



**Collections Management Policy  
Museum of the Coastal Bend  
Victoria College  
Victoria, Texas  
2018**

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## I. Museum Statements

### A. Mission Statement

The mission of the Museum of the Coastal Bend is to enhance the appreciation and enjoyment of the region's heritage.

The Museum of the Coastal Bend also contributes to the overall mission of Victoria College. Victoria College's mission is to "provide educational opportunities" to their students and community. To support this mission, one of the College's goals is to provide "educational activities and events that enhance our community's quality of life" through cultural and intellectual outreach. The Museum is tied to the instructional program of the College and is one of the College's efforts to enhance the cultural and intellectual life of the community. In addition, the museum addresses the need for a regional museum that compliments existing local museums and educational facilities by offering a comprehensive overview of our Coastal Bend heritage (i.e. prehistory, colonialism, maritime industry, steamboat commerce, ranching industry, etc.) and placing it in a regional perspective.

### B. Statement of Purpose

Officially established in 2002, the Museum of the Coastal Bend is an educational, scientific, cultural, and research element of Victoria College. It is a not-for-profit institution by virtue of being a part of Victoria College. The Museum's purpose is to support the academic and intellectual mission of Victoria College through the collection, preservation, documentation, and research of scientific and cultural material and to disseminate information about those collections and their scientific and cultural topics through exhibition, interpretation, and publication for primary, secondary, and higher education students, the scholarly community, and the general public. The Museum aspires to provide the highest standard of excellence in museum ethics and practices, while pursuing continuous improvement, stimulating the greatest quantity of quality research, conservation, interpretation, exhibition, and education, and providing support for faculty, staff, and students.

The purpose of the Museum of the Coastal Bend is fourfold: to collect, to preserve, to exhibit, and to interpret the history and heritage of the region. The goals of the Museum of the Coastal Bend are the following:

1. Education – to educate, to provide an awareness, and an appreciation of the regions' unique and rich multi-cultural heritage to everyone in the Coastal Bend area, including kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, college and university students, seniors, and the general public;



2. Preservation and stewardship of the Coastal Bend heritage; and
3. Tourism – to provide an attraction where tourists both local and non-local may visit to gain a broad perspective of the regions heritage and contribute to the economic development of the region.

### C. Collections Statement

The scope of the Museum of the Coastal Bend collections is limited to the material culture of the Coastal Bend. This includes archeological and historical objects that tell the story of the Coastal Bend. Archival records will be directed to an archival repository unless they directly pertain to the material culture held in the Museum.

The foundation of the Museum is its collections that are held in perpetuity for the public. Therefore, in accordance with its mission and the diverse nature of its constituency, the Museum maintains three collection categories:

1. Research Collections—Accessioned, documented, and cataloged objects of artistic, cultural, scientific, or historical significance, and objects of high quality that are representative of the diversity inherent in the mission of the Museum. These collections are used for research, exhibitions, and loans. They are either owned by the Museum as an agent of Victoria College or held-in-trust for federal and state agencies. These collections are given the highest level of care and protection.
2. Interpretive Collections—Accessioned, documented, and cataloged objects that are used for interpretation, participatory exhibitions, and educational programs. These objects are owned by the Museum as an agent of Victoria College, are given reasonable care, and do not leave Museum grounds without appropriate Advisory Board approval. Exceptions to Board approval are off-site educational programs and loans to other institutions.
3. Education Collections—Accessioned, documented, and cataloged objects used to support the educational mission of the Museum. These objects are owned by the Museum and are subject to possible damage or destruction due to supervised utilization. They are exposed to hands-on interaction with visitors and can leave Museum grounds. In the event of damage or destruction beyond the point of usefulness, they are deaccessioned according to the Museum's deaccession policy.

The Museum also holds other objects to support its research and educational programming, such as exhibit props, furniture, materials and supplies, etc. These are not collections objects and are not accessioned, but are property of the Museum.

## II. Code of Ethics

### A. Introduction/ Premise

The Museum of the Coastal Bend is a public and academic educational institution that collects, documents, preserves, and interprets objects, and disseminates the knowledge gained from them, to serve society. To promote public trust, high standards of operation and behavior are necessary at all levels of the Museum, including individual members of governing bodies, subdivisions and associations, volunteers, and staff. Maintaining these standards is a collective and individual effort.

As an institution actively involved with the training of students and the public in proper stewardship of historical and archeological sites as well as objects related to the history of the Coastal Bend, the Museum of the Coastal Bend has an added responsibility to students and the museum community, to follow the recognized standards of the profession. For this reason, principles expressed in the Code of Ethics of the International Council of Museums, American Alliance of Museums, and specific disciplines and professions, are endorsed and adapted as part of the Code of Ethics of the Museum of the Coastal Bend. This code of ethics is applicable to all parties and individuals associated with the Museum of the Coastal Bend.

### B. Statement of Position

1. **Scope**—This Code of Ethics pertains to all governing bodies, staff members, students, and support and/or associated groups of the Museum.
2. **Authority Recognition**—This Code of Ethics is superseded by all laws, regulations, and international agreements of the United States and the State of Texas. Within this framework, this Code of Ethics also is superseded by the general policies and regulations of The Victoria College and specific regulations applicable to certain individuals, such as students and faculty.
3. **Endorsements in Principle**—This Code of Ethics endorses in principle the guidelines proposed by the International Council of Museums and the American Alliance of Museums. Within this framework, this Code of Ethics also endorses in principle the guidelines established by those disciplines and/or professions that are recognized as having affiliations with museums in the United States. In situations where differences may occur, the interests of the Museum will take precedence over the guidelines endorsed in principle.
4. **Implementation**—This Code of Ethics serves as the umbrella for the mission and policies of the Museum. The policies, established by the Museum Advisory Board and approved by Victoria College's Board of Trustees, are carried out under the guidance and supervision of its designated

representative, the Director of the Museum (hereafter referred to as Director). The development of associated procedures is generally the responsibility of the Director and designated staff.

5. Periodic Review and Interpretation—An Ethics Committee, appointed by the Museum Advisory Board Chairman, addresses any recommended changes of this document and resolves any issues raised about its interpretation. This Code of Ethics is reviewed at least every five years, and amended as needed.

## C. Governance

### 1. General Responsibility

- a. Administration—The Museum Advisory Board, as appointed and superseded by Victoria College’s Board of Trustees, serves all parts of the Museum of the Coastal Bend (see Definitions) as well as the staff, students, visitors, and support and/or associated groups of the Museum. While the Museum Advisory Board has the responsibility of serving these parties, it must also insure that all activities are in agreement with the federal, state, and Victoria College’s regulations, as well as the mission and policies established for the Museum.
- b. Agreements and Contracts—The Museum Advisory Board, through its designated representative, the Director, reserves the right to negotiate and involve the Museum with corporations, agencies, or other outside parties in projects and programs that have mutual interest. The Museum Advisory Board will not obligate the Museum to projects or programs that do not serve Museum interests, or to situations that compromise the resources needed for on-going activities related to the Museum’s primary functions.
- c. Fiscal Matters—The Museum Director, as advised by the Museum Advisory Board and Victoria College’s President, is responsible for using budgeted funds and resources to serve the interests of the Museum and its mission, in a manner that provides an appropriate balance of allocations for staff, collections, facilities, equipment, programs, services, and museum functions. In all fiscal matters, the Museum Director maintains full documentation and accountability for resource expenditures.
- d. Fund Raising—All fund raising activities will be compatible with the mission and programs of the Museum. The Museum will be ethical and open about its intentions related to such activities. All donations will be handled so that the needs and wishes of the Museum are balanced with those of the donor. In all matters involving sales of



goods or services, the Museum will maintain reasonable rates of exchange. The Museum Advisory Board may raise funds to establish endowments for the Museum through Victoria College.

1. Personnel—The Museum Advisory Board recognizes the greatest asset of the Museum is its staff, and that the quality of the staff is directly related to the Museum's ability to build and maintain collections, conduct research, develop exhibit and education programs for public and academic audiences, and perform ongoing services. For this reason, the Museum Advisory Board, acting through the Director, and the administration of Victoria College are responsible for providing job descriptions, hiring qualified staff, providing training and career enhancement opportunities, supporting adherence to the Code of Ethics, providing resources to perform jobs, conducting periodic performance reviews and evaluations, and developing work environments that are in agreement with federal, state, and College regulations that address health, safety, and personnel issues.
2. Collections—The Museum Advisory Board recognizes that the collections are the foundation of the Museum's programs and functions. The Museum Advisory Board recognizes that the possession of these collections incurs legal, social, and ethical obligations to provide proper storage, management, and care for the collections and associated documentation. For these reasons, the Museum Advisory Board, acting through the Director, is responsible for assuring that the scope of each collection agrees with the Museum's mission, that collection growth is balanced with available resources, and that appropriate allocation is made of personnel, facilities, equipment, services, and support to address the on-going needs of each collection.
3. Audiences—The Museum Advisory Board recognizes the importance of serving both public and academic audiences, and that these audiences help justify the support the Museum receives from federal, state, local, and private sources. For this reason, the Museum 1) establishes programs and activities that serve its broad constituency; 2) be a facility that provides a responsive, safe, and comfortable environment; and, 3) is a resource for accurate information. The Museum is particularly sensitive to properly dealing with cultural, social, and legal issues, such as due respect for human remains, animal rights, disability access, and religious and cultural diversity.

