

The Regional History Museum Collections Management Policy

I. Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

This Collections Management Policy governs all aspects related to the development, management, preservation, and use of the **The Regional History Museum**'s collections. The policy provides a framework of professional standards to establish guidelines for managing the collections.

The Collections Management Policy is a comprehensive written statement that:

- Sets forth the mission of **The Regional History Museum**,
- Explains how this mission is pursued through collection activity,
- Articulates the organization's professional standards regarding objects in its care,
- Serves as a guide to staff and volunteers in carrying out their collection related responsibilities, and
- Provides the public with information about what objects and information the organization collects and preserves and how the organization performs these functions.

This policy was developed and drafted by the staff of **The Regional History Museum** with the assistance of the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) as part of an initiative funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences.

B. Process of Establishing Policy

This Collections Management Policy is a working document. Any errors, omissions, or other necessary changes will be identified and updated by **The Regional History Museum**'s staff in a timely manner.

All policies are approved by the governing board. The final draft was submitted to **the Board President** for comment and approval.

This policy was first written in the fall of 2016 by the Collections Committee, consisting of Regina L. History (Registrar), Archie Vist (Archivists), and Connie Servation (Collections Manager). The policy was first drafted in December 2016, with revisions in 2017 and 2020. The current version of this policy was last approved in December 2020.

C. Statement of Authority

The Regional History Museum is organized as a **non-profit organization** and is overseen by a **Board of Directors selected by the Commonwealth**. The collection is owned by **the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**.

The governing authority's role in managing the collection is to **guide the strategic growth and ensure oversight of the collections**. The day-to-day management of **The Regional History Museum** is delegated to the **the Executive Director**, who bears the ultimate responsibility for implementation of this Collections Management Policy.

D. Permanent Collections Charge

The Regional History Museum's permanent collections are overseen by **the Collections Committee**.

The Collections Committee consist of staff members, Board members, and unaffiliated experts who are responsible for the collections. The committee is available to provide advisement to the Board on the oversight of the collection and all matters pertaining to collection care and management including acquisitions, de-accessions, loans, collection maintenance and conservation, insurance, and inventories. Moreover, this Committee has the mandate to be conversant with current legal, ethical and professional standards regarding collection management.

E. Code of Ethics

The Regional History Museum recognizes the code of ethics of the following Organizations:

- **American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)**
- **American Alliance of Museums (AAM)**
- **Code of Ethics and Professional Practices for Collections Professionals (CS-AAM/ARCS)**

In general principle, **The Regional History Museum** affirms and supports the contents of these codes.

Management of this collection additionally adheres to The Regional History Museum's Values Statement.

F. Review and Revision

This policy shall be reviewed by **the Executive Director every three years**. Any major changes regarding the collections and/or their management may necessitate more frequent revisions.

The policy will be reviewed outside of the regularly scheduled reviews as deemed necessary by the Collections Committee or when there is an organizational change that necessitates a review.

G. Public Disclosure

Once approved by **the Board President**, copies of this Collection Management Policy will be provided to a **Board of Directors selected by the Commonwealth** and appropriate staff of **The Regional History Museum**. **The policy will be made public through posting the policy on the organization's public webpage. The Archivist will also provide a copy to the public when requested.**

II. Mission and Collections

A. Institutional Mission

The Regional History Museum is an educational institution that engages and inspires a large and diverse audience by preserving regional history and creating innovative programs that connect the past to the present.

B. Description and Scope of Collection

The Regional History Museum collects items and ephemera representing two centuries of regional history. The core collection comprises roughly 10,000 3D objects; 10,000 photographic images of the region from the 18th century through present day; more than 5,000 cubic feet of business archives and over 250,000 maps and drawings.

C. Purpose of the Collection

The Regional History Museum collection is acquired, preserved, researched and exhibited to further the museum's mission. The museum was established by the State to act as stewards of the public collection. Additional collection materials are acquired by donation and purchase.

Artifacts are primarily acquired for preservation and interpretation, although some may be designated for interpretive operation and hands-on use.

Collections will continue to be exhibited and interpreted to serve the Museum's mission. Collections should not be viewed as a separate and discrete function of the Museum, but as an integral and integrated aspect of the Regional History museum's core values.

III. Acquisitions and Accessions

A. Methods of Acquisition

The Regional History Museum is empowered by their governing authority, a **Board of Directors selected by the Commonwealth**, to acquire items for the collections by **gift** and **purchase**.

