained the object legally and ethically.
7. The Museum shall be provided with (or allowed to copy) all document and information in the present owner's possession that pertain to the historical significance and provenance of the object.
8. Acceptance of the object will not result in major expense in conservation disproportionate to its usefulness.
9. Funding for the purchase of an object will be at a fair market value affordable to the Museum and procedures for purchasing artifacts will be followed.

101.03 Procedures

All offers of objects to the Museum whether by donation, by bequest, by purchase, or by transfer should be referred to the Director of Collections and Programming. The potential donation is then reviewed by the Acquisitions Committee. If the object offered to the Museum requires temporary deposit in the Museum's custody before a decision regarding the acquisition of the object can be made, then a *Temporary Custody Receipt* should be signed by the object's owner and the Museum staff person receiving the object (the Director or Director of Collections and Programming). This receipt outlines the terms of temporary custody, the length of which cannot exceed ninety days. After study and review of the object, the Acquisitions Committee will determine whether or not to acquire the object.

If the decision is made not to acquire the object, then the Director or the Director of Collections and Programming will be responsible for returning the object to the owner, according to the terms of agreement outlined in the *Temporary Custody Receipt*, and documenting the return. If the decision is made to acquire the object, then a member of the Acquisitions Committee will initiate and complete the acquisition of the object in the following manner:

1. If the object is to be donated, an *Unconditional Gift Agreement* should be signed by the donor and a member of the Acquisitions Committee. The *Unconditional Gift Agreement* formally transfers the complete ownership and physical possession of the object to the Museum and shall be legally binding when signed and dated by both parties. A copy of the *Unconditional Gift Agreement* shall be provided to the donor, and shall be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming.
2. If the object is to be bequeathed, a copy of the pertinent section of the will should be provided by the attorney or executor and shall be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming.
3. If the object is to be purchased, the Acquisitions Committee will review all items available at the monthly committee meeting.

Criteria for determining purchases are as follows:

- a. The artifact is one-of-a-kind and a comparable artifact is not available,
- b. The artifact is relevant to Mississippi's agricultural history and will help interpret the exhibits of the Museum,
- c. The price of the artifact is fair market value,
- d. The artifact is in good condition and immediate conservation/stabilization is not necessary,
- e. Funds are readily available.

All criteria must be met when determining purchases.

Purchases over \$500.00 must have the prior approval of the Collections Committee. When an artifact is purchased, a copy of the invoice as approved and

authorized by the Director should be provided and shall be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming.

4. If the object is to be transferred from another division of the Department of Agriculture and Commerce, appropriate written documentation regarding the object should be provided by that division's Director or their designee and shall be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming.
5. If the object is to be transferred from the education or prop collection to the permanent collection, appropriate written documentation regarding the object should be provided and shall be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming.
6. A duplicate copy of records documenting the Museum's legal ownership of objects shall be maintained offsite in the MDAC downtown office for security. Records are updated annually by the Director of Collections and Programming or his/her designee.

101.04 Recordkeeping

1. **Permanent Collection:**
All objects acquired for the permanent collection are accessioned, cataloged according to the Chenhall nomenclature system, numbered, photographed, and entered into the collections management software according to professionally accepted standards. Accession and catalog records on the permanent collection are maintained in the collections office by the Director of Collections and Programming.

Duplicate accession and catalog records are maintained offsite in the MDAC downtown office for security. Records are updated annually by the Director of Collections and Programming.
2. **Interpretive Collection:**
Objects acquired for the interpretive collection (expendable objects which contribute to the educational programs of the Museum and are available directly to the public) are inventoried, but not accessioned into the permanent collection. Objects in the interpretive collection may be upgraded to permanent collection status at the discretion of the Acquisitions Committee. A list of objects is maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.
3. **Prop/Equipment Collection:**
Objects acquired for the prop/equipment collection (expendable objects not directly related to the Museum's purpose, but which contribute to and enhance the visual and educational impact of exhibits/site) are inventoried, but not accessioned into the permanent collection. Objects in the prop collection may be upgraded to permanent collection status at the discretion of the Acquisitions

Committee. A list of objects is maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* § 69-1-1 *et seq.*

102. Deaccession

102.01 Policy

The Museum has a continuing obligation to review and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of its existing collection, and in light of such evaluation, to reformulate and restate in writing its overall collections policy utilizing professionally accepted standards. Deaccessioning is the formal process used to legally and permanently remove an object from collections. When undertaking the deaccession and disposition of items, the museum proceeds with the knowledge that it holds its collections as a public trust.

