

POLICY ON DISPOSITION OF MUSEUM COLLECTIONS AND OBJECTS

POLICY

Whenever public funds are made available by the Provincial Government to a public museum or other public trust to purchase, acquire, restore, or maintain any historic artifact, natural history specimen, work of art, sculpture, archival document or similar object deemed to be primarily of value for its historical interest, every reasonable effort shall be made by the agency or institution to have such materials remain in the care and custody of an appropriate public body in Alberta.

This policy applies to all museums, historic sites, archives, exhibit centres, and collection holding institutions that receive public assistance from either the General Revenue Fund or the Lottery Fund of the Province of Alberta. Notwithstanding the foregoing it includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Museums, art galleries, interpretation centres, historic sites and collections funded and operated directly by the Government of Alberta. (e.g., Provincial Museum of Alberta)
2. Museums, art galleries, interpretation centres, historic sites and collections receiving funds and operating as government controlled organizations or as agencies of the Crown in Right of Alberta. (e.g., Glenbow – Alberta Institute, Alberta Foundation for the Arts)
3. Museums, interpretation centres, historic sites and collections receiving funds directly or indirectly from agencies of the Crown in Right of Alberta. (e.g., Red Deer and District Museum, Fort Macleod Museum)

No custodial authority which has received public funds from the Government of Alberta as described above, or which is holding materials for which a federal or provincial government tax receipt has been issued, shall deaccession or dispose of this material except pursuant to this policy.

PROCEDURES

Prior to providing General Revenue or Lottery Funds to any museum, historic site, archive, exhibit centre, or collection holding institution for the purpose of acquiring or maintaining artifacts or specimens, the responsible administrative authority shall ensure that the recipient institution has a valid deaccessioning policy in place which reflects the following:

1. Before any deaccessioned object or collection is considered for sale, it will first be offered at no cost to other appropriate Alberta public non-profit or government custodial institutions.
2. In the event that more than one appropriate custodial institution wishes to acquire the object or collection being offered for deaccessioning, the custodial institution deaccessioning the materials shall decide which candidate shall be the recipient of the deaccessioned materials.
3. If no appropriate Alberta public institution subject to this policy is prepared to accept custodial responsibility for the object or collection being deaccessioned, the materials may be disposed of by sale or such other means as is deemed appropriate by the organization deaccessioning the objects.
4. When deaccessioned objects or collections are sold, the proceeds of the sale will only be used for acquisitions to enhance the remaining collections of the institution, or services directly related to the curatorial care of the remaining collections.
5. In the case of any dispute as to whether or not any interested custodial institution is appropriate to receive materials being offered through deaccessioning, the Minister of Community Development, in the advice of the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation, shall determine whether or not such institution should be considered an appropriate candidate for consideration to receive the material being deaccessioned.

EXCEPTIONS

For the purposes of the administration of this policy, deaccessioning by means of the exchange of objects or collections of comparable value between Alberta based public institutions subject to this policy shall not be of concern.

Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing Policy or Procedures, the Minister of Community Development may allow an institution or agency subject to this policy to deaccession any historical object or collection on such terms and conditions as he deems appropriate.

March 19, 1996
Honourable Gary G. Mar
Minister of Community Development