“Acquisition” is the procurement of an object for the collection by **The Regional History Museum**. “Accessioning” is the process by which the title to an object passes to **The Regional History Museum**, establishing legal custody and ownership and providing information on how **The Regional History Museum** acquired the object.

B. Authority

The **Collections Committee** is responsible for initiating the acquisition process in accordance with the criteria established in this document.

The Curator shall recommend objects for accessioning to the Vice President of Museum Collections, who in turn shall recommend it to the Collections Committee of the Board. the Board will determine if the Museum will formally accession the object into the permanent collection.

Donations to **The Regional History Museum** are accepted upon the approval of the **Collections Committee**.

All purchased additions to **The Regional History Museum** with a monetary value of **\$1,000** or more must be approved by the **Executive Director**. **Guidelines for the consideration and approval of purchases, including monetary limitations on purchases, are outlined in the Collections Acquisition Policy.**

The **Executive Director** must approve any acquisition (by purchase or donation) that will involve significant staff time, and/or storage space, defined as **oversized objects, obsolete media, and extremely fragile materials**.

C. Criteria for Collection Acquisition

The Regional History Museum only acquires an object for the collection with the intention of retaining it for the long term. No objects or documents shall be accepted into the permanent

collection of **The Regional History Museum** with the sole purpose of being deaccessioned and sold.

Before any object is acquired by any means the following criteria must be met:

1. Collecting Scope

The Regional History Museum will only accept acquisitions that fall within the scope of its collections (as defined in this policy in Section II.B. Purpose, Scope and Use of the Collection) and collection criteria as defined in additional organization policies.

2. Format

The primary formats collected include **fine arts (e.g. paintings, works on paper, sculptures, etc.), decorative arts (e.g. dishware, textiles, jewelry, furnishings, etc.), historical artifacts, archival collections, and photographs.**

3. Title

All acquisitions must be accompanied by clear title that has been presented by the donor, seller, or the donor's authorized agent. **When proposing an object for acquisition, clear title must be established for a donated item through a Deed of Gift signed by the donor..**

If the seller or donor owns copyright, it should be transferred by specific statement to **The Regional History Museum.**

At its discretion, the organization may request documentation of an object's provenance.

4. Condition

The object is in condition to be exhibited or, if for study, sufficiently stable to permit that activity.

If in need of immediate conservation, the object can be conserved within the available resources of **The Regional History Museum**, or is accompanied by a monetary donation for its conservation; No object shall be acquired for the collection if **The Regional History Museum** cannot provide proper storage, protection, and preservation.

Exceptionally large or damaged objects, or any object that cannot immediately be made available for research due to its size, poor state of preservation, physical instability, risk to staff or other

objects, etc., will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and provisions required for the care and conservation of the object will be taken into account before accepting the object(s).

5. The Regional History Museum's Resources

The Regional History Museum must have the resources necessary to acquire and care for the object. **The Regional History Museum** can afford to transport, describe, and conserve the object. If an object is not offered as a gift or bequest, **The Regional History Museum** must be able to afford to purchase the object using **an annual budget** and **designated acquisition funds**.

The Regional History Museum has the capacity to secure, store, and/or exhibit the object safely.

6. Duplicates

In general, **The Regional History Museum** will not acquire duplicates of objects or materials already in the collection.

Exceptions to this may be considered on a case-by-case basis under the following circumstances:

- Objects that are duplicates of things already in the collection may be accepted if they are in better condition, have a particular historical significance or association, or may be used for loans.

7. Legal and Ethical Considerations

The object has not been illegally imported into the United States or illegally collected within the United States. **The Regional History Museum** has done due diligence to confirm the object's legal status to the best of its ability prior to acquisition.

8. Conditional Acquisitions

Gifts and bequests should be accepted only if they conform to the stated policies of **The Regional History Museum**. Objects that are subject to the imposition of special and restricting conditions may not be accepted if the conditions are contrary to the interests of **The Regional History Museum**.

- All gifts should be unrestricted, with no commitment made to the donor to retain them in perpetuity or to exhibit them unless agreed upon by **The Regional History Museum** and the donor. Conditions regarding exhibiting objects should be avoided except under the most unusual circumstances. If such conditions are accepted, these conditions should apply only to a limited, specified period of time.
- **The Regional History Museum** will not accept collections donated with the condition that the entire collection be accessioned. **The Regional History Museum** has the right to choose, within a proposed donation, which objects they wish to keep. For manuscript and archival collections, the standard practice of accepting an entire collection and selecting materials for disposal as the collection is processed will be followed.
- **The Regional History Museum** will not accept materials that are restricted from public access in perpetuity.