#### D. Collections

1. Scope—Collections are developed, managed, and conserved for use in research, exhibits, and/or education programs for public and academic audiences. To ensure these collections will be available for use in the future, utilization is balanced with current preservation philosophies and practices, especially those involving preventive conservation.

2. Acquisition—The growth and development of collections adheres to the Mission Statement and the Acquisition Policy of the Museum, particularly to legal and ethical acquisition, clear ownership, provenance, condition, value, need, and ability to provide proper long-term care. The Museum is committed to continued growth and development of collections, in a manner that reflects quality and relevance over quantity. New acquisitions will emphasize collection integrity, object/specimen integrity, and maximum associated information.
3. Management, Care, and Use—The management, care, and use of these collections follow the collections' policies of the Museum, such as those for security, loans, specimen utilization, pest control, emergency preparedness, and preventive conservation. Implementation of policies are based on written procedures that 1) meet disciplinary standards for the respective collections; 2) include specifications for providing proper care with respect to environment, storage, and handling; and, 3) incorporate all parts of the collection, including objects/ specimens, associated data, collection records, reference material, and specialized collections.
4. Disposal—The disposal of accessioned collection items follows the Deaccession Policy of the Museum and written procedures for policy implementation. All deaccessioned material is fully documented, clearly justified, disposed of appropriately, and free from problems of ownership, conflict of interest, and legal issues. No personal gain resulting from deaccessioned material is to be realized by any individual having affiliations with the Museum or Victoria College.

#### E. Conduct of Individuals

1. Scope—This Code of Ethics pertains to all governing bodies, staff members, students, and support and/or associated groups of the Museum of the Coastal Bend (see Definitions).
2. Responsibility to Museum
  - a. Code of Ethics, Policies, and Procedures—Individuals having an affiliation with the Museum are expected to be familiar with and to abide by the Code of Ethics, Policies, and Procedures adopted by the Museum.
  - b. Duties and Responsibilities—Individuals having an affiliation with the Museum are expected to fulfill all duties and responsibilities of their designated position and written job description, in a timely and professional manner.

- c. Use of Resources—All resources of the Museum, including personnel, salaried-time, facilities, collections, equipment, supplies, and funds are to be used only to serve the interests and purposes of the Museum. Unauthorized use of these resources by any individual, strictly for personal benefit, is ethically irresponsible and may be regarded as a conflict of interest, fraud, or theft.
- d. Discretion and Confidentiality—Individuals affiliated with the Museum have unique responsibilities related to maintaining the Museum’s image, trust, and credibility to its public and academic audiences. For this reason, affiliated individuals must 1) properly represent the Museum and their position when interacting with others; 2) exercise professional discretion about activities and concerns of the Museum; and 3) hold in confidence relevant information concerning matters such as collections, personnel, and security.
- e. Conflict of Interest—Individuals having an affiliation with the Museum must avoid situations that may be construed as a conflict of interest. Concerns about potential conflicts of interest will be immediately conveyed to the appropriate Museum authority. The purpose of this concern is to prevent the actual or perceived conflict between personal collecting and the objectives of the Museum. Potential conflicts of interest include 1) personal collecting within the Curatorial Staff collection of areas of the Museum; 2) using Museum affiliation, Museum resources, or the influence of one’s position, in unauthorized ways solely for personal benefit, or to solely serve the interests of persons outside the museum; 3) placing the Museum in a situation that compromises its mission, policies, functions, practices, or philosophies, 4) placing the Museum in a situation that it unduly competes with outside parties; and 5) participating in other employment that compromises one’s capability to perform in a timely and professional manner.

### 3. Responsibility to Collections

- a. Integrity of Information—The Museum’s ability to serve its public and academic audiences is dependent on the quality and accuracy of available information. Such information includes object and collection documentation, personal communications, formal presentation, written correspondence, publication, exhibits, and educational programs. For this reason, individuals affiliated with the Museum will maintain information integrity to accuracy and completeness.
- b. Integrity of Preservation—The Museum’s ability to perform its functions are dependent on the quality of object/specimen preservation and conservation. Individuals affiliated with the Museum will

demonstrate respect for the object/specimen by following professional museum preservation procedures, providing protection from agents of deterioration, providing proper storage, and exercising safe handling.

- c. Integrity of Operations—Individuals affiliated with the Museum collections will be knowledgeable about their respective collection(s), disciplinary standards related to their collection(s), and changes in philosophies and practices for properly managing and caring for the collection(s).

#### 4. Responsibility to Other Individuals

- a. Public and Academic Audiences—Individuals affiliated with the Museum will be responsive to the Museum’s public and academic audiences, and treat each individual with professional courtesy.
- b. Professional Associates—Individuals affiliated with the Museum will be responsive and cooperative with professional associates outside of the Museum organization.
- c. Museum Affiliates—Individuals affiliated with the Museum will respect the property and rights of one another. Individuals will acknowledge the roles and responsibilities of each other, and will cooperate as needed to promote the mission, functions, services, programs, and image of the Museum.
- d. Supervisors and faculty are responsible for the actions of the individuals under their direction. To promote the mission, functions, services, programs, and image of the Museum, supervisors and faculty will take an active role in providing direction, instruction, communication, and group cooperation.

#### 5. Adherence to the Code of Ethics

- a. Adherence to the Code of Ethics by individuals affiliated with the Museum is addressed in the Museum’s Code of Ethics

### III. Acquisitions and Accessions

#### A. Acquisition and Accessioning Policy

Certain state, federal, and international statutes and laws are in existence that may affect the acquisition of certain items. In all cases, the Museum acts in accordance with those statutes and laws. Additionally, the Museum bases its acquisition and accession policies and procedures on the highest ethical standards as set out in its own Code of Ethics. This Code is based on national and international Codes of Ethics for museums and ensures that the Museum operates in all respects to the highest professional standards.

1. All potential acquisitions must be evaluated in terms of the objectives, purpose, mission, and scope of the Museum, and the educational thrust of Victoria College, and must fall within financial and physical limitations of the institution.
2. All potential acquisitions must be evaluated by the following criteria:
  - a. Documentation as to origin, previous ownership, use, and pertinent classification information.
  - b. Ability of the Museum to properly maintain and house the object(s).
  - c. Relevance of acquisition to the mission statement and scope of the Museum and its ability to enhance collections.
  - d. Legal and ethical standards governing possession and use of objects. (The Museum endorses the ethics of acquisitions as set forth by the International Committee on Museums and the American Alliance of Museums). The Museum will not knowingly accept any object acquired by either illegal or unethical means.
  - e. Willingness of the donor (owner) to transfer complete ownership (provide clear title) to the Museum without restrictions, limitations, or conditions. (Original works of art or any item deemed by professional opinion to be unique by virtue of its aesthetic, artistic, scientific, research, or intrinsic value, may be accepted with limited conditions and with approval by the Collections Committee and the Museum Director.)
3. The Museum or employees thereof cannot ethically or legally appraise objects, retain an appraiser for a private citizen, or refer an appraiser to a private citizen, and, therefore, shall not be involved in appraisal activities.

This restriction does not apply to in-house assessments of value for collection objects (i.e., for insurance purposes, traveling exhibitions etc.) or for activities within the professional community that involves establishing the relative monetary value of certain kinds of objects. These activities are viewed as professional assessments and not “commercial” appraisals.

4. Collections objects acquired through purchase are the property of the Museum, are accessioned, and all bills of sale and appropriate records are kept by the Museum.
5. Collections and associated documentation, including field records generated by staff research and staff or student fieldwork, are owned by, or held-in-trust by, the Museum and are accessioned as appropriate.
6. The Chairman of the Museum Advisory Board shall appoint members of the Museum Advisory Board to serve as the Collections Committee. The Museum Director and Curatorial staff shall also be members of the Collections Committee.
7. Objects bequeathed to the Museum preferably should be approved for acquisition prior to the Museum being designated as beneficiary. All objects bequeathed to the Museum are subject to the Acquisition and Accession policy defined in this document. The Museum shall observe appropriate confidentiality with regard to accepted testamentary distribution objects. The Museum is not legally bound to acquire objects that are bequeathed to it, unless by prior agreement. Such objects also are subject to the Acquisition and Accession policy defined in this document.
8. All items acquired for the permanent collections of the Museum will be accessioned in a timely manner.
9. The Museum maintains a detailed, permanent record-keeping system of all objects acquired, accessioned, or received by any approved means into its care. This system is in accordance with standards for historical and archeological collections.
10. The Museum provides access to collections for research. Staff and guests to the collections follow all Collections procedures including but not limited to signing into the collections log book before entering any area where collections are housed, using pencils in collections areas, and following proper collections handling procedures.
11. The Museum performs periodic inventories of collections.
12. Through Victoria College, the Museum maintains adequate and appropriate insurance for the Museum, its collections, and loans.

13. The Museum maintains a current disaster management plan that is updated and reviewed regularly by Museum Staff in collaboration with appropriate Victoria College personnel.
14. The Museum maintains an appropriate pest management plan that is not harmful to Museum Collections.
15. The Museum maintains appropriate security for the Museum building and collections held therein.
16. The Museum Curatorial staff maintains records on the condition of objects and makes recommendations to the Museum Director when objects need more involved conservation procedures. Any procedure that alters the physical integrity of an object must be approved by the Collections Committee and the Museum Advisory Board. (see also Deaccessioning Policy Section III. F., and Collections Care Section IV)
17. An annual report of acquisitions activities is made to the THC regarding state-associated held-in-trust collections.

