

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

*The mission of the Arizona Historical Society is
to collect, preserve, and interpret
the history of Arizona, the West, and Northern Mexico as it pertains to Arizona.*

The purpose of this Collections Policy is to establish rules for the acquisition, preservation, and use of the historical collections (objects, photographs, books, maps, manuscripts, letters, electronic data, audio storage instruments, etc.) of the Arizona Historical Society. This policy defines the collections and identifies administrative objectives, including legal and ethical obligations for managing the collections, in keeping with the Society's stated mission. It is the Society's responsibility to maintain these collections in perpetuity. It is, therefore, important that the Policy is adhered to and that it accurately reflect the Society's mission. This policy shall be reviewed every five years by the Collections Committee of the Arizona Historical Society Board of Directors.

This policy is one component (Section A) of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual, a guiding document that includes procedures for implementing the policy (Section B) and a Collecting Plan (Section C, also known as an Intellectual Framework) to shape collections development.

II. GOALS OF COLLECTING

The Society's purpose in collecting is to preserve, interpret, and make available significant historical materials relating to Arizona, the West, and northern Mexico as it pertains to Arizona. Collections are used for research, education, exhibition, and loan. The Society's goal is to use these collections to stimulate an interest in and an understanding of the history of Arizona and its relationship to the region

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

and nation. The Society's collections and programs preserve Arizona's heritage for all its citizens and visitors, present and future.

III. COLLECTIONS DECISION-MAKING RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

The Society's State Board of Directors has responsibility for the collections. Staff Collections Committees in each division have the authority to select materials for the permanent collections in accordance with the Collections Policy and the Collecting Plan. (The Collecting Plan is in Section C of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual.) Each staff Collections Committee shall be composed of a minimum of three professional staff members: the Director of the geographic division, and at least two other staff members appointed by that Division Director, whose job duties include responsibility for the care of collections. When a geographic division divides its collections among two or more departments, it may elect to establish separate Staff Collections Committees for those departments. Some divisions or departments have insufficient professional staff to meet the minimum number of members to establish a Staff Collections Committee. In such a case the Division Director shall request of another Division Director that an appropriate professional staff member from that division be permitted to serve on the committee.

Directors of the remaining three geographic divisions shall regularly review the decisions made by each Staff Collections Committee.

Individual collections staff members may **provisionally** receive materials on behalf of the Society and shall refer these materials, with an accompanying temporary custody receipt, to the appropriate Staff Collections Committee for consideration. The Staff Collections Committees have the authority 1) to select items to be included in the permanent collection in accordance with the Collections Policy and Collecting Plan, 2) to make the initial decision (in a hierarchy of reviews) to recommend

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

deaccessioning an object, 3) to approve a request for an outgoing loan, and 4) to approve, within thirty days of initiation, an incoming loan. These committees shall keep a written record of their decisions and shall promptly notify the Directors of the other geographic Divisions of their decisions.

The Directors of the other geographic Divisions shall review the decisions sent to them from the Staff Collections Committees and within five business days from the time the decisions were received, a Division Director may request a clarification, or that the Staff Collections Committee reconsider a decision. The applicable Staff Collections Committee Chair, or his designee, shall respond by describing the action taken, within five business days from the time he received the request from the Division Director. The determination of the Staff Collections Committee shall be final.

IV. CRITERIA FOR COLLECTING

The Society's Collecting Plan (Section C of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual) shall address in detail the criteria that guide acquisition decisions.

A. Geographical Focus: The focus of the Society's collections is Arizona, which has in the past been part of several political and geographical subdivisions: New Spain (1540-1821), the States of Sonora and Baja California, Mexico (1821-1854), the Territory of New Mexico (1848-1863), the Territory of Arizona (1863-1912), and since 1912, the State of Arizona (1912-present).