9. The Education Collection

The Regional History Museum may accept donations of non-collection reference materials, equipment, supplies, and objects given to support and further its educational objectives. **Objects are added to the Education collection for hand-on use by students and visitors. Duplicate historical objects that do not meet the above criteria may be incorporated into this collection, and will not be accessioned.**

D. Acquisition Terms and Restrictions

The Regional History Museum will not pay for a monetary appraisal of the proposed gift for a donor, nor recommend an appraiser. A board member, employee, or any consultant or volunteer employed by or associated with **The Regional History Museum** may not appraise a potential gift for a donor.

Objects that are intended to be sold will not be accepted and formally accessioned.

No person who is a staff member, board member, or volunteer, or who is involved in the policy or management of **The Regional History Museum**, may compete with **The Regional History Museum** for objects or may take advantage of privileged information which has been received. Should a conflict of interest develop between the needs of the individual and **The Regional History Museum**, the needs of **The Regional History Museum** will prevail. This should be addressed in **The Regional History Museum's** Code of Ethics.

Objects are added to the Education collection for hand-on use by students and visitors. Duplicate historical objects that do not meet the above criteria may be incorporated into this collection, and will not be accessioned.

E. Documentation of Acquisitions and Accessions

The complete procedure of acquiring and accessioning any object will be recorded. All documents relating to the object, including the signed Deed of Gift, will be deposited in the relevant collection files.

All acquisitions are documented with a Temporary Custody Receipt, which should be signed by a Museum representative and the donor. Each item is assigned a temporary tracking number, starting with the prefix TEMP, and will be recorded in the object database. Objects awaiting review will be stored in Temporary Storage, unless otherwise noted on their object record.

Accession procedures are clearly documented in the Museum's Accessioning Procedures. This document clearly outlines the system utilized for assigning unique identifiers and the documentation required. The Registrar is responsible for ensuring all acquisitions are properly recorded and accessioned.

IV. Deaccessions and Disposals

Deaccessioning is the process of permanently removing accessioned collection objects and materials from **The Regional History Museum**'s permanent collections. The sole purpose of deaccessioning any object or archival collection within **The Regional History Museum** is to refine and strengthen the overall collections. This objective should be achieved either by using designated disposal proceeds to acquire objects of better quality and significance or by deaccessioning an object of no appreciable monetary value in order to give appropriate space and care to the remaining objects.

Deaccessioning is an important collections management tool that is employed by collecting institutions around the world for a variety of reasons. As **The Regional History Museum**'s collections grow, it is recognized that some objects that no longer fit the mission or parameters of the collection, or that cannot be properly housed, conserved, and/or exhibited, may be considered for deaccession or disposal.

Because deaccessioning can adversely affect an institution's collection, reputation, and ability to fundraise, all objects proposed for deaccessioning from **The Regional History Museum** must be subjected to a thorough review. Procedures for the deaccession or disposal of materials should be at least as rigorous as those for accessioning and will be governed by the same basic principles. The decision to dispose of materials must be made only after scrupulous consideration of the public interest and the needs of researchers; the process of deaccessioning and disposal must be carried out in as open and public a manner as possible.

The Regional History Museum will carefully assess all materials before accepting them in order to lessen the likelihood of deaccessioning. Nevertheless, there are valid reasons why materials in collections may be deaccessioned.

Archival processing includes selection and disposal of material on a regular basis. Material discarded as a part of this normal process is not subject to the same rigor of deaccession procedures as accessioned collection objects and materials.

Guidelines and standards have been set by professional organizations to promote clear, consistent, and ethical deaccessioning practices. The following policy for deaccessioning of materials from **The Regional History Museum** is in accordance with the standards established by:

- **American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)**
- **American Association of Museums (AAM)**

Considerations regarding deaccessioning are subject to the terms of acquisition, local regulations, and state and federal laws.

A. Authority

Deaccessions must be approved by **the Collections Committee**. Deaccessions that are of considerable value or a sensitive nature must be approved by **the Executive Director**.

As stated in the Deaccession Policy, the Chief Curator is responsible for proposing objects for deaccession on an bi-annual basis.

B. Criteria for Deaccessioning

Because **The Regional History Museum** is aware of its role as a steward of the collection for the benefit of the public, it acquires only objects that it intends to retain for the long term and not with the intention of disposing.