## B. Acquisition Procedures

### Acquisition

Acquisition is the process of acquiring an object(s) for the Museum of the Coastal Bend and is the point at which transfer of title to the Museum is made. Object(s) usually are acquired through donation, fieldwork or research, purchase, transfer from another institution, exchange, or bequest. Acquisition, except as approved in writing by the Director, does not imply accessioning, but is a necessary prerequisite for accessioning. Acquired objects may be recommended for accession to the Director.

As a fundamental axiom for acquisition, the Museum of the Coastal Bend categorically endorses the concept that responsibility for the physical safety of the object begins with acquisition, the point at which transfer of title is made.

1. The following procedures are, in every case, to be interpreted to supporting an attitude of responsible collection management. They are set forth to provide guidance for acquisition for authorized Museum personnel. Adherence to these rules promotes responsible collecting and assures the attendant storage, preservation, and conservation accountability inherent in the acceptance of object(s). Reference to these restrictions fosters a spirit of understanding and cooperation with prospective donors by serving as a defined justification for acceptance or rejection of donations, gifts, bequests, transfers, or purchases.

- a. Acquisition is the point at which legal clear title is transferred to the Museum.
- b. The Museum will acquire no object(s), by any means, for which a valid title cannot be obtained. It is critical that clear title is established, to the best knowledge of all parties, prior to acquisition.
- c. Restrictive or conditional donations cannot be accepted. (In Re: Acquisition and Accessioning Policy, Section III. A., and Loan Policy Section V. A. 1.).
- d. The value and provenance of “museum quality” object(s) are frequently matters of opinion; for the purpose of acquisition, the Museum Director and Curatorial staff are relied upon for such judgments in their special fields. Their decision is final.
- e. Acquisitions of the Museum of the Coastal Bend are the property of Victoria College. The conditions of their care and utilization in the Museum are defined elsewhere in this document. The Museum is not legally bound to acquire or consider for accession objects that are acquired by other Associations or individuals on behalf of the Museum without prior agreement.
- f. Object(s) donated to the Museum are not normally to be returned to the donor or heirs. In such cases where the return of an object(s) is deemed appropriate by the Director of the Museum, a report of that action is sent to the Internal Revenue Service.
- g. The Museum does not accept donations of object(s) of questionable origin (legal or ethical), nor does the Museum exhibit or otherwise allow the utilization of such object(s). (In Re: Museum Statement—Exhibitions Policy Section VI. A).
- h. Acquisitions of the Museum, once accessioned, are subject to the Deaccessioning Policy as set forth in this document, and except as specifically stated, no object(s) is sold, traded, or otherwise removed from the care and protection of the Museum. (In Re: Deaccessioning Policy Section III. F).
- i. Certain state, national, and international statutes and laws currently in existence may require that acquired and accessioned objects are deaccessioned from the collections of the Museum and repatriated elsewhere, as per the specific statute or law. The Museum abides by such statutes and laws currently in existence and those that may be bought to apply in the future. Prospective donors of material likely to



be affected by such legislation are informed of this likelihood during initial donation discussions.

- j. The Museum may determine that selected object(s) are appropriate and may be acquired for designation as Educational Material. This material is acquired, recorded, and acknowledged by a Deed of Gift form and is accessioned into the Education Collection. These object(s) are given reasonable care and attention, but by the nature of their use, are available for selective consumption. (In Re: Museum Statement— Education Collection). Objects that are selected for consumptive use or destructive analysis are not deaccessioned; the information gained substitutes for the altered or destroyed object/sample. The Museum will show the utmost care in the selection of materials for such use, following all procedures for such cases. (In Re: Deaccessioning Policy and Procedures Section F. 3. j.).
  - k. The Museum does not consider acquisition of personal memorabilia, nor does the Museum accept like material from others, unless the material has general relevance to the mission and scope of the Museum. (In Re: Acquisitions and Accessions Section III. B.4.c.).
  - l. Donor information and credit is maintained as part of the acquisition file, the accession file, and on the catalog card. It is not used as part of labeling while the object(s) is on exhibit without the prior signed consent of the donor. (In Re: Exhibitions Section VI. B.,).
  - m. The Museum staff is not allowed to give appraisals, either written or verbal. Donors requiring appraisals for income tax purposes must obtain these at their own expense from appraisers of their choice prior to donation. (In Re: Acquisitions and Accessions Section III. A.3.,).
2. The Director, Curatorial staff, and appointed individuals function as the Collections Committee. All object(s) offered to the Museum are accepted only after review by the Collections Committee, acceptance by the Advisory Board, and final approval by the Director. The Collections Committee meets bi-monthly.
  3. Because the Museum is a non-profit educational, scientific, cultural, and research element of Victoria College, a potential donor must be informed of the restrictions under which gifts may be given. The potential donor may either bring the object(s) to the Museum or the Director or Curatorial staff may view the material at a designated location. If the potential donor brings the object(s) to the Museum, a signed receipt indicating that the material was left only for consideration and on a tentative basis must be given to the

potential donor. The receipt must be signed by the potential donor or their authorized agent and either the Director, Curatorial staff, or appropriate Museum representative. One copy of the receipt is kept on file in the Collection Records and another copy accompanies the Curatorial staff's recommendation to the Director.

4. Initial recommendations for object(s) acquisition consideration may be made by the Curatorial Staff in writing to the Director, addressing the following:
  - a. Evaluation criteria as stated in the Museum Statement;
  - b. Significance of object(s);
  - c. Relevance of object(s) to the current scope of collections (research, education, and exhibit);
  - d. Number of like object(s) in the collection;
  - e. Conservation need(s) of the object(s);
  - f. Housing need(s) of the object(s);
  - g. Funding need (s) for the conservation and care of the object(s);
  - h. Legal, ethical, and social considerations of object(s).
5. Note: The above are evaluated through the completion of a Donation Assessment as per the Curatorial Staff's letter.
6. A formal letter concerning the decision on acquisition is sent to the potential donor by the Director. The Director's decision is communicated in writing to the appropriate Museum personnel, and become a permanent part of the Museum record. If the donation is approved, the Curatorial Staff explains to the donor, in writing, the procedure for transfer of title and provides the donor with a Deed of Gift form. The Deed of Gift form must be signed by donors at the time the title is transferred and the object(s) is received by the Museum. Object(s) destined for accessioning will not be accessioned by the Curatorial Staff until a signed Deed of Gift is received in the Curatorial Staff's office. If a Deed of Gift form is not signed within 30 days of notice, the Curatorial Staff will notify the donor that the Museum can no longer be responsible for the donor's property and must return the material. The receipt of the signed Deed of Gift is the official date of the acquisition transaction, and is so noted on all donation related documentation.

7. Proposed purchases to be acquired either for or by the Museum must also undergo (in advance of actual purchase) the acquisition recommendation and review process as for donations, and require final approval by the Director.
8. Fine arts object(s) executed after January 1, 1978 that are subject to the Copyright Act of 1976 (17 U.S.C. &sect;&sect; 101-702) are considered for acquisition only after a thorough review of copyright restrictions. The Museum of the Coastal Bend prefers not to acquire fine arts object(s) without a written conveyance of clear and unrestricted use of the object(s). Exceptions to this preference must be stated and evaluated prior to acquisition review.
9. All object(s) bequeathed to the Museum are subject to the Acquisition and Accessioning Procedures as defined in this document. The Museum is not legally bound to acquire any items that do not fit the scope and mission of the Museum as defined in the Mission Statement. In every case, the Museum will observe appropriate confidentiality with regard to accepted testamentary distribution objects, and will attempt to abide by donor request except where those requests are in conflict with Museum or College policy, or state, national, or international laws.
10. In the process of acquiring or gathering field specimens, Museum personnel will not knowingly or intentionally violate local, state, national, or international laws or statutes. Nor will the Museum knowingly or intentionally receive into its possession any specimen(s) that has been stolen, converted, or taken by fraud in violation of the above noted laws or statutes. Field collection is not initiated without the appropriate documentation, including all required state and federal permits, and land use authorization. Permission to collect, preserve, utilize, and subsequently to assume title, without restriction, must be gained, in writing, from the owner, or legal representative of the owner, on whose land the object(s) or specimen(s) are collected. These documents are a part of the field notes associated with the collection and as such become a part of the Museum's permanent file. (In Re: Museum Statement Section I. A).

### C. Accessioning Procedures

#### Accessioning

Accessioning is the procedure that officially incorporates objects into the permanent collections of the Museum of the Coastal Bend, or the registration of objects held-in-trust for federal and state agencies. It is the transfer of clear title of the object or the registration of held-in-trust objects. Upon accessioning (acceptance of in-perpetuity responsibility), the Museum assumes the obligation for the proper management of object(s). Accessioning provides an inventory of objects owned and held-in-trust by the Museum, and is the function of the Curatorial Staff.