The Museum has the right, carefully and judiciously, to deaccession and dispose of objects from its collection in a manner consistent with professionally accepted standards.

A written deaccession request listing the reason(s) for deaccession and recommended means of disposal must be signed by the members of the Collections Committee.

Only if the deaccession request is approved by the Collections Committee and the *Deaccession Request* form is signed by all parties, is the Museum authorized to proceed with the deaccession and disposal.

102.02 Criteria for Deaccession

An object recommended for deaccession must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. The object has ceased to have relevance and consistency with the Museum's purposes and activities.
2. The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness.
3. The object is made of hazardous materials or is actively decomposing in a manner that directly affects the condition of other objects and/or the health and safety of the Museum's staff and/or visitors.
4. The Museum is unable to continue to provide care and storage for the object in keeping with professionally accepted standards.
5. The object's care and storage are far more expensive than the value of the object as it relates to the Museum's purposes and activities.
6. The object lacks authenticity or is so lacking in documentation as to render it valueless for purposes of scholars or public education.
7. The object has been lost or stolen and remains so for ten years or more.
8. The object may be replaced with a similar object of greater significance, quality, and better condition.

9. The object is subject to legal and ethical standards such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

102.03 Procedures

A Museum staff member may recommend the deaccession of an object if, in his/her opinion, and based upon the criteria set forth in the deaccession policy, the deaccessioning of the object is beneficial to proper collections management. A *Deaccession Request Form* identifying the object, its condition, the reason(s) for deaccessioning, recommended means of disposal, and any other pertinent information necessary for evaluation of the object must be completed by the Director of Collections and Programming and submitted to the Acquisitions Committee for approval. If approval is received, the request is submitted to the Collections Committee for review and approval. No object is to be deaccessioned unless the Museum has clear and unrestricted legal title to the object, and if there are any questions regarding the title, the Museum's legal counsel will be consulted.

As a courtesy, the Director may attempt to notify the donor if the object was accessioned within the last ten years. This procedure should not be misconstrued as a request for permission to deaccession.

If a deaccessioned object is to be sold, an appraisal of the object's fair market value will be completed by a qualified, objective appraiser. Deaccessioned objects will not be sold or given, publicly or privately, to any Department of Agriculture and Commerce employees, members of the Museum's Foundation board, their families, or their representatives. Complete records will be maintained on all deaccessioned objects and their subsequent disposition.

102.04 Methods of Disposal

A deaccessioned object may be disposed of in one of the following methods:

1. Placement in the Interpretive Collection or the Prop/Equipment Collection, if appropriate.
2. Donation to an appropriate non-profit museum or scholarly or cultural institution or organization preferably within the state of Mississippi, especially if the object is from the state.
3. Repatriation to the federally recognized tribe which has established a legal claim to ownership of the object in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.
4. Sale at an advertised public auction or in the public marketplace in a manner that complies with state law and that will best protect the interests, objectives, and legal status of the Museum.
5. Destruction of the object (only if the object has deteriorated beyond usefulness and no other method of disposal is appropriate).
6. Return to the donor if it was stipulated by the donor on the Museum's

Unconditional Gift Agreement.

102.05 Use of Proceeds Derived from Deaccession/Disposal

Any funds derived from the sale of deaccessioned objects will be used solely for direct care of the collections, including but not limited to acquisitions or conservation. A line item shall be created within the nonbudgeted enterprise fund related to the museum which shall be designated for funds derived from the sale of deaccessioned objects. The Director of Operations and the Director of Collections and Programming shall maintain and track the use of these funds.