To be considered for deaccessioning, an object must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Be free from donor-mandated restrictions;
2. Be fully and legally owned by **The Regional History Museum**; and
3. Meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - **The object or material does not meet the current criteria for purpose and scope of collections and hence does not support the organization's mission.**
 - **The object or material is redundant or is a duplicate, has no value as part of a series, and as such does not enhance teaching, research, or study.**
 - **The object is in a format that the organization cannot support, and has not been (or cannot be reasonably) converted to another format.**
 - **The object has been extensively damaged or presents a risk to other materials in the collections and/or to the individuals working therein and cannot be restored without compromising its integrity.**
 - **The object or material was acquired illegally or unethically, is requested for repatriation, or is shown to be the rightful property of another person or entity.**
 - **The object has been determined not to be authentic.**

C. Restrictions and Conditions on Deaccessioning

When considering deaccessioning, **The Regional History Museum** will carefully weigh the interests of the public for which it holds the collections in trust, the interests of the scholarly and

cultural communities, and **The Regional History Museum**'s mission.

The Regional History Museum will consider any legal restrictions, the necessity for possession of valid title, and the donor's intent in the broadest sense. Mandatory restrictions on disposition which accompanied a donation will be observed unless it can be shown clearly by appropriate legal procedures that adherence to them is impossible or substantially detrimental to **The Regional History Museum**. When statements of donor's preferences accompany an acquisition, any departure from them will be carefully considered and negotiated with the donor or the donor's heirs or settled by appropriate legal procedures.

Under no circumstances will a deaccessioned object be given to, or otherwise placed in, the possession of a **The Regional History Museum**'s staff, volunteers, board members, or any representative or immediate family member of the aforementioned.

Any donor or person who contributed funds to the purchase of the object which is being considered for deaccessioning must be consulted whenever possible.

D. Methods of Disposal

The Regional History Museum may dispose of a deaccessioned object by **transfer (to a reference collection or other department)** when it is warranted.

When recommending deaccessioning, all acceptable means of disposal must be considered. The method will be determined on a case-by-case basis for each deaccessioned object. Deaccessioned objects are usually disposed of through one of the following means:

- Transfer: Objects or archival material may be transferred to .
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- Witnessed Destruction: This option should be considered if the object has deteriorated so severely that it is no longer useful, and/or if it poses a hazard to staff, public, and/or other items in the collection that is not an acceptable risk. If condition of the object is a criterion for deaccessioning, **The Regional History Museum** may wish to obtain the recommendation of a qualified conservator before making the final decision. Privacy and confidentiality considerations may justify destruction of archival materials.
- In no case shall a private sale, gift, or transfer to a for-profit institution or an individual be acceptable.

E. Disposal of Undocumented Objects

If an object is undocumented, **The Regional History Museum** must make a serious, diligent, and documented effort to learn more about it before considering it for disposal. This process may include:

1. Determining as much about the object's status as possible – any record whatsoever of its documented history, even if incomplete.
2. Consulting institutional records, such as accession records, old inventories, board minutes, old gift and loan agreements, correspondence, newsletters, etc., to attempt to connect the object with some documentation.
3. Recording all additional information that is known about the object.

If an undocumented object is to be sold or donated, **The Regional History Museum** can use a quitclaim deed that transfers claim and rights to the object to the new owner, with no guarantee of title transfer. Any risk of holding the undocumented object is therefore transferred to the new owner.

If an undocumented object is shown to have or can be reasonably assumed to have minimal value (intrinsic, monetary, research, etc.) to the organization, **The Regional History Museum** may choose to donate the object to a nonprofit organization. The lack of title transfer will be transparently stated.

If undocumented objects are deemed to have deteriorated beyond repair, if disposal is required to protect the objects themselves or other objects in **The Regional History Museum** collections, and/or if they have become a hazard to health and safety, immediate action as appropriate will be taken. **The Regional History Museum** may wish to obtain the recommendation of a conservator in this event.

If it is discovered during review that an object is an old loan, **The Regional History Museum** will take steps to resolve the loan status as soon as possible. Resolution actions should be in compliance with the old loan statute of the state in which **The Regional History Museum** is located. If the state does not have an old loan statute, **The Regional History Museum** should be guided by the principles of common law in notifying the lender of the museum's intent to end the loan. **The Regional History Museum** may wish to consult legal counsel to ensure proper action is taken.