1. Complete records of the accessioned holdings of the Museum are maintained in the Collections Records. Museum object(s) are obtained through four primary means: donation, purchase, trade/exchange/ transfer, and field generation. The object(s) is reviewed by the Collections Committee and either recommended for acceptance or rejected. If the object(s) is recommended to the Advisory Board, and approved by the Director, where appropriate, a signed Deed of Gift or accessions contract is received, then the object(s) is accessioned by the Curatorial Staff into the Museum. Accession numbers document Museum ownership and are an inventory control device for the Curatorial Staff.
2. The accession system utilized by the Museum is numerical and includes the calendar year of acceptance followed by a number indicating the order of acceptance. The calendar year is written in full, and the number of order of acceptance is separated by a period from the year (e.g., 1980.1). Each object (if the accession consists of a single object), or collection of objects is assigned an accession number.
3. With the exception of in-house field-generated collections, all objects for accessioning are taken to the receiving room of the Collections for processing. Objects are not incorporated into the Museum's collections until they are accessioned. Accessioning is the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff, and only the Curatorial Staff has the authority to assign accession numbers. It is the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff to provide all acquisition and identification documentation.
4. The records that accompany accessions are critical. The following are guidelines:
  - a. For all collections, including state-associated held-in-trust collections, the accessioning process requires the following records:
    - i. Curation/Housing agreement (Texas Historical Commission Artifact Curation Form).
    - ii. Signed Texas Historical Commission and other entities held-in-trust agreement.
    - iii. Records are paper and/or electronic and are in a format conducive to their preservation, such as archival papers and cards and electronic formats that can easily be transferred to new formats/technologies.
    - iv. Records are kept in a secure location at the curatorial facility.

- v. Records are organized in such a way as to facilitate the easy retrieval of an object (within thirty minutes).
  - vi. Duplicate copies of the held-in-trust records are kept in a secure location off site and is updated on a scheduled basis.
  - vii. A listing of the curatorial facility's state-associated held-in-trust collections at the curatorial facility.
  - viii. An annual report is made to the Texas Historical Commission of accessioning, deaccessioning and disposal, site inventory, inventory and security issues, incoming and outgoing non-destructive loans, and conservations actions.
- b. A signed Deed of Gift form for those objects donated to the Museum; proof of ownership for those objects purchased by the Museum; a letter from the trading/exchanging institution transferring title of the object(s) to the Museum; or a signed accessions contract form for those objects held-in-trust by the Museum is required.
  - c. A complete record of all correspondence and transactions involving the acquisitions includes:
    - i. Name and address of the donor, seller, trading/exchanging institution, or governmental agency for which object(s) are being held-in-trust;
    - ii. Copy of the permit for held-in-trust objects;
    - iii. Import and export papers on object(s) from non-U.S. countries;
    - iv. Bill of sale and bill of lading;
    - v. Any gift restrictions;
    - vi. Copyright considerations;
    - vii. Artist's rights considerations;
    - viii. Provenience information;
    - ix. History of object(s);
    - x. Dates or ages of object(s).

- d. For collections acquired by field research by the Museum staff, there must be on file in the Collections Records either: a copy of the permit giving the staff member permission for such research and naming the Museum as the official repository; or written documentation that the landowner provided the staff member permission for such research and the arrangements for the final disposition of the collected material. The Museum recognizes that certain collections generated under state or federal permits are regulated by specific state and federal laws and are held-in-trust instead of owned by the Museum.
  - e. Black and white photograph(s), color slides, or video recordings with the assigned accession number visible either in the photograph(s) or inscribed on the face of the photograph(s) is required for some objects. This requirement is to include all type specimens, all works of art, all ethnographic material, significant historical costumes and objects, appropriate archaeological objects, and other objects designated by the Director in consultation with the Curatorial Staff.
  - f. Accession records include an initial condition report, including conservation and fumigation needs. If the object is treated before being incorporated into a division's holding, the treatment form noting all treatment must be filed in the Collections Records. Subsequent treatment of an object(s) that alters its condition should be reported to the Curatorial Staff.
5. Accession records include the accession number and the location of the object (s).
  6. Any other documentation concerning, related to, or accompanying the object(s) also should be included in the Accession Record and filed in the Collections Records.
  7. Once the acquisition procedure is completed or held-in-trust status established, the object(s) is entered into the Museum's register and assigned an accession number. An accession record worksheet is initiated by the Curatorial Staff. A brief description of the object(s) and all background information are recorded on the accession record worksheet, typed into the database, and filed with the Collections Records. The frame number of the black and white photograph or the color slide, or videocassette frame number is attached to the accession record and the negative or duplicate copy is housed elsewhere in an area designated by the Director. The object(s) then is marked with its accession number in an approved, archival, reversible manner.
  8. Object(s) accepted for educational use are acquired and accessioned by the Museum. Deed of Gift or transaction papers of trade/exchange must carry

a notation that the object(s) is accepted for educational purposes that may be of a consumptive nature. Objects accepted for the comparative collections are accessioned.

9. Books, papers, or photographs that come as part of a collection and are intended for the Library or Victoria Regional History Center will not be accessioned by the Museum. Books, papers, or photographs that are rare and historic manuscripts appropriate for the Museum collections, on rare occasions, may be accessioned after approval by the Collections Committee.

#### D. Held-in-Trust Agreements

1. Transfer of stewardship of state-associated held-in-trust collections is made through a signed, written document that identifies agency, institution, and the objects/collections/documents for which stewardship is transferred. This document is executed between the Texas Historical Commission and the curatorial facility.
2. An annual report of destructive loan activities is made to the Texas Historical Commission state-associated held-in-trust collections.

#### E. Acceptance and Processing of Gifts-in-kind

The procedure by which the Museum of the Coastal Bend accepts gifts-in-kind is partially defined by College Advancement and External Affairs and the Office of Finance of Victoria College.

##### 1. Approval Process

Gifts-in-kind for the Victoria College, with the exception of unrestricted gifts of books and other related materials to the Library or Museum, must be approved prior to acceptance.

The Approval of the Board of Trustees of Victoria College is required for all gifts of property valued at \$25,000 or more, and for all gifts of real estate. Under no circumstances should an individual commit Victoria College to the acceptance of a gift prior to official approval.

The following steps must be complied with, in order to obtain official approval:

- a. For Gifts-in-kind of significant value, the following approvals are necessary before acceptance into the Museum Collections:
  - i. The potential donor of the gift with the assistance of the Museum Director or Curatorial Staff completes the

- Museum of the Coastal Bend's Acquisition Review Form. A third party independent appraisal of the gift secured by the donor should be attached to Acquisition Review Form. Employees of either Victoria College or the Museum of the Coastal Bend cannot appraise the gift, nor can Victoria College or the Museum of the Coastal Bend funds be used to pay for the appraisal.
- ii. After the Collections Committee review, the Collections Committee proposes acceptance or denial to the Museum Advisory Board. (The Collections Committee review process is described in detail in the previous section.)
  - iii. After Museum Advisory Board review, the Museum Advisory Board proposes acceptance or denial to Victoria College's Board of Trustees.
  - iv. Victoria College's Board of Trustees reviews the proposal and accepts or denies. Victoria College's Board of Trustees reports their decision to the Museum Advisory Board and Museum Director.
  - v. The Museum Director writes a letter to the donor accepting or denying the proposed gift. A copy of the letter is forwarded to the President of Victoria College, the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs, and Victoria College's Director of Finance. If the gift is accepted, the Museum Director sends the Deed of Gift form, (with a self- addressed stamped envelope) along with the thank you letter to the donor.
  - vi. If the gift is accepted, the Museum Director completes the Victoria College In Kind Donation Form and submits it to the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs  
(<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/docs/default-source/CollegeAdvancement/development/portal/inkinddonationform.pdf>).
  - vii. If approval to accept personal real estate property is granted, a copy of the In Kind Donation Form is forwarded to the Office of Finance for appropriate accounting entries. The Office of Finance determines whether the gift is capitalized.



- b. For Gifts-in-kind of less significant value the following approvals are necessary before acceptance into the Museum Collections.
  - i. The potential donor of the gift with the assistance of the Museum Director or Curatorial Staff completes the Museum of the Coastal Bend's Acquisition Review Form. A third party independent appraisal of the gift secured by the donor should be attached to Acquisition Review Form. Employees of either Victoria College or the Museum of the Coastal Bend cannot appraise the gift, nor can Victoria College or the Museum of the Coastal Bend funds be used to pay for the appraisal.
  - ii. After the Collections Committee review, the Collections Committee proposes acceptance or denial to the Museum Advisory Board. (The Collections Committee review process is described in detail in the previous section.)
  - iii. After Museum Advisory Board review, the Museum Advisory Board proposes acceptance or denial to the Museum Director.
  - iv. The Museum Director writes a letter to the donor accepting or denying the proposed gift. A copy of the letter is forwarded to the President of Victoria College and the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs. If the gift is accepted, the Museum Director sends the Deed of Gift form, (with a self-addressed stamped envelope) along with the thank you letter to the donor.
  - v. If the gift is accepted, the Museum Director completes the Victoria College In Kind Donation Form and submits it to the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs (<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/docs/default-source/CollegeAdvancement/development/portal/inkinddonationform.pdf>).
- c. For Gifts-in-kind that are not intended for the Museum Collections (i.e. educational supplies, furniture, equipment, computers, cameras, etc.) the following process is as follows:
  - i. Museum Director accepts or denies gift.
  - ii. The Museum Director writes a letter to the donor accepting or denying the proposed gift. A copy of the

letter will be forwarded to the President of Victoria College, and the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs.

