

COLLECTION POLICY

Policy Number:	BP # 139
Effective Date:	January 2013
Application:	Applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society (EWSHS)
History:	Originally added to the Policy & Procedure Manual in January 2013 and approved by the Board of Trustees and renumbered in January 2017.

General Statement of Purpose

- A. Authority:** RCW 27.34.070 designates the Eastern Washington State Historical Society as "a trustee for the state whose powers and duties include: To collect, catalog, preserve, and interpret objects, manuscripts, sites, photographs, and other materials illustrative of the cultural, artistic, and natural history of this state." [RCW 27.34.070 (1) (a)]. The Society's Articles of Incorporation empower the Society to develop collections that are of significant artistic, cultural and historic merit.
 - B. Mission Statement:** The mission of the Eastern Washington State Historical Society (MAC) is to actively engage all people in the appreciation of arts and culture through collections stewardship, exhibits, and programs that educate and entertain.
 - C. Purpose of Collection Policy:** This policy articulates the framework by which the Society and its representatives pursue the mission of the museum through the development and stewardship of collections.
 - D. Responsibility for Implementation of the Collection Policy:** The Executive Director of the Society shall be responsible for implementing the collection policy.
 - E. Ethics Statement:** It is the policy and practice of the Society to require its Staff, Board of Trustees, and other representatives to act responsibly, ethically, and legally in acquiring and disposing of collections.
-

Definitions

ACQUISITION: Item(s) accepted by the Society to further its mission.

ACCESSION:

- (1) Acquisition(s) formally accepted into the Society's permanent collection;
- (2) The process of formally accepting and recording an item into the Society's permanent collection.

COLLECTING POLICY: Defines the framework for acquiring, caring for, and disposing of collections.

DEACCESSION:

- (1) Any formally accessioned acquisition which is removed from the permanent collection;
- (2) The process of removing an accession.

DEVELOPMENT: Activities undertaken by the Society to raise funds for museum operation or capital expenses and endowment.

DISPOSAL: The process of disposing of deaccessioned items.

PERMANENT COLLECTION: Acquisitions that have been formally accessioned by the Society.

LOANS: Temporary transfers of objects and materials to or from the Society that do not involve a change of ownership.

OBJECT OR MATERIALS PLACED IN THE CUSTODY OF THE SOCIETY: Objects or materials left with the Society for other than loan purposes (for example, for attribution, identification, examination for possible gift or purchase, custodial storage).

Collecting Policies

A. Acquisition

1. The authority to acquire materials and objects for the permanent collection is designated to the Executive Director by the Board of Trustees. In turn, authority is granted to the appropriate curators or library staff who make selections for the permanent collection.
2. Materials and objects may be acquired by purchase, gift, exchange, levy by creditors, abandonment, and reversionary clause.
3. Conditions of transfer are stipulated in a legal instrument of conveyance, which describes the materials to be transferred, and is permanently on file at the Society.
4. Materials and objects acquired for the permanent collection are obtained with title, free and clear and with full rights. If material is accepted with restrictions or limitations the conditions are stated clearly on the instrument of conveyance and become part of the permanent accession record.

B. Deaccession

1. Only the Board of Trustees, after the recommendation of the Executive Director, has the authority to approve the deaccession of material from the Society's permanent collection.
2. Materials and objects approved for deaccession may be disposed of in a manner deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.
3. Income from the disposal of deaccessioned materials is restricted to collection development, enhancement, and management activities.

C. Loans

1. Loans Out
 - a. The Society lends objects and materials for specified periods of time from its permanent collections to museums, galleries, and institutions for educational exhibits and cultural purposes.
 - b. No loans are made to individuals.
 - c. Loans are made upon the approval of the CEO or designated staff.
2. Loans In
 - a. Incoming loans may be accepted from individuals or institutions for a specified period of time for educational and cultural purposes.
 - b. No indefinite or long-term loans shall be routinely accepted. The Board of Trustees with the recommendation of the CEO may authorize exceptions.
 - c. The Society may enter into custodial agreements with tribal groups, museums, or institutions with missions similar to the Society in order to protect and preserve materials and objects that are relevant to the mission of the Society.
 - d. The Society accepts objects and materials for the purpose of identification and for the purpose of consideration for acquisition or loan purposes.

Acquisition Guidelines

- A. Scope of Collections:** Objects and materials selected for the permanent collection represent three major categories: regional history, visual art, and American Indian and other cultures.
- B. General Criteria**
 - 1. The Society subscribes to a policy of selective acquisition.
 - 2. Only materials that relate to and are consistent with the purposes and stated scope of collections of the Society and its programs shall be considered for accessioning into the permanent collection.
 - 3. The Society adheres to generally accepted museum practice with regard to State, Federal, and International law.
- C. Acquisition for Development Purposes:** The Society may acquire objects and materials for development purposes. Such activities must not compete with acquisition for the permanent collection. The CEO establishes the procedures for handling and accounting for such gifts.

Collection Care and Records Management

- A. Collection Care:** The Society shall care for objects and materials in its custody through appropriate allocation of resources and adherence to contemporary museum, archival, conservation, and cultural practices.
- B. Records Management**
 - 1. All records of the permanent collections, including records of conveyance, accession records, loan records, and registration records shall be organized according to professional standards and housed to ensure their preservation, access, and retrieval.
 - 2. Records of objects and materials taken in by the Society as loans, including loan agreements and registration records, are retained permanently and are organized according to professional standards. They are housed to ensure their preservation, access and retrieval.

Access

- A. Access to Collections**
 - 1. The Society's collections shall be made available for legitimate study, research, inquiry, and examination by responsible parties depending upon staff availability, conservation considerations, condition of collections, restrictions to collections, or purpose or nature of examination
 - 2. Access to unprocessed collections is permitted for review purposes only. However, no object may be removed, copied, loaned, exhibited, or photographed until the collection is inventoried and organized.
- B. Access to Records:** The Society's collection records shall be made available for legitimate study, research, inquiry, and examination by responsible parties depending upon staff availability, condition of records, restrictions to records, or purpose or nature of examination.

References that apply to this policy

RCW 27.34.070 & RCW 27.34.070(1)(a)	Articles of Incorporation
Mission Statement	Collecting Plan