102.06. Recordkeeping

All records of deaccessioned objects will be clearly marked "Deaccessioned" and a "Deaccessioned Objects" file containing a complete record of deaccessioned objects and their subsequent disposition will be maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann. § 69-1-1 et seq.*

103. Incoming Loans.

103.01. Policy

Authority for incoming loans is shared by the Acquisitions Committee. The Museum may borrow objects from institutions and individuals for specific purposes such as exhibition and/or research. Loans of objects from individuals are limited to a time period of two years or less with the purpose of being incorporated into a temporary exhibit. Loans of objects from institutions are usually limited to a time period of five years or less, but may, under special circumstances, be loaned for a specified time period of over five years at the recommendation of the Director and with the approval of the Collections Committee. To receive such approval, the Director will provide the Collections Committee with written justification for the loan request that considers the following criteria:

1. The object is of unique quality and relevant to a specific exhibition purpose of the Museum.
2. Care and custody of the object will not exceed the Museum's resources.
3. The extended loan of the object may lead to donation of the object to the Museum.

A loan may be terminated before the agreed upon end date by either party, provided that written notice of termination is received thirty days in advance of the proposed early termination date.

In accordance with Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act (*Miss. Code Ann. 39-19-1 et seq.*), the Museum will not under any circumstances accept so-called "indefinite" or "permanent" loans.

Objects on loan are to be provided with the same professional level of care afforded objects owned by the Museum. The Museum will not knowingly accept an object on loan if the physical condition is such that the object will not be able to withstand travel to and from the Museum and/or exhibition. Lenders to the Museum shall have obtained the object legally and ethically and have a clear and verifiable title of ownership to the object.

Complete records on all incoming loans are maintained in the collections office by the Director of Collections and Programming.

103.02 Procedures

For objects on loan from institutions for two years or less, an *Incoming Loan Agreement* must be signed by the lender and a member of the Acquisitions Committee. For objects on loan from institutions for a period of over five years, an *Incoming Loan Agreement* must be signed by the lender and the Director with prior approval from the Collections Committee.

The *Incoming Loan Agreement* outlines the terms of the loan specifying the loan purpose, time period, insurance coverage, and the responsibilities of both the borrower and the lender. Copies of the *Incoming Loan Agreement* and Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act will be provided to the lender; *Incoming Loan Agreements* will be kept on file by the Director of Collections and Programming. A condition report on the borrowed object(s) will be prepared by the Director of Collections and Programming; a copy of the condition report will be provided to the lender if requested. The Museum will normally photograph borrowed objects for recordkeeping and security purposes unless instructed by the lender not to do so.

The Director of Collections and Programming will be responsible for the packing, shipping, and/or transportation, and insurance coverage for borrowed objects. The Lender is responsible for the cost of any object appraisal(s) if needed for insurance purposes. The Director of Collections and Programming will monitor all incoming loans, document the safe return of borrowed objects to lenders, and maintain complete, up-to-date records on incoming loans filed by calendar year in which the loan was accepted.

The Museum will make all reasonable efforts to return borrowed objects to the lender in accordance with the terms outlined in the *Incoming Loan Agreement* and in accordance with Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act. According to this law, the lender must notify the Museum of any change with the object's ownership or in the lender's address while the object(s) is (are) in the custody of the Museum. If the object(s) is (are) to be returned by mail or other carrier, the object(s) will be shipped to the owner to the address on record at the Museum's expense by restricted certified mail or other means that requires a receipt to be returned to the Museum certifying that the package has been received. In addition, an outgoing receipt will be sent at the time of artifact shipment for the lender's signature. Failure to sign and return said receipt shall release the Museum from any further liability for the object(s).

If the lender fails to collect the object(s) or if delivery cannot be affected after the removal date, the Museum will mail the lender at its address of record an official “notice to remove.” The Museum assumes no responsibility to search for a depositor, or listed owner, not located at that address. After making all reasonable efforts and through no fault of its own, if the Museum is unable to return the object(s) within sixty days of the termination of the loan, then the Museum will have the right to place the object(s) in storage.

If after five years such property has not been reclaimed nor has the Museum received written communication from the lender, lender’s successor, or persons authorized to represent the lender, the Museum shall terminate the loan following the provisions of Mississippi’s Museum Unclaimed Property Act. Once the provisions of Mississippi’s Museum Unclaimed Property Act have been fulfilled, title to the unclaimed loan passes to the Museum and the object(s) shall become property of the Museum.