- iii. If the gift is accepted, the Museum Director completes the Victoria College In Kind Donation Form and submits it to the Executive Director of College Advancement and External Affairs  
(<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/docs/default-source/CollegeAdvancement/development/portal/inkinddonationform.pdf>).
- d. If an item may have hazardous materials, Victoria College's Hazardous Materials Committee is notified by the Museum Director or Museum Curatorial Staff and given the opportunity to review those gifts containing chemicals, radiation-producing materials and devices, lasers, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), or any item(s) suspected of containing hazardous materials that could be detrimental to campus health or safety.
- e. In the process of a review of a proposed gift, the Collections Committee, the Museum Director, and the Museum Curatorial Staff identify any expenses entailed with the acceptance and maintenance or use of the gift, as well as the source of funds for payment of these expenses.

## 2. Internal Revenue Service Report

- a. Any form required by the Internal Revenue Service to be signed by either Victoria College or Victoria College Foundation as a charitable donee of gift-in-kind property must be forwarded to Victoria College's Director of Finance for appropriate signature and handling.
- b. If the Museum sells, trades, or exchanges any gift-in-kind property within two years of its acquisition by the Museum, the Museum Director must notify in advance Victoria College's Director of Finance of the same, including amount received at sale. Victoria College's Director of Finance will file the appropriate Internal Revenue Form as required.

## 3. Within the Museum, the Gift-in-kind review process is as follows:

- a. The potential donor offers the gift to the Museum of the Coastal Bend.
- b. The object is loaned to the Museum for detailed inspection and study (Incoming Loan Form required).

- c. The potential gift is reviewed by the appropriate Curatorial personnel with regard to the acquisition criteria for the Museum and the collection plan for the particular collection area.
- d. After careful study, an Acquisition Review Form is submitted to the Collections Committee with a recommendation to accept or not accept the proposed gift.
- e. The gift is reviewed by the Collections Committee and either recommended for acceptance or rejection based on the criteria for Acquisition defined in the Acquisition Policy of the Museum.
- f. If the proffered gift is rejected, the Museum staff contacts the donor and returns the object.
- g. If the proffered gift is recommended for acceptance and approved by the Collections Committee, the Director, and the Museum Advisory Board, (see outline of approvals needed for acceptance) a thank you letter and two copies of the Deed of Gift form are sent to the donor with a stamped envelope addressed to the Museum enclosed. A copy of the thank you letter is forwarded to the President of Victoria College and to College Advancement and External Affairs. The Victoria College In Kind Donation Form is then completed and sent to College Advancement and External Affairs.
- h. Once the documentation has been completed and approved by the appropriate administrative authorities, the object is accessioned according to the Accessions Policy of the Museum.

#### F. Deaccessioning Policy

Deaccessioning, when carried out in an appropriate manner, is an integral part of enlightened museum professional practice. This view is endorsed by the Museum of the Coastal Bend in its Code of Ethics and is based upon ethical codes of national and international museum professional organizations. As the museum profession has developed, so have scholarly mechanisms for building on the experience of the past.

Deaccessioning is a useful tool for defining and refining the scope and quality of collections that have grown over the years. The existence of a deaccession policy should not, however, be taken to imply that collections are a resource to be tapped for the purpose of raising revenue to cover operating costs. Such action quickly undermines the concepts of fiduciary responsibility and public trust. The deaccessioning of an object in order that it can be sold can only occur in particular circumstances, and the revenue raised from such sales is restricted in use.

1. State-associated held-in-trust collections are never disposed of by sale, any disposition of state-associated held-in-trust collections are governed by the policies of the state agency.
2. No object is destroyed, exchanged, sold, or in any way removed from the Museum records without careful review, evaluation by Curatorial staff, and documentation of clear title.
3. The Director and a committee of Museum personnel appointed by the Museum Advisory Board Chairman functions as the Deaccessions Committee. Initial recommendations in writing come from the Curatorial Staff. The Director makes the final decision on deaccessioning based on written guidelines.
4. All reasonable efforts are made to notify donors, heirs, and executing artist (when dealing with contemporary works of art) prior to removal of the objects from the Museum's collections.
5. Objects of sacred or ritual significance requested for return by Native American or other groups or external governments are considered for return to the appropriate cultural group under the terms and conditions of state, federal, and international laws and statutes.
6. The donation, transfer, or exchange of objects to or with appropriate public museums is the preferable method of deaccession. Type materials and comparable objects are not deaccessioned or exchanged.
7. Objects that cannot be exchanged with public museums may be deaccessioned and transferred to private not-for-profit museums, university departments, and other educational institutions.
8. In the event of donation or exchange with either public or private institutions, the Museum requires evidence that proper care will be provided for the objects.
9. If the donation/exchange options fail, certain defined classes of objects may be sold at a widely publicized public auction conducted by a reputable purveyor who will be responsible for determining a fair market value. The donor or heirs and executing artist (for contemporary works of art) are notified of the Museum's intention to sell. The money acquired by the sale of objects is used to obtain objects of like kind for the Museum's collection. No member of the Museum faculty, staff, or students, the Museum Advisory Board, or Victoria College's Board of Trustees are eligible to purchase objects deaccessioned from the Museum.

10. Objects of educational value, but otherwise inappropriate for research or exhibition purposes, may be considered expendable and used for educational purposes after the appropriate deaccessioning procedures have taken place.
11. If a suitable recipient for donation, exchange, or purchase cannot be found, the Museum must keep and maintain the objects, unless other circumstances appropriate for deaccessioning exist.
12. Objects that have decomposed to a point where they have no value to the Museum or the public must have all identification numbers removed, and be destroyed and disposed of in an appropriate manner.
13. A number of reasons create the need for careful removal of properly reviewed objects from the Museum collections. The only material considered for deaccession are those that the Museum has clear title. The deaccessioning of any object, for whatever reason, is of primary importance to the Museum of the Coastal Bend. The deaccessioning policy and procedure are specifically defined and adhered to rigorously.
  - a. The Museum recognizes the special responsibility associated with the receiving and maintenance of objects of cultural, historical, and scientific significance in the public trust. In order for the institution to serve the cultural and educational needs of its various communities, it cannot remain static. Periodic reevaluations and thoughtful selection are necessary for the growth and proper care of collections. The practice of deaccessioning under well-defined guidelines provides these opportunities. Deaccessioning permanently removes an object from the collections through donation, transfer, exchange, sale, repatriation, loss from collections, deterioration beyond repair, controlled destruction by museum personnel, and loss through natural disasters, and allows the transfer of unrestricted title to the receiving agency.
  - b. No object is donated, exchanged, sold, repatriated, or in any way removed from Museum records without careful review, evaluation, and documentation of clear and unrestricted title. Under no circumstances are type specimens deaccessioned. Anthropological, historical, or natural science objects are not usually sold, but may be considered for deaccessioning through other channels such as transfer or exchange. Certain national and international statutes and laws may necessitate deaccessioning of anthropological and ethnological material for repatriation elsewhere. Works of art that are duplicated (in the case of prints, photographs, or other multiple image processes) or original works that are determined not to relate to the mission of the Museum may be sold at public auction to either not-for-profit

museums, agencies, or institutions or private individuals, who have no affiliation with the Museum.

- c. As the Museum is concerned for the preservation of objects in the public trust, written evidence is required that appropriate care, maintenance, and environment will be provided all objects considered for deaccessioning through donation, exchange, transfer, or repatriation, except where state, federal, or international laws or statutes override this requirement. Objects under consideration for exchange from another institution are subject to the acquisitions and accessions review process. An object must have been accessioned into the Museum's holdings for at least seven years before it can be considered for deaccessioning, unless otherwise regulated by state and federal law, or be transferred to an appropriate institution for educational or research purposes.

14. The decision to deaccession is made based on, but not limited to, the following guidelines with the procedures for specific situations as outlined.