B. Time Period: The collections begin with the arrival of the Spaniards in 1540 and extend to the present day. Within this time frame, each division may emphasize different time periods appropriate to its unique focus.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

C. Formats: The Society may hold real and personal property. Real property may include buildings with historical and/or architectural significance, such as the Sosa-Carrillo-Fremont House, the Charles O. Brown House, the Sanguinetti House, the Molina Block, the Mellon House, the Coconino County Hospital for the Indigent, the Doney Cabin, the Strawberry Schoolhouse, the Arizona Historical Society Museum at Papago Park in Tempe, and the Main Museum building of the Southern Division. Personal property is understood to include, but is not limited to, objects, art, books, maps, manuscripts, ephemera, newspapers, photographs, and audio-visual and electronic media.

V. COLLECTING CONSIDERATIONS

The uniqueness of the Society resides in its collections and the historical and educational information they contain. The quality and relevance of the permanent collections are vital to supporting the Society's mission of historical research, education, and interpretation.

Accessioning is the formal process used to accept and record an item into the permanent collections. It is the result of review and selection, to determine that the item meets certain mission-related criteria, and is worthy of becoming part of the permanent collection. Acquisitions must be relevant to the purposes and priorities of the Society. A well-defined collection policy and consistently applied procedures serve as tools in developing and maintaining collections that support the agency's mission. Resources are limited; therefore, the Society must be selective and consider the quality, attribution, research value, costs of storage and conservation, and the availability of similar materials at other repositories.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

A. Quality:

The Society strives to acquire materials that are in acceptable physical condition, possess intrinsic or aesthetic value, and best represent their type.

B. Attribution:

The Arizona Historical Society collects materials that have historical significance and relevance to the interpretation of Arizona history. These are materials created or used by Arizona residents and individuals or groups that had an impact on Arizona history. Priority shall be given to materials whose attribution (i.e. documentation of creation, ownership, or use) is known. In the absence of attributed items, the agency may collect unattributed artifacts that are representative of materials known to have been used in Arizona. These items, known as “type pieces”, are appropriate until similar, but attributed items can be obtained, at which time the unattributed items may be deaccessioned.

C. Research Value:

The Society's collections possess value for staff and researchers to document and interpret history. A relationship by origin or subject matter to items already in the Society's collections is likely to add to the historic value of the original material. For example, the Buehman photographs and negatives in the Library and Archives Department are complemented by the Buehman studio's view camera in the Museum Collections Department.

D. Cost-Benefit Analysis:

The Society collects historically significant items related to its purpose and those that it will be

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

able to store, preserve, and document. The costs of storing, conserving, processing, and cataloguing items will be considered. The curatorial usefulness and relevance of the material to the collection should be equal to or greater than the costs involved in accepting and permanently curating them.

E. Coordinating Collecting:

It is imperative that the Society coordinate collecting activities within the agency itself and among the state's other museums and libraries. The Society's Collecting Plan (Section C of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual) addresses these issues. Considering the collecting policies of other Arizona repositories within each division's area will allow the Society to avoid unnecessary duplication of type collections. A selective focus for collecting and building on the Society's unique strengths will result in quality collections.

VI. ETHICS

A. General Guidelines:

- All staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society shall abide by the Collections Policy and by the agency's Code of Ethics. (See Appendices for the agency's Code of Ethics.)
- In addition, staff and volunteers shall abide by the ethics statements of their particular disciplines. (See Appendices for the Code of Ethics of the American Association of Museums and the Code of Ethics of the American Association for State and Local History as examples.)
- The Standards of Conduct in Title 2 of the Arizona Administrative Code are incorporated herein by this reference. (See Appendices for Title 2, Chapter 5, Article 5, R2-5-501.)

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

B. Conflict of Interest Policy:

The underlying principle of the Society's conflict of interest code is that any person having a close relationship with the Society must put the interests and well-being of the institution before his/her own interests. Violations of ethics policies may result in the individual's dismissal from the employ of the Society, from a board of the Society, or from a volunteer position with the Society.

- Staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society must protect the confidentiality of any privileged or proprietary information to which they may be privy as a result of their association with the Society. Staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society may not use proprietary information acquired as a result of their association with the Society for their personal gain or for that of others.
- Staff, board members, and volunteers shall neither participate in nor encourage any practice or transaction that creates the appearance of unethical or illicit activity or personal gain.
- Staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society may neither participate in nor encourage any transaction or practice that might jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the Society.
- The Arizona Historical Society's Board of Directors entrusts the Staff Collections Committee in each division with the responsibility and authority for acquisitions decisions. Division Directors shall routinely review acquisition decisions following established procedures. Board members shall refer potential acquisitions to the appropriate Staff Collections Committee.
- Staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society shall not compete with the Society's collecting interests for materials that might be acquired by the institution. They should be scrupulous in publicly disclosing any collecting interests that might be construed as a conflict of interest.
- By law, staff **shall not** provide written or oral financial appraisals on real or personal property for any patron or prospective donor.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

- Individual board members shall not be involved in the deaccession or disposition of collection items until these items are brought to the attention of the Collections Committee of the Society's Board of Directors.
- Staff, board members, and volunteers of the Society shall not acquire any material deaccessioned from the Society's collections except in the same manner as offered to the general public.

VII. COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A. Documentation:

The Society shall maintain adequate permanent records identifying its holdings and monitoring their movement and the Society shall comply with state records retention regulations. Original, actively used collections management records shall be housed in secure locations recommended by staff and approved by the Division Director, with duplicates of vital records stored physically and/or electronically, among the divisions of the agency for additional security.

Accession records that document the acquisition of collected items and identify them shall be kept as permanent Society documents. Deaccession and disposition records that document the reasons for removal from the collections, the levels of approval, disposition, and the subsequent owner, when applicable, shall be kept as permanent Society documents. Records of all loan transactions shall be considered permanent. User access and collection location records shall be maintained by appropriate collections staff on a records retention schedule to be determined by the Staff Collections Committee.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

B. Methods of Collecting:

The acquisition of collection material may be made through gift, bequest, exchange, and purchase. Income generated from sales of deaccessioned collection items shall be used only for purchase of other items for the collections. The staff shall actively seek to collect desirable materials for the collections based upon that division's Mission Statement and the Collecting Plan. (See Appendix for division Mission Statements and Section C for the Collecting Plan.)

C. Collecting Plan or Intellectual Framework:

The collections staff of each geographical subdivision of the Society shall develop a written Collecting Plan, also known as an Intellectual Framework. The Collecting Plan defines the broad themes represented by the Society's current holdings and identifies the key concepts that the Society will use to develop its interpretive and educational goals, with reference to each Division's Strategic Plan and Mission Statement. The Collecting Plan shall emphasize: 1) strengthening of areas of concentration within the collections, and 2) filling weaknesses or gaps by more aggressive acquisition strategies. This Collecting Plan shall be approved by the Executive Director. Every five years the Staff Collections Committees shall review the Collecting Plan. The Collecting Plan serves as a guide to each Staff Collections Committee in its decision-making.

D. Legal Transfer of Ownership:

All items to be considered for inclusion in the collections of the Society must be free and clear of restrictions or qualifications of any kind. Rare exceptions may be granted by the Staff Collections Committees, for example for library and archival materials that have limited-term privacy issues. The donor(s) shall hold clear legal title to the material being offered. The transfer of ownership

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

rights from the donor(s) shall be documented on a legal instrument of conveyance, signed by both parties. In addition, the donor(s) must understand that upon issuance of a signed gift acknowledgment, ownership shall reside with the State of Arizona, with the Arizona Historical Society acting as trustee.

The Society shall not knowingly acquire materials for the collections that have been obtained in violation of state or federal law, international conventions pertaining to illicit exportation or ownership of cultural material, or that contain endangered plant or animal species. Nor shall the Society knowingly collect human remains; American Indian sacred, religious, or burial material; or illegally collected archaeological material. The Society's collections staff is responsible for making a reasonable effort to determine the legal status of all prospective donations.

E. Other Uses for Collections:

The Society distinguishes between the quality of care given to artifacts that are held in perpetuity (i.e. entered into the accession record and thereby formally accessioned into the permanent holdings), and props, auxiliary material, and reproductions, which may be consumed through use. With the donor's acknowledgement, the Staff Collections Committee may refer materials that were not accepted into the permanent collection to other appropriate departments for possible use as props, auxiliary material, and reproductions.