The organization is located in State, where Statute A governs the management of old loans, undocumented property, and doorstep donations. Any disposal of abandoned property, unclaimed old loans, or found-in-collection objects will be completed in accordance with the Statute A.

F. Ethical Considerations

The Regional History Museum has a public responsibility and is accountable for the decision to deaccession an object, and for the method by which disposal is implemented. The procedure will be documented and there will be no effort to conceal the transaction. Any proceeds resulting from the disposal of objects will be used either for purchase of acquisitions or direct care of the collection. Direct care is defined as investments in existing collections that enhance their life, usefulness, or quality and thereby ensuring they will continue to benefit the public.

G. Documentation of Deaccession and Disposal

Responsibility to the needs and reputation of **The Regional History Museum** requires that, in preparing for and carrying out deaccession and disposal, **The Regional History Museum** will take care to publicly explain the purpose of the deaccession and the intended use of monetary or other proceeds of the disposal, to avoid detracting from **The Regional History Museum's** reputation for honesty and responsible conduct, and to carry out the entire process in a way which will uphold public perception of its accountable stewardship.

The complete procedure followed when deaccessioning and disposing of any object will be documented in collection records.

The deaccessioning process, including required documentation, is documented in detail in the Museum's Deaccessioning Policy, which is publicly available. The Policy also includes procedures for internal reporting regarding the deaccession and disposal of objects.

The Executive Director will determine if a public statement is required for any deaccessions. If a statement is required, they will work with the Marketing Committee to craft an appropriate statement that will be shared with local news outlets.

All documents related to the deaccessioning and disposal process will be deposited in the relevant collection files and retained permanently. Deaccessioning and disposal purpose and dates will be recorded on any object records, physical or electronic. The deaccessioned object's unique accession number will remain permanently in the institution's records, with clear indication that the records are no longer active.

V. Incoming Loans

The Regional History Museum borrows **fine arts** (e.g. **paintings, works on paper, sculptures, etc.**) and **historical artifacts** for the purpose of **exhibition** as **The Regional History Museum's** needs dictate.

A. Approval Processes for Incoming Loans

Requests for objects from other institutions and individuals are to be proposed by **the Collections Committee**. **The Museum's Loan Policy** addresses the process of proposing incoming loans.

The Collections Committee is responsible for approving incoming loans. **The Museum's Loan Policy** addresses the process of approving incoming loans.

The Curator is responsible for ensuring appropriate documentation for incoming loans. **The process for documenting incoming loans is detailed in the Museum's Loan policy.**

B. Terms and Conditions of Incoming Loans

Incoming loans will be accepted from individuals or institutions for **Exhibition**. Because of the liability and expense, **The Regional History Museum** cannot store and maintain objects belonging to others that are not required for the aforementioned purposes.

The standard loan period is **one year** and the maximum term for any incoming loan is **two years**. All loan agreements must be re-evaluated with the possibility for renewal **annually**.

The following criteria will be met before requesting or approving an incoming loan:

- **The Regional History Museum** has determined that it can afford the estimated cost of exhibition, storage, security, transportation, collection maintenance, and all risk, wall-to-wall insurance for the objects on loan at the value established by the lender unless the lender waives insurance requirements in writing. The amount payable by such insurance is the sole recovery available to the lender in the event of loss or damage.
- If the lender prefers to provide insurance for the object while it is on loan, the lender shall list **The Regional History Museum** as additional insured on its own policy or will obtain for **The Regional History Museum** a waiver of subrogation.

- Only objects that can withstand the normal rigors of packing, transport, handling, and display will be accepted on loan at **The Regional History Museum**. **The Regional History Museum** will conduct a basic condition report upon receipt of a loaned object and prior to the object's return to the lender.

Objects that are not claimed by the lending individual or institution within 60 days of written notice of loan termination and request for return of borrowed items, then no action may be brought for damages or the recovery of the loaned object. If unclaimed after 65 days of the last notice, property rights will transfer to the museum (see State Law 1A).

If an object is damaged while on loan, the damage will be documented and the lending institution will be contacted as soon as possible to discuss next steps.

C. Long-Term Loans

The Loan Policy addresses details regarding long-term loans.

A longer-term loan agreement may be possible with approval of the **the Executive Director**. **A long-term loan would be considered if the loaned object played a unique role in the region's history.**

If objects are found in the collection that were previously deposited at **The Regional History Museum** as permanent or indefinite loans, staff will make all possible efforts to contact the lender or immediate heirs of the lender in order to:

- Convert the loan into a gift, if the object is consistent with **The Regional History Museum's** mission and collecting criteria.
- Negotiate a new loan agreement with the lender.
- Return the object to the lender or the lender's heirs.