These guidelines assume that all objects currently are accessioned and that the Museum has clear and unrestricted title:

- a. Objects lacking provenience or location information that are not significant or useful for research, exhibit, or educational purposes in and of themselves;
- b. Objects that have been determined not to be authentic;
- c. Objects that have limited or no value to the Museum because of redundancy in the collection;
- d. Objects of sacred or ritual significance that are requested for return under the terms and conditions of any state, federal, or international laws and statutes. As per current federal laws and statutes, the requesting group must provide evidence of the validity of their claim. All claims must be made in accordance with national and international statutes and laws and the Museum will respond accordingly. The stated deaccession procedure is followed in these cases;
- e. Objects that do not relate to the stated mission of the Museum; (This guideline does not supersede any other part of this procedure or the general policy for deaccessioning). Objects that are relevant to the stated mission of the Museum may not be deaccessioned on the grounds that they are not relevant to the research interests of current faculty or staff;

- f. Objects that have decayed or decomposed beyond reasonable use and repair or that by their condition constitute a hazard to other objects in the collection. (NOTE: Objects of this type, when deaccessioned, must have all Museum numbers removed, and is destroyed beyond recognition in order to prevent future confusion or rediscovery of the object)
- g. Objects that have been noted as missing from the collections must be recorded as such by the Curatorial Staff. Objects missing from the Museum beyond the time of the next collections-wide inventory are determined irretrievable and deaccessioned as “lost”; records are kept on the loss;
- h. Objects suspected as stolen from the collections must be reported to the Director in writing immediately for notification of similar museums, appropriate organization, and law enforcement agencies. Object(s) suspected as stolen and not recovered after a period of three years or until the time of the next collections-wide inventory are determined irretrievable and deaccessioned as “stolen;” records are kept on the loss;
- i. Objects that have been stolen and for which an insurance claim has been paid to the Museum;
- j. Objects of educational value, but otherwise inappropriate for research or exhibit purposes, may be utilized by the Museum’s education program. The physical location of the object is reassigned. Objects used in education programs and from the comparative collections are deaccessioned immediately after their consumption and such use is the justification for deaccessioning only after deaccessioning procedures have been followed;
- k. Object(s) without Deed of Gift or other legal document of transfer to the Museum that have been accessioned. If the original donor is known and no Deed of Gift was signed, an attempt to contact the donor or heirs is made to determine their willingness to accept the return of the object. Contact is attempted by certified mail by the Curatorial Staff. After 30 days, a second contact attempt is made by the Curatorial Staff through a notice in newspapers of general circulation in the county of the Museum (Victoria) and the county of the last known address of the donor or heirs. Notice is published at least once a week for two consecutive weeks. If the donor or heirs respond and do not request return of the object(s), the Museum will require from them a written statement granting clear and unrestricted title to the institution. If the donor or heirs requests the return of the object(s), the object(s) can be deaccessioned and returned. If the original donor or heirs cannot be located, the object is considered

abandoned property and recorded as such. The Museum must wait 15 years without donor contact before claiming clear and unrestricted title to the object. At that point, the object can be considered for deaccession;

- l. Object(s) without signed Deed of Gift that are returned to the donor or heirs may be returned in whole or in part. While the Museum seeks to preserve and maintain the quality of all objects under its care, it is not responsible for the condition in which the object(s) is returned. If the donor or heirs accept return of the object(s), they are required to pay shipping charges. If a charitable tax deduction was claimed (after 1968 and as modified in 1984) by the donor when the object was given, the object cannot be returned;
  - m. Object(s) without signed Deed of Gift that cannot be returned to donors or their heirs, and that is not relevant to the scope of The Museum, may, after a period of 15 years, be deaccessioned. At this point, it may be offered to interested public or private not-for-profit museums and educational agencies and institutions (not to individuals). The Museum informs regional museums and other not-for-profit agencies and institutions of proposed deaccession actions. Interested agencies are given appropriate time to contact the Museum to request specific object(s) and outline care and use intentions. Transfer of the object(s) to the receiving agency is by donation or exchange.
  - n. Objects that are found in collections for which no documentation whatsoever can be found. Such objects must be recorded as such and marked with this information and the date that this was established. The object(s) must then be kept for a minimum of 15 years to fulfill the requirements of the abandoned property laws for the State of Texas. If the object(s) remains unclaimed after the appropriate public notification requirements are met, they may be deaccessioned;
  - o. Items that were erroneously accessioned into the collections (e.g., repair or conservation supplies and tools, unrelated documentation, exhibit props and fixtures, etc.).
4. Usable objects that have been deaccessioned may be donated to or exchanged with, in order of preference: 1) appropriate public museums, 2) appropriate public educational agencies and institutions, and 3) private museums and educational agencies and institutions. An evaluation of appropriateness is made by the Curatorial Staff of the objects in question on a case-by-case basis. Every effort is made to retain objects of regional or local importance. If the donation/exchange option fails, objects (Re: Acquisition and Accessioning Policy) may be sold at a widely publicized public auction



conducted by a reputable purveyor. The purveyor will be responsible for determining fair market value based on his judgment and that of an in-house evaluation and two outside appraisals. The donor or heirs or the executing artist, if contemporary works of art are involved, will be notified of the intention by the Museum to sell. As part of the notification process, the donor or heirs are given assurance that:

- a. The money acquired from the sale of the object(s) is used solely to obtain objects for the collections. It is placed in a separate account to be used expressly for these purposes. On no account will any revenue generated be used to fund operating costs or salaries. Such an action constitutes a severe breach of ethical responsibility, and leads to a depletion and impoverishment of the collections;
- b. Funding for newly acquired and accessioned objects are attributed to the original donor(s);

NOTE: In instances of sale, no member of Victoria College's Board of Trustees, the Museum Advisory Board, the Museum of the Coastal Bend faculty, staff, students, or volunteers, will be eligible to purchase deaccessioned items. Under no circumstances will this restriction be waived.

#### G. Deaccessioning Procedures

1. The initial recommendation for deaccessioning is submitted by the appropriate Curatorial Staff in writing (with photodocumentation, as appropriate, attached) to the Director. The request includes an evaluation of the object and the reason for recommending deaccessioning. The Curatorial Staff has the authority to initiate inquiries with another institution with respect to possible deaccession through transfer or exchange. Such an arrangement then becomes part of the justification for deaccessioning of the object presented to the Deaccessioning Review Committee (DRC). Final decision on deaccessioning of any object is made by the Director after consultation with appropriate individuals who function as the DRC.

The procedure for deaccessioning is as follows:

- a. After the approval of deaccessioning an object, deaccessioning must be documented in writing and the original documents kept on file in the Collections Records. A duplicate set is on file in the appropriate division. The deaccession record must include, but is not limited to;

The completion of a deaccessioning form;

- i. name(s) and title(s) of persons involved in initiating and sanctioning the process and date of deaccessioning;

- ii. initial recommendation by the Curatorial Staff;
  - iii. reason for deaccessioning;
  - iv. description of object being deaccessioned;
  - v. accession number;
  - vi. evidence of clear and unrestricted title of the Museum to the object;
  - vii. photodocument of deaccessioned object as appropriate, e.g. repatriated items, fakes, and deterioration of objects beyond repair.
- b. If appropriate, the following must also be included:
- i. evidence of compliance with national or international statutes and laws;
  - ii. formal request for repatriation by Native American group or foreign government as per 1.d. above;
  - iii. name and location of the receiving museum, agency, institution, or purchaser, or Native American group or foreign county;
  - iv. written evidence from receiving agency or foreign government of their ability to properly care for and use the object, except where any laws and statutes waive this requirement;
  - v. document that transfers clear and unrestricted title to the receiving agency.
2. All accession records (including those in vault storage), must be stamped “deaccessioned” in red ink by the Curatorial Staff with the date of transaction.
  3. An annual report of deaccessioning activities is made to the Texas Historical Commission regarding state-associated held-in-trust collections.

Information on the disposition of the object is maintained by the Curatorial Staff. While the object is no longer physically part of the collections of the Museum, the accession number and card must remain a permanent part of the Collections Records. The accession number is not reassigned. It is the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff to conduct the process of deaccessioning and to keep and maintain all deaccession records.

## IV. Collections Care

### A. Introduction

Care of collections is the responsibility of the Director and Curatorial Staff. Collections care includes the preservation and protection of Museum artifacts and objects. Storage and exhibition conditions are designed and monitored to insure the long-term protection of the items. Collections on exhibit, in storage, or in remote climate controlled secure storage facility must be protected against pests, fire, water, theft, vandalism, and natural disaster. The collections must be protected by special security measures.

### B. Preservation

The collections are housed in temperature, humidity, and atmospheric controlled environments. The artifacts are packaged in archival materials that provide a buffer between the artifact and the environment. The artifacts are handled only by trained volunteers under strict conditions.

### C. Access to Collections

1. Collections staff supervises access by others (e.g. non-collections staff, visiting scholars and researchers, volunteers);
2. Research access is controlled by a written and approved research design.

### D. Conservation

1. Conservation needs are reviewed on an as needed basis. The recommendation and assistance of professional conservators is to be sought.
2. State-Associated Held-in-Trust Collections
  - a. Conservation for state-associated held-in-trust collections requires prior approval from the Texas Historical Commission, unless the Texas Historical Commission has delegated this authority in writing to the curatorial facility.
  - b. Conservation treatments for state-associated held-in-trust collections are performed only by trained conservators.
  - c. Conservation treatments for state-associated held-in-trust collections must be reversible in nature and are carried out with compatible materials.

- d. Conservation treatments for state-associated held-in-trust collections are documented prior to, during, and after completion.
- e. Annual reports are made to the Texas Historical Commission regarding conservation treatment for state-associated held-in-trust collections.

#### E. Disaster Management

Victoria College Physical Plant personnel perform routine building and systems inspections as well as preventive maintenance. The Museum follows the Emergency Response plan in accordance with Victoria College. In addition the following Hurricane Preparedness Timeline addresses measures utilized to protect collections and artifacts on exhibition before, during, and after an emergency. The plans are tested and evaluated annually.