103.02. Transfer of Loaned Artifact Ownership

If during the course of a loan, artifact ownership is transferred to a second lender, a *Notification of Transfer of Ownership* form is to be completed by the original owner, new owner, and the Museum. The completed forms with all three signatures are then dispersed to each lender and the Director of Collections and Programming. If the artifact will remain on loan, a new *Incoming Loan Agreement* will be completed, ending the previous loan agreement.

If the artifact is removed from the Museum procedures for returning the loan will follow the guidelines set forth in section **Rule 1.3, B** of this document.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* § 69-1-1 *et seq.* and *Miss. Code Ann.* §39-19-7.

104. Objects in Temporary Custody.

104.01. Policy

The Museum distinguishes between objects loaned to the Museum for exhibition and/or research and objects deposited in the temporary custody of the Museum for purposes such as identification, examination (including copying and/or photography), or proposed acquisition.

104.02 Procedures

If such temporary custody of an object is needed, then a *Temporary Custody Receipt* for a maximum period of ninety days should be signed and dated by the object's owner and a member of the Acquisitions Committee. The *Temporary Custody Receipt* will list the purpose of the deposit, the specified time period of the deposit (not to exceed ninety days), the method of return, and the terms of the custody including the provision that insurance of the object(s) is the responsibility of the depositor unless otherwise specified.

A member of the Acquisitions Committee will be responsible for returning the object(s) to the owner according to the terms of agreement of the custody and for documenting the return. All temporary custody objects will be monitored to document the safe return of such objects to owners (unless the object(s) was (were) a proposed acquisition subsequently accepted and accessioned into the collection), and maintain complete, up-to-date records on temporary custody objects filed by the calendar year in which the temporary custody was made.

The Museum will make all reasonable efforts to return borrowed objects to the Depositor in accordance with the terms outlined in the *Temporary Custody Receipt* and in accordance with Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act. According to this law, the depositor must notify the Museum of any change with the object's ownership or in the depositor's address while the object is in the custody of the Museum. If the object(s) is (are) to be returned by mail or other carrier, the object(s) will be shipped to the owner at the Museum's expense by restricted certified mail or other means that requires a receipt to be returned to the Museum certifying that the package has been received. The depositor will be sent an outgoing receipt at the time of shipment. Failure to sign and return said receipt shall release the Museum from any further liability.

If the depositor fails to collect the object(s) or if delivery cannot be affected after the removal date, the Museum will mail the depositor at its address of record an official "notice to remove." The Museum assumes no responsibility to search for a Depositor, or listed owner, not located at the address of record. After making all reasonable efforts and through no fault of its own, if the Museum is unable to return the object(s) within sixty days of the termination of the temporary custody agreement, then the Museum will have the right to place the object(s) in storage.

If after five years from the removal date noted on the face of the receipt, such property has not been reclaimed nor has the Museum received written communication from the depositor, depositor's successor, or persons authorized to represent the depositor, the Museum shall terminate the loan following the provisions of Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act. Once the provisions of Mississippi's Museum Unclaimed Property Act have been fulfilled, title to the unclaimed loan passes to the Museum and the object(s) shall become the property of the Museum.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code* § 69-1-1 *et seq.* and *Miss. Code Ann.* § 39-19-7.

105. Outgoing Loans.

105.01 Policy

The Museum may lend objects to qualified museums for specific purposes such as exhibition and/or research for a specified time period if such museums meet professional standards of collections care and management. The Museum will not under any circumstances lend objects to individuals. Outgoing loans to qualified museums will be

permitted for a period of five years or less with an option for renewal if agreeable to both parties. Fees associated with outgoing loans will be determined by the current fee schedule as set forth by the Museum. No object will be lent if its physical condition is such that the object will not be able to withstand travel and/or exhibition.

The Museum will not lend objects which are needed for exhibition and/or research purposes. Authority for outgoing loans is shared by the Director subject to the approval of the Collections Committee.