If staff are unable to locate and contact an object's lender, they must document all efforts and keep all documentation in the object's file.

If an individual or individual's heir claims ownership of a found-in-collection object and wishes for it to be returned, the burden of proof of ownership is on the claimant. The claimant must produce an original loan certificate in order to reclaim the object and an heir must also produce proof that they are the legal heir of the donor.

VI. Outgoing Loans

The **Regional History Museum** will loan **fine arts (e.g. paintings, works on paper, sculptures, etc.), historical artifacts, archival collections, and photographs** for the purpose of **exhibition and research program**.

A. Approval Processes for Outgoing Loans

Outgoing loan requests must be reviewed by **the Collections Committee**. Final approval for outgoing loans must be obtained from **the Collections Committee**.

Additionally, the Board must approve any outgoing loans. This process is clearly outlined in the Outgoing Loans section of the Museum's Loan Policy.

Outgoing loans must be documented by **the Collections Committee**.

B. Criteria for Outgoing Loans

The Regional History Museum will evaluate requests to borrow objects for the purpose of **Exhibition** at other institutions when the policies and facilities of those institutions meet accepted standards of security, climate control, and insurance coverage, and when proper credit is given to **The Regional History Museum**. Institutions wishing to borrow objects should begin the process early (**six months** or more in advance) and must submit proper documentation before an agreement will be signed.

To request an outgoing loan, the requesting institution must contact the Director of Collections. The Loan Policy addresses details regarding loans.

When assured that proper care and protection will be provided, **The Regional History Museum** may lend objects to other institutions provided that the following criteria have been met:

- **No loans will be made to private individuals.**
- **At all times, the preservation of collections objects will take priority.**
- **The loan will not jeopardize the institution's own exhibition, loan, research, and/or education programs.**
- **All objects involved in the loan are accessioned.**
- **All objects involved in the loan are photographed.**
- **The borrower agrees to all conditions established by the institution.**

C. Duration

Loans from **The Regional History Museum** will not exceed duration of **one year**.

If the borrower wishes to keep an object longer than one year, the possibility of renewal will be re-evaluated annually on an item-by-item basis.

D. Requirements and Obligations for Borrowers

- **General Facility Report**

In order for **The Regional History Museum** to consider a loan request, it is required that the borrowing institution complete a General Facility Report which documents the conditions under which the object will be displayed.

- **Object Condition**

The borrowing institution must complete a written condition report upon receipt of any loaned object, with an additional condition report completed prior to return of the object to **The Regional History Museum**.

If an object is damaged while on loan, the damage will be documented by the borrower and the Museum should be contacted as soon as possible to discuss next steps.

- **Cost**

The Borrowing Institution is responsible for paying shipping costs (including any special packaging, insurance costs in transit, and courier fees) or any conservation work needed by requested objects.

The Borrowing Institution is responsible for providing insurance coverage. They must provide proof of insurance, and provide photographic documentation of the object and written condition assessment upon receipt and prior to departure.

- **Reproductions**

Photographs of an object may be used by the borrowing institution for promotional material pertaining to its exhibition.

VII. Documentation

A. Collection Records

The Regional History Museum will initiate and maintain up-to-date records of all objects under its care, including gifts, purchases, loans, or any other type of acquisition, even if temporary. Collection records are maintained by **the Director of Collections**. Collection records include, but are not limited to, **accession records, registration records, deeds of gift, loan forms, condition reports, deaccession records, and research records.**

The Regional History Museum maintains **paper-based records** and **electronic records**. Electronic records are managed using **ArchivesSpace**.

B. Backup System for Records

The Regional History Museum records will be safeguarded from loss, destruction, and degradation.

Duplicate collections records are stored in the cloud and backed up daily. A hard drive backup of the server is maintained by the IT department, which includes the CMS database.

C. Inventory

To maintain, manage, and secure its holdings properly, **The Regional History Museum** performs regular inventories.