F. Deaccessioning and Disposition:

Deaccessioning is the process of permanently and legally removing an object from the museum's permanent collection. The Society's collections are held as a public trust and it is essential that there be an ongoing appraisal of the relevance of collections. Materials shall be retained if they support

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

the mission and goals of the Society. Those items that no longer contribute to the Society's stated mission and goals shall be deaccessioned following established procedures. (See Collections Management Procedures in Section B of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual. Due to the serious nature of the Society's holding property in trust for the citizens of Arizona, extraordinary consideration must be provided in the deaccessioning and disposition of such property. Items to be deaccessioned must be recommended in turn, by the appropriate division's Staff Collections Committee, the Directors of the geographic Divisions acting as a Review Committee, the Society's Executive Director, the standing Collections Committee of the Society's Board of Directors, and the Society's Board of Directors.

Before an item is presented to the Collections Committee of the Society's Board of Directors, the staff must determine whether the Society is legally free to transfer title to or dispose of the item. Disposition is the process of physically transferring custody of an item that has been deaccessioned. Acceptable methods of disposition include discard, exchange, public sale, and gift. The method of disposition for Board-approved deaccessioned items shall be determined by the Staff Collections Committees. The disposition of deaccessioned material shall be in accordance with this approved Collections Policy and with professional ethics. Preference shall be given to transferring Arizona-related material to an institution where it can serve an educational or research purpose, where it can be curated as part of a collection for public benefit, and where it can receive professional care and conservation. The staff shall inform the State Board of the method of disposition.

G. Access to Collections:

The Society maintains its collections to support its mission of historical research, education, and interpretation. The Society staff shall not deny access to processed collections by individuals or

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

groups for research, provided security and safety of the collections can be assured. The Society's goal is to share the rich history of the state while retaining the intrinsic and economic value of its collections. Research use of collections can be damaging to the material. The appropriate means for achieving access and use must be tempered by the importance of providing adequate security, safety, and proper environmental control for the material. Individual and institutional researchers wishing to use Society collections shall be required to use established reference room procedures or to make appointments with appropriate collections personnel. As a preservation measure, staff, in its discretion, may provide facsimiles to researchers if original documents are rare and/or fragile.

H. Publication Use of Collections:

The Society maintains ownership rights to its holdings, may charge fees for permission to publish material from its collections, and shall require a credit line accompanying the published matter, acknowledging the Society as its source. If material is protected by copyright, it is the researcher's responsibility to abide by copyright regulations in seeking permission to use the material.

I. Incoming Loans:

The Society may borrow materials from individuals or institutions for use in exhibitions. The Society is obligated to provide a level of care and security for loaned items equal to the care given to its own collections. The Society is obligated to pay all costs associated with incoming loans. Reasonable restrictions placed by the lender upon the loaned material shall be considered during negotiation and, if approved, duly noted and adhered to. Signed documents describing incoming loan material, the duration, and the circumstances of the loan must be created and kept on file. A loan may be made for a maximum of one year, renewable if both parties are agreeable.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

J. Outgoing Loans:

Outgoing loans to museums and libraries for exhibitions provide additional public access to Society collections and help the agency fulfill its mission. Requests to borrow Society collections shall be brought to the attention of the appropriate Staff Collections Committee. Requests for outgoing loans must be evaluated by appropriate department staff for any negative effects the loan would have upon the material concerned. Original Library and Archives materials are usually not loaned out due to the needs of on-site researchers, the fragile condition of some of the documents, and their rarity.

However, facsimiles may be made available to borrowers in lieu of originals.

The Society reserves the right to impose restrictions upon the borrower regarding conservation treatment, framing, packing, shipping, mounting, security, insurance, and environmental control, publicity, marketing, and online access. The borrower is obligated to pay all costs associated with outgoing loans. The Staff Collections Committee shall review all loan requests and approve all outgoing loans. Signed documents describing the nature of the material being loaned, the duration, and the circumstances of the loan must be created and kept on file.

VIII. CARE AND MAINTENANCE

A. Preservation and Conservation:

State statutes require the Society to preserve the collections for present and future generations. The Society acknowledges that its obligation of collecting is limited by its ability to adequately care for that which it holds in trust and that the preservation and conservation of the collections are part of the stewardship obligation assumed by the Society.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

The Society's administration is committed to encouraging and supporting professional development in the areas of preservation and conservation, and the staff shall take responsibility for ensuring that their training remains current.