A loan may be terminated before the agreed upon end date by either party, provided that written notice of termination is received thirty days in advance of the proposed early termination date.

Records on all outgoing loans are maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

105.02 Procedures

Museums seeking to borrow an object(s) must complete a *Loan Request Form* and submit it to the Director of Collections and Programming stating the specific object(s), purpose, and time period of the proposed loan, and guaranteeing payment of all costs associated with the loan including loan fees, packing, shipping, and/or transportation, and insurance. A *General Facilities Report* will be submitted with the *Loan Request Form*. If the proposed borrower does not have a *General Facilities Report*, one can be purchased from the American Alliance of Museums and completed and returned to the Director of Collections and Programming in a timely manner. The Acquisitions Committee will review the written loan request and the completed *General Facilities Report* to determine if the proposed borrower meets professional standards. If professional standards are not met by the proposed borrower, the Director or the Director of Collections and Programming will notify the proposed borrower.

If professional standards are met by the proposed borrower and if the loan of the object(s) will not endanger its physical condition or interfere with the Museum's own exhibition and/or research needs, the Director may make a written recommendation to the Collections Committee to approve the loan. Upon approval by the Collections Committee, the Museum is authorized to proceed with the outgoing loan.

An *Outgoing Loan Agreement* must be signed by the authorized representative of the borrowing museum and the Director of Collections and Programming. The *Outgoing Loan Agreement* outlines the terms of the loan specifying the loan purpose, time period, insurance coverage, required credit line, photography restrictions, stipulations against any repair or alteration of the object without written permission of the Museum, and other terms agreed upon by both parties. Conditions for Outgoing Loan requirements including care and preservation, packing and transportation, insurance, photography and credit, loan costs, return of loans, and borrower responsibility are listed on the reverse side of the *Outgoing Loan Agreement*. The borrowing institution's *Incoming Loan Agreement*

may be used in lieu of the Outgoing Loan Agreement, if all requirements are met on the borrowing institutions form.

The *Outgoing Loan Agreement* (or its comparable) will be kept on file by the collections manager, and a copy of the *Outgoing Loan Agreement* will be provided to the borrowing museum. The borrowing museum will provide a certificate of insurance as evidence that the object(s) is adequately insured.

A condition report on the object(s) to be lent will be prepared by the Director of Collections and Programming. A copy of the condition report will be provided to the borrower if requested. The object will be photographed prior to its loan if suitable photographs documenting its condition do not already exist. The Director of Collections and Programming will be responsible for the packing, shipping, and/or transportation and insurance coverage for loaned objects. The Director of Collections and Programming will monitor all outgoing loans, document the safe return of loaned objects to the Museum, and maintain complete, up-to-date records on outgoing loans filed by the calendar year in which the loan was made.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* § 69-1-1 *et seq.*

106. Documentation of Collections.

106.01. Policy

The Museum will maintain adequate documentation both on the objects it owns and the objects that are placed in its custody. This responsibility is shared by the Director and Director of Collections and Programming.

Such documentation will include, but not be limited to the following:

1. accession files containing the *Unconditional Gift Agreement* or other documentation of the Museum's legal title to the object and other information pertinent to the acquisition of the object
2. *Temporary Custody Receipt* file
3. *Incoming Loan Agreement* file
4. *Outgoing Loan Agreement* file
5. deaccession file
6. accession register or list (tripartite decimal system used)
7. catalog cards (Chenhall nomenclature system used)
8. donor or source card file
9. inventory file
10. condition reports
11. conservation treatment records
12. digital images

All information generated on the computer or within the collections management software is backed up on the Director of Collections and Programming's hard drive and on the MDAC server housed at the MDAC downtown office.

All records pertaining to the collections will be properly maintained and securely housed using acid-free folders and other archival safe materials in the Collections Office.

