



COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted April 9, 2013

Adopted March 23, 2021

This policy first defines the purpose of the Florence County Museum (FCM) and the scope of its collection, and then sets forth policies for the acquisition and disposal of FCM objects and for the management of access to the collection and its records. This policy applies to those objects loaned temporarily by individuals or institutions to the FCM and those objects collected by or donated to the FCM.

This document will be reviewed and ratified by the FCM Board at least once every five years to insure that it remains consistent with the goals of the museum.

This policy may be amended at any time by a two-thirds majority vote of the FCM Board voting in a regular meeting. An amendment will not be voted on until the meeting subsequent to the meeting in which the amendment was proposed.

I. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

- A. The Florence County Museum Board (FCMB) shall mean the members of the FCMB established in accordance with Florence County Ordinance No. 12-2017/18, which sets forth the roles and responsibilities of the board and county. (Attachment 1)
- B. The staff shall mean the current professional museum staff employed by Florence County.
- C. Acquire shall mean to obtain ownership by means of a gift, transfer from another agency, exchange, bequest, purchase, or field collection.
- D. Lease shall mean to obtain temporary ownership of a collection from another agency with the intent for exhibition and long-term care. Objects leased in support of the museum will be treated

with the same respect, care, and guided policies as with the permanent collection.

- E. Accession shall mean all the material conveyed to the FCM and entered into the collection in accordance with the Florence County Museum Collections Management Policy.
- F. Deaccession shall mean the deliberate and permanent removal of objects from the collection by means of gift, transfer, sale, exchange, redeposition, or disposal.
- G. Loan shall mean the temporary physical transfer of objects from one institution or individual to another without a change of ownership.
- H. Salvaged specimens shall mean any animal or part of an animal that has been collected by an FCM staff member after the animal died of natural or accidental causes or was acquired from authorized persons.

II. STATEMENT OF MISSION

The mission of the Florence County Museum (FCM) is to provide a dynamic sanctuary for the preservation, interpretation, and exhibition of objects of scientific, historic, and artistic significance that are unique or of special interest to the people of Florence County and the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

III. DEFINITION OF COLLECTION

The Permanent Collection contains prime exhibit and research materials that support the adopted mission.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy has been established by the FCMB, which is responsible for its administration, but the primary responsibility for its implementation and application lies with the staff employed by Florence County in accordance with Ordinance No. 10-2017/18 (Attachment 1).

The FCMB has ultimate responsibility for the acquisition, deaccession, and disposition of FCM collections. The staff makes recommendations to the FCMB relating to the collection.

V. ACQUISITIONS

A. Scope

The FCM will collect, house, and exhibit objects pertinent to the artistic, historical, and scientific significance from the County of Florence and the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

B. Collection items, whether works of art, books, manuscripts, photographs, digital and written documents, artifacts, or specimens from the natural world, are acquired by gift, bequest, purchase, exchange, or any transaction by which title to an object passes to the FCM. In all cases, acquisitions should meet the basic scope of the institution. These assume that the collection items are:

1. consistent with the mission of the FCM;
2. useful in the FCM's educational, exhibition, research or interpretation activities;
3. received in reasonably good condition so that they may be preserved with as little alteration as possible;
4. accompanied by verifiable provenance data;
5. unencumbered by donor, trademark, copyright, or other restrictions.

C. In consultation, the curator shall determine the appropriateness of an object for the collection and the conditions under which it shall be approved for accessioning (formal inclusion) or deaccessioning (permanent removal).

D. Under supervision of the director, the curator of collections shall manage the collections and recommend all accessions and deaccessions. The curator shall be the staff member authorized to accept collection objects into the temporary custody of the FCM. All intended gifts should have a signed receipt. All acquisitions shall be promptly accessioned upon acceptance and receipt.

E. Objects considered for acquisition valued, in the judgment of the director, above or needing conservation or restoration in the amount of \$10,000 or more, or that require special

permanent accommodations, must be referred to the full Florence County Museum Board for approval.

F. Appraisals

1. The valuation of gifts remains the donor's responsibility. Neither the museum nor its staff shall appraise or otherwise value objects for donors or prospective donors.
2. The FCM will not pay for an appraisal of items before they are donated and accessioned to the collection. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the FCMB. Such approval will be given only in unusual circumstances.