1. Hurricane Preparedness Timeline
  - a. Increased awareness Phase (Condition Four)
    - i. June 1<sup>st</sup>—beginning of hurricane season
  - b. Watch Phase (Condition Three)
    - i. 60-48 hours before forecasted tropical force winds
    - ii. 72-60 hours before landfall
  - c. Warning Phase (Condition Two)
    - i. 48-36 hours before forecast tropical force winds
    - ii. 60-48 hours before landfall
  - d. Essential Services Phase (Condition One)
    - i. 36—48 hours before forecast tropical force winds
    - ii. 48-36 hours before landfall

Notes: The building has hurricane louvers that are permanently closed, thus the windows in the front of the building are protected. All artifacts are removed from the exhibit gallery. Each artifact is removed from the exhibit cases, placed in labeled archival bags that are then placed in archival boxes and moved to the Space Saver storage furniture in the vault. The vault has no windows. The boxes are placed on the top shelves in case of storm surge. Museum is closed and employees are sent home.

#### F. Pest Management

Victoria College utilizes a comprehensive integrated pest management program for the entire campus including the Museum building and remote storage. Museum staff members visually monitor sticky traps on a regular basis. Museum staff will receive continued education regarding integrated pest management.

### G. Security

Access to the collections is controlled by key access to the Museum building's and remote storage building's exterior doors. In the Museum building all exterior doors are monitored by an alarm system. Access to interior doors is controlled by a triple lock system. Access is restricted to Museum and Curatorial staff.

## V. Loans

### A. Loan Policy

Borrowing and lending objects are inherent practices in a museum and require specific procedures to assure object management. Loans do not involve transfer of title but are the temporary reassignment of objects from the Museum (outgoing) to another institution or to the Museum (incoming). All loans are for a defined period of time and for the stated purposes of exhibition, research, education or inspection.

Loans are by authority of the Director and effected through the Curatorial Staff. Loans are initiated by the Curatorial Staff or Director. A written loan agreement must accompany every loan with specifications on rights and responsibilities of each party. The loan contract must stipulate the conditions of the loan to insure adequate storage, environmental protection, and safety precautions during transit, handling, and use.

Loan contracts are kept on file in the Collections Records. The Curatorial Staff establishes the procedures for packing and transportation of all loans.

All loan arrangements (outgoing or incoming) that require a financial or physical commitment by the Museum of other than a minimal nature, or obligates the Museum to other than normal investment in the care, maintenance, or protection of an object, must be approved by the Director.

#### 1. Incoming Loan Policy

The purposes that the Museum of the Coastal Bend may accept an object as an incoming loan are as follows:

- a. For exhibition as part of a temporary installation or loan exhibition.
- b. For inspection and study with regard to possible gift or purchase.
- c. For research or related educational purposes for stated Museum purposes.

## 2. Outgoing Loan Policy for the Permanent Collection

The purposes that the Museum of the Coastal Bend may release an artifact to another educational institution as an outgoing loan are as follows:

- a. An educational institution is defined as a museum, library, or other institution with proper security.
- b. For exhibition as part of a temporary installation or loan exhibition.
- c. For research or related educational purposes for stated institutional purposes.
- d. For conservation, identification, or examination.
- e. All loans must be approved by the Collections Committee and Advisory Board.

## 3. Outgoing Loan Policy for Educational Exhibits

The purposes that the Museum of the Coastal Bend may release an object to another educational institution as an outgoing loan are as follows:

- a. Objects are defined as educational replicas based on the permanent collection.
- b. For exhibition as part of a temporary installation or loan exhibition.
- c. Loans for educational exhibits do not require prior approval by the Collections Committee and Advisory Board.

## 4. Outgoing Loan Policy for Held-in-Trust Objects

- a. The decision to lend held-in-trust objects/collections is based on the policy for Permanent Collections objects as defined in the CMP, Loans 2.a. (above);
- b. Held-in-trust objects are never loaned to individuals; loans are made only to the institution with which the researcher is affiliated;
- b. Held-in-trust objects are required to be insured for the duration of the loan.

## B. Outgoing Loan Procedures

1. Museum collections are maintained for the benefit of the public and objects are loaned to reach a wider audience and facilitate research. While on loan, objects must be afforded the same level of care and protection as provided by the Museum. Because of these considerations, loans are made only to other similar institutions, non-profit agencies, and educational organizations. Loans for research purposes are made to the institution with which the individual is affiliated and that institution assumes full responsibility for the proper administration of the loan and the care and security of the object(s).
2. An object(s) considered for loan must be the property of the Museum or held-in-trust and accessioned into the Museum's record. All objects considered for loan must be acquired by legal and ethical means, and in stable condition to withstand the rigors of being on loan. Neither uncataloged Museum collections nor type specimens and comparable objects will be loaned. Each division may further restrict the kinds of objects or materials eligible for loans based on nature, rarity, monetary value, research priority, and/or management considerations of the objects.
3. The Museum has an obligation to take precautions to assure that objects requested for loan receive proper care and security. It is incumbent on the requesting institution to present verification of their environmental, storage, exhibition, and security conditions and procedures for the handling and transit of objects. Accreditation by appropriate accrediting agents, as well as knowledge of conditions, practices, and procedures of the requesting institution is used in evaluating the loan request. Exhibition or research conditions must be stated clearly on the loan agreement and evidence of adherence may be requested. The length of time and other conditions of loan (such as periodic checks to monitor the safety of the object(s), use of the object(s) for the stated purpose, condition of the object(s), and to assure that insurance valuations are current) must be stated on the loan agreement and adhered to by the borrowing institution. Packing and transportation methods that must be approved by the Curatorial Staff, will be stated clearly on the loan agreement. Costs associated with the loan will be coordinated with approval of the Director. The object(s) must be packed and transported in the safest possible way in accordance with the nature and condition of the object(s).
4. Loans generally are for a six-month period with an option to renew for another six months without having to return the objects for inventory and evaluation. Requests for longer periods must be in writing from the borrowing institution with full justification. These renewal loans may be subject to restrictions including written evaluation (condition report) or the return of the object(s) for inventory, in-house evaluation, and assurance of current insurance valuation prior to the extended loan period. No object(s) shall be on exhibition loan for longer than one year or research loan for two years. Returned loan objects only become eligible for further loan after undergoing inventory and evaluation.

5. A Condition Report on an object(s) going out on loan prior to packing for transport to the borrowing institution and after return to the Museum that is the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff, is required. A Condition Report may be required from the borrowing institution upon receipt of the loaned object(s) and prior to packing for return to the Museum. Damage or loss of object(s) while in transit or during the loan period must be reported in writing to the Curatorial Staff with immediate notification to the Director. Damage or loss of objects while in transit or during the loan period must be verbally reported immediately to the Curatorial Staff with a subsequent written explanation directed to the Director. The Curatorial Staff is responsible for providing appropriate information to the borrowing institution relating to a loan. Insurance claims for damaged or lost objects are the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff. An object(s) on loan cannot be altered, cleaned, or repaired unless permission to do so is authorized in writing by the Curatorial Staff on the Loan Agreement.
6. In general, insurance coverage for all objects sent out on loan is required. Normally, insurance coverage is provided by the borrowing institution. Current and reasonable insurance valuations are the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff. All other insurance matters are the responsibility of the Director. Insurance is part of adequate security and confirms that resources are available for payment of damages or replacement of the loaned object(s). Under most circumstance, insurance is all risk, wall-to-wall coverage. A certificate of insurance may be required, as defined on the Loan Agreement, from the borrowing institution prior to transportation of the loaned objects and is kept on file in the Director's office.
  - a. Cancellation or change in insurance coverage necessitates immediate written notice to the Director. The loan then may be subject to cancellation. Failure to maintain adequate insurance coverage in no way releases the borrowing institution from liability for loss or damage regardless of whether or not the Museum monitored the borrowing institution's insurance.
  - b. It is recognized that as a part of Victoria College, the Museum does not insure its collections. However, Victoria College, as a support service, carries the insurance for Museum specified objects. If the borrowing institution is unable to provide insurance, a request for an exception must be made in writing by the Curatorial Staff to the Director. Under no circumstances will objects loaned to an individual be exempt from insurance coverage.
7. An object(s) on loan must be returned promptly when the loan period expires. As appropriate, a reminder letter is sent by the Curatorial Staff to the



borrowing institution. The Museum reserves the right to cancel or deny renewal of any loan.