On an annual basis, duplicate copies of the following records are maintained at the MDAC Downtown office for security:

1. Records documenting the Museum's legal ownership of objects (e.g., copies of *Unconditional Gift Agreements* or other documents)
2. Accession list (computer back-up)
3. Catalog record (computer back-up) which provides an up-to-date location record
4. Loan records for active incoming and outgoing loans

106.02 Procedures

Specific procedures to be followed for the documentation of collections are outlined in the various sections of this collections policy and further described in the comprehensive collections management manual maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

106.03 Objects Found in Collections

Objects designated as "Found in Collections" (that is objects which lack significant documentation as to how they are in the custody of the museum) are subject to the same treatment and care as documented objects in the collections. Objects Found in Collection will receive a two-part number prefaced by "FIC (e.g. FIC 2013.1, FIC 2013.2) to document the artifact until further research is conducted on the object. If accessioned, the artifact will follow the guidelines set forth in "Acquisition" section of this document. Objects Found in Collections are subject to deaccessioning if they meet at least one of the deaccession criteria stated in the collections policy. Any deaccessioning and disposition of Objects Found in Collections shall follow the deaccession and disposal procedures listed in the collections policy except that Objects Found in Collections will not be sold or destroyed.

If the Museum is contacted by a person claiming to own an Object Found in Collections, the Museum shall maintain custody of Objects Found in Collections until claimant fulfills all of the following:

1. presents to the Museum a clear explanation why the claimant believes he/she holds title, with supporting evidence, and
2. presents a notarized statement from the claimant that he/she is either the sole party at interest or he/she is authorized to represent all parties at interest and present supporting proof.

The Museum shall not immediately relinquish custody of the object(s) to the claimant who appears to have the right to make the demand. The Museum shall exercise its right to review the documents carefully to see if the Museum has evidence that may counter the claimant's demand.

The Museum shall defend its custody of the object(s) claimed if any of the following apply:

1. Evidence that the claimant knew, or should have known, that the Museum thought it owned the object(s) and that the claimant delayed in bringing his/her action to the detriment of the Museum.
2. Evidence that the claimant "slept on his rights," that is he/she failed to use due diligence in seeking out his/her property.
3. Evidence that the Museum has publicly displayed the object as its own or otherwise publicized it as such.

In cases where the Museum cannot defend its custody of the Object(s) Found in Collections, the Museum shall make an effort to obtain ownership by suggesting to the claimant the possibility of formally donating the object(s) to the Museum.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* § 69-1-1 *et seq.*

107. Access to and Use of Collections and Collections Records.

107.01 Policy

The Museum will strive to make its collections and collections records available for study and examination by individuals for scholarly research and other legitimate purposes.

The Museum will allow access to and use of its collections and collections records in a controlled, professional manner that protects the physical and intellectual integrity of the collections and collections records. Access to the collections and collections records will not be unreasonably denied. However, acknowledging its responsibility to safeguard the collections and collections records, the Museum reserves the right to control access to prevent the following:

1. Deterioration, mutilation, loss, or dislocation of objects and/or collections records
2. Undue interference with the administrative, professional, and technical operations of the Museum Division
3. Undue impact on the furnishing of services to other Museum users.

Authority for permitting and monitoring access to and use of the collections and collections records is shared by the Director and the Director of Collections and Programming. Should particular questions arise regarding proper, legitimate access to and use of the collections and collections records, the department's legal counsel will be consulted.

107.02 Procedures

A written request specifying the objects and records to be examined, photographic format, the purpose and proposed date of the examination, and the researcher's current address, email address, and daytime phone number, should be submitted to the Director or Director of Collections and Programming.

If the request meets with the established access policy of the Museum, the Director of Collections and Programming or his/her designee will schedule an appointment with the researcher and will provide supervised access to the specified objects and records. Access to the collections and the collections records may be limited both by the availability of staff time to provide adequate supervision and by the potential damage to particularly fragile objects from movement and handling during examination. Any copying and photography costs shall be the responsibility of the researcher. The researcher shall give the Museum copies of any photographs, papers or publications which result from his/her study of the Museum's collections.

107.03 Access to Obtain Copies of Collection Related Material:

The Museum occasionally retains permission to use images of text, paintings, drawings, and other photographs from hundreds of different sources for use in exhibits. The Museum may provide source information to researchers for purposes of requesting permissions to use images. It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain written permission from the original owner of the image. In rare instances, the Museum may provide a copy of the requested image to the researcher after permission has been given and if the original owner is unable to provide the copy. Otherwise, the Museum requires that images be sought from the original owners.