VI. DOCUMENTATION

- A. It is the responsibility of the director, who reports to the Florence County Administrator, to insure that staff maintain adequate and up-to-date records to the FCM permanent collection. All objects entered into the permanent collection must be registered and catalogued.
- B. All correspondence, instruments of conveyance, invoices, research reports and notes, and other documents relating to the collections shall be filed as part of the collections records. These files shall include information that is not included in a catalogue. Collections records shall be filed in a central location.
- C. At the time objects are acquired, the staff shall collect as much information as possible from the donor or seller. It is the responsibility of the staff to determine the authenticity of objects acquired for the collection.
- D. Nothing acquired for resale at the FCM shall be accessioned into the permanent collection.
- E. Staff members are permitted to build and maintain personal collections. However, they must seek to avoid real or apparent conflicts of interest between their personal collecting goals and those of the FCM, the latter of which must take precedence. Staff members should scrupulously abide by the guidelines set forth by the American Alliance of Museums current Code of Ethics.

VII. DEACCESSIONING AND OBJECT REMOVAL

Deaccessioning is the formal removal of an object(s) from a museum's permanent collection. It is normally followed by a disposition of the object by sale or exchange. Deaccessioning is an ongoing professional responsibility of the museum, undertaken for collection enhancement. The museum, for any one of the reasons below, may find it necessary or desirable to amend its collections by deaccession.

The Florence County Museum is home to three major collections: the Florence County Museum Permanent Collection, the Wright Collection of Southern Art, and the Florence Museum Trustee Collection. All collections are housed at the Florence County Museum and occupy valuable exhibition and storage space. Museum staff treat all objects with the same respect and in doing so must assess their value and the value of each object to the environment it occupies. It is the responsibility of museum staff to ensure their safety and plan for the future growth of the museum.

Objects recommended for deaccession are directed to the organization with jurisdiction over that artifact. It is the responsibility of that organization to approve or deny the recommendation of the museum staff for deaccession and subsequent disposition.

In the event an independent organization does not approve the recommendation for deaccession, the Florence County Museum Board must assess the required storage needed to retain possession at the Florence County Museum. If the Florence County Museum Board determines that it cannot accommodate the storage of said object, the process of removing the object will be initiated.

The official recommendation for removal will follow the same process as those recommended for deaccession. If an item is approved for removal from the museum, the appropriate organization will be notified within 24 hours of that decision and will have four weeks to take possession of the object. Any item not removed will be considered abandoned property and will become the property of the Florence County Museum under the direction of the Florence County Museum Board.

Objects considered for deaccession may include the following:

- A. Objects that are not consistent with the mission and goals of the museum.

- B. Objects that are determined to be below the level of quality necessary to advance the mission or possess little potential for research, scholarship, or educational purposes.**
- C. Objects that have been forged or misrepresented. A forgery is defined as a work that was intentionally made or sold for the purpose of defrauding buyers, or that has been altered in any way toward the same end. For ethnographic art, this definition also includes objects not made or used in their traditional contexts. Forgeries do not include studio work, copies, imitations, and similar works made without deceitful intent and sold in good faith by a reputable party. Objects misrepresented by the seller include forgeries and objects with falsified provenance.**
- D. Duplicate and redundant objects. An example would be two prints of the same state. The museum shall retain the superior example; condition and source shall also be considered. Redundant works include objects that are either duplicates, or similar variants, such as slightly different states of the same print. They also include works closely related in subject and style by the same artist or school but varying in quality, condition, and interest.**
- E. Objects damaged or deteriorated beyond reasonable repair.**
- F. Objects for which the museum is not able to provide proper storage.**
- G. Objects in art historical areas or cultures in which the museum ceases to collect.**

PROCEDURES

The curator of collections will determine whether an object may be considered for deaccessioning based on the guidelines provided herein. The curator will present the deaccession proposal to the director for approval prior to beginning the formal procedures. The following process will be followed.

A. Recommendation for Deaccession

The curator will initiate a Recommendation for Deaccession form for each proposed item. This written justification includes an evaluation of

the significance (artistic, historic, cultural, etc.) and its position in the collection, discusses provenance, valuation, reasons for deaccessioning, and proposed disposition.

B. Review of Records

The registrar will examine the object's records to determine whether the museum has legal title, and will review donor information for additional requests made at the time of donation. If the proposed deaccession candidate was a gift, the curator will examine its historical and donor files for any information that may influence the decision to deaccession.