- Full collection inventories are conducted **annually by the Director of Collections.**

Inventory procedures are recorded in the **Guidelines for Inventories**

VIII. Collections Care

The Regional History Museum is responsible for the care and preservation of all objects in its custody, including all collection and loaned objects. Collections care and preservation activities are the responsibility of **the Director of Collections**, in coordination with other staff and volunteers, as applicable. In addition to performing the types of care and management described in other sections of the policy, **The Regional History Museum** will:

- Carry out all legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities required to provide the necessary care for all objects acquired, borrowed, or placed in the custody of **The Regional History Museum**;
- Take measures to prevent the theft, vandalism, destruction or damage by pests, fire, water, or other elements;
- Maintain a comprehensive collection preservation program;
- Maintain appropriate storage conditions within the constraints of budget and space allocation of **The Regional History Museum**;
- Appropriate storage conditions will be maintained in offsite storage at **Municipal Storage Facility**. Decisions regarding which objects will be sent to **Municipal Storage Facility** are made by **the Director of Collections**;
- Monitor all storage areas to ensure appropriate environmental conditions and employ strategies to remediate any concerns;
- Perform in-house assessments of collections **as objects are accessioned and when objects are chosen for exhibition**.
- Ensure collections are physically protected through the use of: **secured storage areas, appropriate housings, established environmental control, security cameras, and regular collection maintenance**;
- Address conservation needs concerning damage or stability of collections by **contracting with a qualified independent conservator**.
- Ensure that objects are handled appropriately as described in the **Handling Policy**.
- Regularly monitor for pests and ensure that an integrated pest management program is in place to prevent or mitigate issues.
- Practice regular housekeeping procedures throughout the building in order to maintain proper storage and exhibition conditions for the collections, deter unwanted pests, and expedite salvage procedures in the case of an emergency. These procedures are outlined in the written Housekeeping Guidelines. **The Facilities Committee is responsible for ensuring housekeeping of the collections spaces is regularly completed**.
- Perform routine building inspections to ensure a secure building envelope and alleviate structural or environmental concerns. Regular maintenance duties are the responsibility of **the Collections Committee**.

IX. Insurance and Risk Management

A. Insurance

Though insurance is not a substitute for safety, security, or professional collections care, it does provide compensation in the event of loss or damage. **The Regional History Museum** will provide insurance coverage for its **collections, building, and general liability**.

The Collections Committee is responsible for the review and renewal of **The Regional History Museum's** collections insurance policy **every other year**.

B. Risk Management

All collections, buildings, and grounds of **The Regional History Museum** should be secure and protected from vandalism, criminal activity, and accidents.

The Regional History Museum must conduct periodic reviews of potential risks to the collection including fire, natural disasters, vandalism, theft, human error, mechanical or operational system failure, pests and deterioration. **The Regional History Museum** should maintain regular contact with the local fire and police departments. Personnel from these agencies should be aware of the historical value and significance of **The Regional History Museum**. Copies of the **The Regional History Museum's** floor plans should be held at the local fire department.

The Regional History Museum maintains a comprehensive security plan, which governs all areas of collection security from physical space control to patron and staff use regulations. **The Director of Operations** is responsible for maintaining the security plan.

The Regional History Museum maintains a security system. The security system consists of **an intrusion system with an exterior alarm. Motion sensors are installed on all doors and window**. The security system is inspected **bi-annually**. **The Building Committee** is responsible for the regular inspection of the security system.

The Regional History Museum must ensure that an Emergency Preparedness and Response plan is in place in order to mitigate potential damage in the event of a disaster or emergency. The contents of the plan, particularly procedures, contact lists, and collections priorities for salvage and/or conservation, must be reviewed and updated periodically. The plan is intended to be reviewed **every two years**, and more frequently if necessary, by **the Director of Collections**.

The fire detection system consists of a **centrally monitored fire detection system. There are smoke detectors and an internal alarm bell.** The system is inspected **once a year.** **The Building Committee** is responsible for the regular inspection of the fire detection system.

The fire suppression system consists of **wet-pipe sprinkler system throughout the building. Fire extinguishers are centrally located on each floor.** The system is inspected **once a year.** **The Building Committee** is responsible for the regular inspection of the fire suppression system.

The water detection system system consists of **water bug sensors placed at strategic locations.** The system is inspected **once a year.** **The Building Committee** is responsible for the regular inspection of the water detection system.

Staff will be trained in the proper use of fire extinguishers, fire drills, evacuation procedures for members of the public and staff, evacuation procedures for collections, and disaster response and recovery for collections.