107.04 Reproduction of Artifacts from Collection:

The Museum reserves all rights for the reproduction of objects in the Museum collections. If permission to reproduce an artifact is granted, that permission is for a one-time reproduction with the reproduction to be used only for educational purposes. No commercial reproduction (replica manufacture of any sort) is permitted without a written agreement approved by the Collections Committee. The Museum reserves the right to license vendors, collect royalties, initiate fees, or otherwise control the use of its collections as may be deemed appropriate and lawful.

107.05 Photography of Collections

1. Limitations on Public Photography of Collections:
 - a. No publication or commercial use of photographs taken in the Museum's Heritage Center exhibition areas is permitted without the written approval of the Director.

- b. Photography in the Museum's Heritage Center exhibition areas for personal use is permitted during regular hours of public visitation unless otherwise posted.
 - c. The use of flash units, strobe lights, or other potentially damaging artificial light sources by visitors to photograph the Museum's Heritage Center exhibition areas will normally not be permitted.
 - d. In the interest of public safety, the Museum may limit or prevent the use of tripods in exhibition areas.
2. Request for Photographs of Collections:
- a. Requests for obtaining photographs of objects in the Museum's collections will be submitted in writing to the Acquisitions Committee.
 - b. The Museum will establish and adjust as necessary a fee schedule for all photographic and other copy work. Due to limited staff resources and time, the Museum may be unable to fulfill a specific photographic request if a digital image does not already exist.
 - c. Researchers wishing to photograph objects in the collections with their own photographic equipment may do so without paying the photography fee.
 - d. Researchers wishing to hire an outside vendor to photograph objects in the collection may do so only with prior Museum approval. The Museum reserves the right to select the vendor to provide such special photographic services. The researcher must make direct arrangements with the vendor for payment of vendor services.
 - e. The Museum will be provided with a complimentary copy of the publication or other example of the published image.
 - f. The Museum reserves the right to levy fees for the use of its copyright materials, photographs, and reproductions.
 - g. The Museum reserves the right to deny a request for photographs of the Museum's collections if fulfilling the request would lead to one or more of the following conditions:
 - i. endanger the physical security of the collections
 - ii. undermine the intellectual integrity of the collections
 - iii. pose an excessive administrative burden
 - iv. violate the terms of a loan
 - v. infringe on copyrighted material
 - vi. involve a use for illegal or unethical purposes
 - vii. violate privacy, publicity, or other personal rights of any party
 - viii. libel, slander, or cause undue ridicule or embarrassment to any person or organization
 - ix. imply an institutional endorsement of any product, company, or enterprise.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* §69-1-1 *et seq.*

108. Care of Collections.

108.01. Inventory

The Director of Collections and Programming is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date location record for all objects owned and accessioned into the permanent collection by the Museum as well as those objects borrowed by the Museum.

A comprehensive inventory of the collections should be completed every ten years and a spot check inventory on an annual basis. Inventories will be conducted according to specific procedures outlined in the collections management manual.

108.02 Handling Collections

The Museum's permanent collection is to be handled only in a manner that enhances its preservation. Objects in the permanent collection are to be handled only by trained Museum staff members or by trained Museum volunteers. The Director of Collections and Programming is responsible for training and supervising any such volunteers. Written guidelines for handling objects are included in the collections management manual maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

108.03 Conservation

The Museum holds and cares for its collections as a public trust and is committed to the standards of collections care and conservation established by the American Institute for Conservation and Heritage Preservation. The Museum recognizes the importance of preventive maintenance and environmental monitoring and control in enhancing the preservation of collections. The Museum will contract with professional conservators on a regular basis for professional conservation treatment of objects in the permanent collection.

All conservation treatments will be properly executed and documented. The authority for conservation treatment of objects is shared by the Director and the Director of Collections and Programming.