C. Outside Opinion

The Museum will seek a written opinion from an outside expert for objects defined as works valued at more than \$10,000. Evaluations based on photographs will not be accepted for the purposes of deaccession of a significant object. If the reason for deaccession is condition, a conservation report may accompany the Recommendation for Deaccession Form.

D. Approval to Proceed with Deaccession

The director must review the recommendation form and give approval to proceed with all deaccession candidates requiring an appraisal.

E. Appraisal

One or more outside appraisals for objects of significant value are recommended, especially those that might be sold or traded.

F. Final Review by Director

The director will review all proposed deaccessions prior to review by the Florence County Museum Board or title holding organization. Only those approved by the director will be considered.

G. Presentation

Items recommended for deaccession must be presented to the appropriate Board of Directors. Approved items must be processed and removed from the Florence County Museum within four weeks after the approval.

H. Disposal

Each deaccessioned object shall be disposed of in a means appropriate to the item. In many cases, this will be by public auction or consignment to or trade with a reputable dealer, but some objects may best be disposed of by transferring them to another institution, or in cases of objects beyond reasonable repair, the museum may wish to destroy them. Disposal will not take place in a way that creates a conflict of interest for the museum or member of any board of director.

As is applicable to all staff, board members, and volunteers of FCM, directly or indirectly purchasing an object that is being deaccessioned is a violation of the FCM Code of Ethics.

In the cases of stolen, forged, or misrepresented objects, the curator and director will determine their proper disposition. For purchases, the museum may seek a refund, credit, or exchange from the dealer or auction house.

It is the duty of the organization holding the title to the deaccessioned object to either transfer the responsibility of disposal to the curator and director, or remove the item from the collection as outlined in the APPROVED Deaccession Form.

I. Use of Proceeds

The funds received from the sale of objects will be used to enhance the collection. Funds will be used to cover the purchase of objects for the permanent collection and may also be used to pay for specific costs directly associated with such acquisitions. Such expenditures of funds may be used to cover framing, mounting, photography, conservation, packing, transportation, evaluation, sales fees, and processing costs. Objects purchased with deaccession funds will be publicly credited to the original donor(s) as follows: "Gift of [donor's original credit] by exchange" or "Through prior gift of [donor's original credit]."

J. Documentation

The registrar will document the deaccession in the permanent collection management database. A photograph must be on record prior to disposal. The completed Recommendation for Deaccession

Form (including the amount realized from sale) will become part of the object's permanent historical file.

REMOVAL OF OBJECTS

All items must be removed from the Florence County Museum within four weeks from the date of approval by the Florence County Museum Board. Any item not under the jurisdiction of the Florence County Museum Board and not removed in the policy timeline will be considered abandoned property and will become the property of the Florence County Museum.

VIII. LOANS

Since the FCM cannot hope to acquire titles to all the objects it needs in its interpretive programs, necessary objects may be acquired from other institutions and from private individuals. In addition, for a limited time, custody of objects belonging to others for the purpose of examination, authentication and research will be accepted.

The FCM also recognizes that it owns objects that can benefit the programs of other museums. It will, therefore, lend objects to other museums whenever feasible for a specified, predetermined amount of time.

The staff of the FCM shall keep a complete record of all loan transactions.

A. Borrowing

1. The FCM will borrow objects only for specific purposes of exhibition, programming, or research. Decisions for borrowing are made by the staff.
2. The FCM shall document all borrowed objects. This documentation shall include:
 - a. A written agreement with the lender setting forth the conditions of the loan.
 - b. A thorough description of the object, including its identifying number (if any) and a photograph, if possible.
 - c. A condition report made out when the object is accepted and another when it is returned.

- d. The name, address, and telephone number of the lender and of any other individuals authorized to reclaim objects.
 - e. An insurance value quoted by the lender.
3. The FCM will borrow only for fixed periods of time, with provisions for renewals agreed to in prior negotiations with the lender.
4. The borrowing of objects shall be subject to the same legal restrictions as those governing collecting. The FCM shall not accept on loan any object which it has reason to believe was obtained illegally or unethically by the lender, e.g., a natural-history specimen acquired or possessed in violation of state or federal laws.
5. Prior to borrowing an object, the FCM staff shall verify that nothing in the loan agreement conflicts with the terms of the insurance that Florence County carries on the FCM collection.