The Regional History Museum has conducted a comprehensive risk assessment **externally. A Risk Assessment was originally conducted in January of 2016 by the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts. It was last updated June 2018.**

X. Access and Use

A. Collections Access

The Regional History Museum recognizes its responsibility to make its collection accessible to the public for education, research, exhibition, conservation, publication, and reproduction. The imperative to provide access must be balanced with **The Regional History Museum's** responsibility to preserve and safeguard its objects. Policies governing access to the collection include the physical collection materials as well as reproductions of the collection and collection documentation. Laws regarding privacy and freedom of information will be observed where applicable.

As a public institution, it is the duty of the Regional History museum to provide the public with reasonable access to the collections, while balancing the safety and preservation of collections materials. The level of access to the collection is determined by the Assistant Director of Collections. Those who handle collections must be appropriately trained and supervised by Staff. Researchers, scholars, and members of the public may be granted supervised access to objects in the collections. All requesting access must complete a researcher form prior to using the collections. Access will be granted for all reasonable and legitimate requests, such as educational and scholarly research, publication, media production, and personal interest. For researchers choosing to visit the archives, appointments should be arranged in advance to ensure that staff and space are available. Collections information (donor files and appraisals) is restricted due to the confidential nature of the records. Provenance information about artifacts and archives will be provided to researchers upon request once information is reviewed by the Collections Committee to ensure confidential material is redacted.

Personal photography is permitted in all museum spaces for personal, noncommercial use with a handheld camera, unless otherwise noted by signage. The use of flash is prohibited throughout the museum. Tripods and light stands are not permitted.

Commercial photography or videography of the collections is prohibited without securing permission. To obtain permission, individuals or organizations must contact the Board President and complete an application for commercial photography.

Members of the Collections Management Team have access to all collections storage spaces. If a Museum Staff Member or Volunteer requires access to storage, they must arrange to be escorted by a member of the Collections Management Team. Access can be requested via the Head of Collections Management.

B. Terms and Conditions

Members of the public may request to examine or study collection items. Appointments must be made in advance and will take place during normal business hours.

Collections are accessible contingent upon staff availability and consistent with accepted security and preservation practices. **The Regional History Museum** reserves the right to refuse access to certain objects in the collection. **The Regional History Museum** may also limit the number of researchers using particular collections at one time.

Users must comply with **The Regional History Museum**'s procedures regarding examination and handling of objects, personal photography, and the use or dissemination of collection information. Requests to reproduce visual images (photography and video) of the collections must be made in advance and are subject to **The Regional History Museum's** publication guidelines and fee schedule. All image use must be credited as required and a gratis copy of any resulting work must be provided to **The Regional History Museum** upon publication. To protect the confidentiality of donors and the security of the collection, access to certain information in the object files may be restricted (e.g., donor contact and other personal information will not be provided). **The Regional History Museum** reserves the right to deny access to other types of information contained in its collection records, such as insurance and appraisal values, but in all cases legal guidelines regarding privacy and freedom of information will be observed, as applicable.

XI. Intellectual Property

A. Photography & Reproduction

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, USC) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions or images of copyrighted material.

Filming of the collection is not permitted.

Photography of collections is permitted given **the use is for non-commercial or educational purposes. The Collections Committee provides permission for photography in the collections and the researcher is required to complete a researcher form.** Requests are made by **contacting the Collections Committee and completing a research form. Commercial entities need to complete an application for commercial photography. The Collections Committee** is responsible for approving requests for photography.

Photocopying or scanning of collections or collection documentation is permitted given **the researcher discusses their intent and need for photocopies with collections staff** Requests are made by **completing a researcher form** **The Director of Collections** is responsible for approving requests for photocopying.

B. Publishing

In granting permission to publish material obtained from **The Regional History Museum**, the **The Regional History Museum** does not assume responsibility for infringement of copyright or of publication rights of material which may be held by others; the publisher assumes all responsibility for claims under the Copyright Law of the United States or for libel claims which may be made as a result of the publication.

The publisher agrees to credit the Organization “**Courtesy of the Regional History Museum**” as the source of reproductions in all published works. A dissertation or thesis is considered to be a published work.

It is **the Curator’s** responsibility to determine whether materials in the collections are in the public domain or are protected by copyright. A statement of permission must be obtained from the holder of the rights, and proper credits given, for all reproductions that are not the intellectual property of **The Regional History Museum**. The responsibility for obtaining additional permission required for the publication of collections remains with the publisher of the material.

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Permission is granted for one-time publication use only. In granting permission to publish, **The Regional History Museum** does not surrender its own right to publish any of the materials in its collection or to grant publication permissions to others.