The Director of Collections and Programming is responsible for preparing a strategic conservation plan detailing conservation priorities based on the recommendations of surveys of the collection and the buildings conducted by conservation professionals. The Director of Collections and Programming will update the strategic plan on an annual basis and submit the plan to the Director for approval and incorporation into the Museum's comprehensive strategic plan. Written guidelines for Museum staff conservation procedures to be followed in case of emergency are located in the disaster preparedness manual maintained by the Director of Operations.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* §69-1-1 *et seq.*

109. Risk Management.

109.01. Policy

The Museum will make every attempt to minimize risks to the collections, the buildings, the staff, and the visitors. The Director is responsible for the overall physical safety and security of the collections and the building, staff, and visitors.

109.02 Procedures

Procedures for managing and caring for the collections in a proper manner which enhances their preservation and security are included in the collections management manual maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

Procedures to be followed for the protection of the collections, the buildings, the staff, and the visitors in case of emergency are included in the disaster preparedness manual maintained by the Director of operations. The Museum will maintain material safety data sheets (with guidelines for the safe use and disposal of chemicals) for products used by Museum staff in performing such duties as conservation and exhibit fabrication, as well as for cleaning products used by the custodial staff, and for any fumigants used by the pest control company.

109.03 Insurance

The Museum's collections and its building are insured by the State of Mississippi through the Department of Finance and Administration. The state's insurance policy covers the buildings and its contents (not including artifacts), and has additional fine arts coverage to insure the permanent collection (a minimum coverage of \$5M per occurrence). Artifacts in transit or on loan to the Museum are also covered by this policy.

The Museum will routinely provide additional insurance coverage as appropriate for objects borrowed by the Museum for exhibition or research (incoming loans). The Museum will not routinely provide insurance coverage for objects or materials temporarily left in the custody of the Museum for potential acquisition, identification, photography and/or copying (temporary custody).

The Museum will require insurance coverage for any object(s) it places on loan to another museum, with the cost of such insurance coverage to be borne by the borrowing museum.

The Department of Finance and Administration has authority for purchasing and arranging insurance coverage. The Director or Director of Collections and Programming will be responsible for working directly with the Department of Finance and Administration on insurance needs. Procedures for obtaining insurance coverage are included in the collections management manual maintained by the Director of Collections and Programming.

(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann . §69-1-1 et seq.*

110. Ethics.

110.01 Museum Code of Ethics

All Museum staff, Foundation Board members, or MDAC staff who work directly with the Museum will adhere to this Code of Ethics and refrain from any private or public activity which might be in conflict with, or appear to be in conflict with, the mission and interests of the Museum.

110.02 Personal Collecting

1. Staff shall not use his/her position to obtain for personal use and benefit items falling within the collecting realm of the Museum.
2. No individual shall be involved in buying and selling historical or agricultural articles for profit as a dealer, or on behalf of a dealer, or retain and interest in a dealership.
3. Staff shall not compete with the Museum in any personal collecting activity. If items purchased by a staff member fall within the collecting areas of the museum, they must be offered to the museum within sixty (60) days at the actual cost of the artifact.
4. Staff shall notify the Director in writing of all personal collecting and if asked, shall supply an inventory of items in their collection. If a staff member elects to sell an item from his/her personal collection, he/she will be expected first to offer the item to the Museum at a fair market price.
5. Staff involved in accepting artifacts and/or the daily activities of the collections office. (Acquisitions Committee/Collections Committee) shall not acquire personal collections of the same nature as the Museum's collection. This policy excludes readily available books and materials relating to agriculture.
6. Collections acquired by staff through gifts, through inheritance, or prior to employment, as well as those not within the mission of the Museum, shall be exempt from this policy.

110.03 Appraisals

1. Due to a possible conflict of interest with the Internal Revenue Service, staff members shall not, in their official or unofficial capacities, provide monetary appraisals of objects for donors, potential donors, staff, members of the Museum's Foundation Board, or the general public. The Museum may provide names of appraisers, but shall not provide an endorsement. The Museum may provide identification and authentication assistance for professional and/or educational purposes only.
2. Appraisals of objects owned by the Museum can be made for internal use such as

insurance coverage. The Museum shall contract with objective and qualified appraisers as needed.
(Adopted March 2014.)

Source: *Miss. Code Ann.* §69-1-1 *et seq.*