B. Lending

1. The FCM will lend objects from its permanent collections only for educational, promotional, or research purposes that are not in conflict with the mission of the FCM.
2. It is the responsibility of the staff to approve loans of objects from the collection. If an object is too rare, important, or fragile to be exposed to loss, the appropriate staff will not approve the lending of that object. In making these decisions the staff must always consider the security arrangements and the environmental conditions in the borrowing institution.
3. All loans will be processed by the curator and registrar, who will prepare the appropriate documents and pack the object for shipment.
4. The FCM reserves the right to charge a loan fee of 5% of the value of the object. This fee will assist in covering the costs of preparing collections for loan. From time to time, the director has the authority to wave a loan fee based on the disposition of the requesting institution.

5. All loans shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The borrower must insure the objects to the full amount specified by the FCM. Objects must be insured from the time they leave the FCM until they return (door to door).
 - b. Transportation costs are the responsibility of the borrower.
 - c. Objects shall be transported and exhibited so that no damage or deterioration results. In the event of restorable damage, the borrower is responsible for the cost of repair. If the object is irreparably damaged, the borrower is liable for the total value as listed on the loan agreement.
 - d. The borrower is responsible for exhibiting objects under appropriate security.
 - e. The borrower must not alter, embellish, repair, retouch, or modify borrowed objects. Pins, nails, or other supports that might mark or damage objects may not be used.
 - f. Borrowed material may not be used for any commercial purpose without written permission from the FCM, or if applicable, from the copyright holder.
 - g. The borrower may not re-loan objects without written permission from the Florence County Museum.
 - h. For return shipping, the borrower must pack objects in the same manner as, equivalent to, or better than the original packing.

X. CARE OF COLLECTIONS

- A. Primary responsibility for the management of the collections has been delegated to the director and staff of the FCM by the FCM Board.
- B. At the discretion of the director, certain staff members may have unrestricted access to the collections. Other staff members must request permission from the director in order to gain access to the collections.
- C. All staff members that deal with collection objects must remember that they are responsible for their care and preservation. Objects should be handled as little as possible.
- D. During the course of operations, objects and traveling exhibits will regularly move in and out of the FCM. The director and/or staff will receive, check in, and also oversee the packing and unpacking of objects of traveling exhibits.
- E. The director and/or curator of collections and interpretations must monitor the movement of objects from one place to another in the storage area and their removal from the storage area. No object should leave the FCM or be removed from storage without a written record being made of such movement.
- F. Wherever possible, the FCM will store objects in secure facilities protected by burglar and fire alarm systems and equipped with temperature and humidity controls. Temporary exceptions may be allowed for objects that have little monetary value, are too bulky to steal, or are relatively insensitive to environmental variations.
- G. The director will develop, in consultation with appropriate Florence County staff, procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, burglary, natural disaster, or other emergency.
- H. The director is responsible for monitoring the conservation needs of the collections. If conservation work is urgently needed, the FCM will arrange to have such work performed on a contractual basis. The professional staff, within the limits of their knowledge, may do minor conservation work. All conservation work should be thoroughly documented on the appropriate forms and, whenever possible, before and after photographs should be taken.

XI. RECORDS

The collection records shall contain the following files:

- A. Accession File:** The official record of accessions, in numerical order, with information of the type of transaction, the source of the accession, and an indication of restriction and, where possible, a photograph of the object.
- B. Catalogue:** A file of individual objects in the permanent collection, containing a number unique to each object and, where possible, a photograph of the object. The computerized catalogue shall be cross-referenced by classification, registration number and source of the accession.
- C. Collection files:** A file of documents, inventories, photographs, research reports and conservation reports pertaining to objects in the collection. All materials related to an object in a particular accession should be in a file for that accession.
- D. Loan files:** Documentation relative to outgoing and incoming loans should reflect all the activity of borrowed objects while they are in the possession of the FCM.

XII. INSURANCE

All insurance purchases and changes of coverage shall be the responsibility of the director in collaboration with Florence County Risk Management. Insurance records relating to the collections shall be the responsibility of the director and staff.

Objects and traveling exhibitions lent by the FCM to other institutions will be insured by those institutions in the amount stated on the loan agreement.