Preventive preservation is a cost-effective strategy for long-term care of historical material. At a minimum, the collections must be housed in premises that are kept clean; protected from fire, theft, damage, and abuse; and shielded from destructive environmental elements. Managerial decisions shall take into consideration any negative effects that proposed new or continuing programs will have upon the well-being of the collections. The Society acknowledges that in addition to a stable environment and protective enclosures, the keys to preventive preservation, many materials in the collections need additional professional conservation treatment. The Society shall make funds available to provide for conservation needs. Written procedures governing all aspects of care and use shall be prepared by collections staff. (See Collections Management Procedures in Section B of the Arizona Historical Society's Collections Manual.)

B. Storage:

The collection storage areas shall provide a safe environment. Staff shall maintain an ongoing appraisal of storage conditions in light of rapidly evolving professional standards and new technologies. Improvement plans that upgrade both storage areas and individual housing containers shall be implemented. Appropriate archival quality materials shall be used to provide protective enclosures.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

C. Environment:

Professional collection management requires an understanding of the potential for damage that may be caused by environmental factors. A stable environment with appropriate mechanical and management controls for temperature, humidity, light, dust, pollutants, and pests shall be provided wherever collections are located. The premises in which collections are housed shall be kept in good repair. Monitoring of the collection storage environment shall be an ongoing process.

D. Inventory:

As part of the maintenance of collections, physical inventories must be performed at regularly scheduled intervals by collections staff. The inventory schedule shall be determined by collection staff based upon the size of the collections, amount of use, and other applicable factors.

IX. RISK MANAGEMENT

A. Insurance:

The State of Arizona maintains self-coverage insurance for its own collections through the Risk Management Division of the Arizona Department of Administration. Items in the Society's buildings as loans are also covered. Insurance coverage on outgoing loans is the responsibility of the borrower.

B. Hazards in the Workplace:

It is possible that some items in the collections may be hazardous to staff and visitors or to other collections. It is the responsibility of the Society's Executive Director to provide a workplace free of hazardous materials and dangerous environments. It is the responsibility of the collections staff

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

to be aware of potential hazards from the collections themselves, to take steps to mitigate them through proper housing, limited handling, environmental or physical stabilization, and to seek administrative and/or technical guidance, when necessary.

C. Integrated Pest Management:

As part of the long-term care of the collections, an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan dealing with insect and pest control shall be implemented by staff. All collections staff members shall be trained to carry out the Integrated Pest Management Plan.

D. Emergency Preparedness:

The collections staff of each geographical division of the Society shall develop a written Emergency Preparedness (EP) Plan for preventing, as well as salvaging and recovering from, disastrous events. The plan shall be applicable to visitors, guests, staff, specific structures, collections, and vital records and shall be designed to allow the Society to return to normal operations as quickly as possible.

E. Security:

The staff of each division shall put in place security procedures that are appropriate to visitors, guests, staff, the premises, the collections held on those premises, and to the potential risks from fire, theft, vandalism, accident, and catastrophic event. Multi-level security procedures shall address both public and non-public hours. At a minimum, detection and suppression systems for fire shall be maintained in all areas where collections are held, used, or exhibited. Authority and responsibility for movement of collections both within the building and off the premises shall reside with the

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

collections management staff of each division. Keys and procedures for access to collections areas shall be carefully controlled by designated staff. Visitors shall be recorded and escorted into any restricted access area.

X. COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY MONITORING

The Collections Management Policy of the Arizona Historical Society shall be formally approved by the Board of Directors and shall be reviewed every five years by the staff. The Society's Executive Director shall ensure that this policy is implemented. To accomplish this, the Staff Collections Committees of each division shall prepare written quarterly reports of acquisitions and loans for the Society's Executive Director, and for distribution to the standing Collections Committee of the Society's Board of Directors.

ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S COLLECTIONS MANUAL
SECTION A--COLLECTIONS POLICY

APPENDICES

The Appendices are the implementation components of the policy, which now require modification for consistency with the revised policy.