8. Loans that will radically alter or destroy an object(s) may be permitted only with the written approval of the Director. Requests must be made in writing by the Curatorial Staff to the Director and must contain full justification for the destruction and a description of the method to be used. The Director will respond in writing to the Curatorial Staff. Although the object may not be returned to the Museum, the information gained from the analysis must be provided to the Museum. It is the Curatorial Staff's responsibility to monitor materials out on destructive loan, to assure their correct use, and to record the returned data in the division records under the object's catalog number with notification to the Registrar. The object is not deaccessioned; information gained substitutes for the altered or destroyed object/sample. The Museum does not in any way relinquish ownership of the object(s), and retains the right to recall the object(s), or its modified forms, if not used for the stated purpose within the loan period or if other circumstances warrant it. For an object(s) held-in-trust for state and federal agencies, a letter from the appropriate agency must be on file in the Collections Records approving the request prior to initiating the in-house request. The State does not relinquish title for held-in-trust objects.
9. Field-generated, scientific collections, and associated ancillary material, may require specialized knowledge (e.g., sediments, tissues), and necessitate transport to specialists for data extraction and analysis. It is the Curatorial Staff's responsibility to monitor these materials and to record the returned data with the appropriate collection. If these materials are not accessioned, a formal loan agreement is not required. However, if objects (e.g., seeds, insect parts, bones, snails) are returned with the data, they are accessioned with their appropriate collection and cataloged. Any field material accessioned prior to being sent for analysis must be accompanied by a Loan Agreement.
10. Except for condition reports, all photography, reproduction, or replication of a borrowed object(s) must be with prior written approval by the Curatorial Staff with notification to the Director. Lighting conditions, environmental and/or applied chemical alterations, and other conditions of reproduction and replication must be specified by the Curatorial Staff in the writing. Photographs, reproductions, and replicas may only be used for research, exhibition, and educational purposes. Commercial use of loan objects is prohibited.
11. The Museum must be credited in all publications and exhibitions associated with the loan object(s), including photographs and reproductions, and must receive two (2) copies of any publication. The object(s) should be identified by its catalog or accession number. The proper name of the Museum to be

used in all acknowledgments is, “The Museum of the Coastal Bend Victoria, Texas.” The proper Museum acronym for its accession number is “MCB”

### C. Incoming Loan Procedures

1. An object(s) is received into the Museum on loan from both institutions and individuals. In the event the lending institution or individual does not have a loan form available, the Museum will adapt its form to provide documentation associated with the incoming loan. The Museum exercises the same care with objects on loan as it does in the security, handling, and storage of its own objects.
2. Requests for a loan object(s) to the Museum are initiated by the Curatorial Staff in writing to the lender with notification to the Director. Normally, the Curatorial Staff accepts objects being placed on loan to the Museum and signs the loan agreement form as the representative of the Museum. The Director is kept informed of all loan transactions. Under unusual circumstances (as deemed by the Director), the Director may initiate incoming loan requests, sign the Loan Agreement form, and accept the object(s).
3. Under no circumstances is a loan object(s) received into the Museum that have been acquired by other than legal and ethical means. A loan object(s) cannot be received from anyone other than the legal owner or his authorized agent.
4. Except for unusual circumstances, an object(s) will not be received on loan from Museum staff members, staff members of Victoria College, the Advisory Board of the Museum or the Board of Trustees of Victoria College or their immediate families. Exceptions for loans from Museum affiliated personnel must be requested by the Curatorial Staff in writing to the Director who will respond in writing to the Curatorial Staff. The request must contain full justifications, loan purpose, loan period, and insurance needs.
5. All incoming loans that are insured must include the provision that the amount payable by the insurance company is the only available to the lender in the event of loss or damage. It is the responsibility of the Director to make appropriate arrangements for insurance of the loan object(s). Requests for waiver of insurance and release of liability must be made in advance by the Curatorial Staff in writing to the Director. The request must contain full justification along with a written agreement by the lender to waive insurance and release the Museum from any liability associated with the loan. Complete documentation of all exceptions is kept on file in the Collections Records for the duration of the loan.

It is the responsibility of the lender to set insurance valuations. The type of valuation must be stated on the loan agreement (fair-market, replacement,

conservation, material, or special consideration). The lender monitors loan valuations and notifies the Museum immediately if any changes occur during the loan period. If a valuation figure is not forthcoming or not mutually acceptable between the lender and Museum, the Director will reconsider pursuit of the loan. The Curatorial Staff notifies the lender that failure to provide a valuation(s) will result in non-acceptance of the loan. The Museum does not provide evaluations or appraisals for a loan object(s).

6. Loans of personal property from individuals for warehousing in the Museum will not be honored, on either a short—or long-term basis.
7. The Curatorial Staff may require the lending party to certify that the loan object(s) can withstand ordinary strains of packing, transportation, and handling. The Curatorial Staff may request that the lending party send a written condition report prior to the transportation of the object(s). It is the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff to monitor the condition of the loan object(s). Upon receipt of the loan by the Curatorial Staff, the object(s) must be inventoried, inspected, photographed (where appropriate), and written notations made of the findings. A copy of these findings must be maintained by the Curatorial Staff and filed in the Collections Records.

Any inconsistency in the loan inventory, such as number or type of objects, damage or suspected damage, or any change in the condition of the loan object(s), must be reported immediately to the Curatorial Staff. The Curatorial Staff must notify the lending party and, when appropriate, notify the insurance company and prepare a full condition report. It is the responsibility of the Director to handle claim negotiations.

8. The Curatorial Staff is responsible for the prompt return of the loan object(s). The object(s) must be inventoried, inspected, photographed (where appropriate), and written notations made of the findings. A copy of these findings must be maintained by the Curatorial Staff. Any inconsistency in the inventory, damage, or suspected damage must be reported immediately to the Director. The Director must notify the lending party and, when appropriate, notify the insurance company and the Curatorial Staff must prepare a full condition report. (As noted above: It is the responsibility of the Director to handle claim negotiations.)
9. The Museum reserves the right to cancel a loan or remove the loan object(s) from display at any time. All loans are for a set period of time that cannot exceed two years. Regular evaluation of each loan situation occurs to determine if loan renewal or an updated insurance valuation is needed.
10. Normally, permanent loans are not permitted. However, the Museum recognizes that federal agencies by statute are not permitted to deaccession objects but may offer such objects on permanent loan. Although title is not transferred, all other rights of possession follow. In this situation, although

termed a permanent loan by the federal agency, the objects are subject to the Museum's acquisition policy, must undergo consideration by the Collections Committee, and, if accepted, the objects are accessioned into the Museum collection.

11. When returning a loan, the object(s) must be packed and transported in the same or a more suitable manner as received. Packing and shipping arrangements of a loan object(s) are the responsibility of the Curatorial Staff. The Curatorial Staff will send (by certified mail) the lending party a copy of the shipping inventory and a Museum receipt form. The Curatorial Staff notifies the lending party that they are required to sign and return the Museum receipt form within 30 days or else forfeit any claim for damage or loss. If the lending party retrieves the loan object(s) in person, the Museum receipt form must be signed prior to removal of the object(s) from the Museum. In the event that the Loan Agreement does not stipulate how the object(s) are to be returned, the Curatorial Staff will notify the lending party that the loan object(s) will be shipped if not retrieved in person within 30 days.
12. The Curatorial Staff may notify a lender of the Museum's intent to terminate a loan for an object(s) for which a written loan agreement exists that was made for an indefinite term or for a term in excess of seven years. The statement of termination of loan must include the following information:

“The records of the Museum of the Coastal Bend indicate that you have property on loan to it. The Museum wishes to terminate the loan. You must contact the Museum, establish your ownership of the property, and make arrangements to collect the property. If you fail to do so within 65 days from the date of this notice, you will be deemed to have donated the property to the Museum.”
13. Any property on loan to the Museum for 15 years or more, and for which no written loan agreement exists, and to which no person has made claim according to the records of the Museum, is considered abandoned. The object(s) becomes the property of the Museum if the Museum has given the lender notice. (The Museum is considered to have given the lender notice if the Museum mails the notice to the lender at the lender's last known address and proof of receipt is received by the Museum within 30 days after the date the notice is mailed. If the Museum does not have a current address for the lender or if proof of receipt is not received, the Museum will publish a notice at least once a week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in both Victoria county and the county of the lender's last known address. The notice of the unclaimed loan will contain the lender's name, last known address, description of the loan object(s), the date of loan, and the name, address, and telephone number of the Curatorial Staff.)
14. As part of a loan agreement, the lending party has the responsibility to

maintain contact with the Museum. If a change in ownership of the object(s) occurs while on loan, as exemplified by the following conditions:

- a. transfer of title;
- b. death of the individual lending party; or
- c. dissolution of the lending institution;

The lending party or its authorized agent must give prompt notice to the Museum. In all such cases, the Museum either negotiates a new loan agreement or returns the object(s).

15. An annual report of loan activities is made to the Texas Historical Commission regarding state-associated held-in-trust agreements.

## VI. Exhibitions

### A. Exhibitions Policy

1. An exhibition is the process of presenting one or more objects with accompanying interpretive and educational materials for the purpose of informing, inspiring, and enlightening a defined audience. This kind of presentation is an appropriate use of museum collections and an integral part of the Museum's Collection Management Policy.
2. In matters relating to the selection of objects to be exhibited in the Museum, every effort is made to maintain the confidence of the constituents. Exhibit decisions are weighed not just with thought of what the Museum perceives to be best for the people, but also in consideration of what the people perceive to be in their own best interest. The desire of the Museum to maintain the "good will" of special interest groups must be balanced with its obligation to carry out its responsibilities to the general public, the College, and the greater community of national and international museums. Every reasonable effort is exerted to avoid the appearance and fact that favoritism and commercialism, rather than merit and scholarship, dictate exhibit selection.
3. As a general policy, the Museum attempts to approve requests by the College, City of Victoria, Victoria County, and those agencies who express the interests of the people of the Victoria community for information and photographs of Museum exhibits. Some requests may be denied due to restrictions imposed by lending persons, institutions, or agencies.
4. Exhibitions in the Museum are of three types:
  - a. Long-term Exhibitions present a part of the "story" inherent in the mission of the Museum. Normally these exhibitions are for an extended period of time, and may include objects that are rotated on and off exhibit in consideration of proper collection care.
  - b. Temporary Exhibitions are drawn from the Museum's collections or objects on loan from other institutions, and are on display for a limited time (normally not exceeding six months). These exhibitions may elaborate on topics related to the mission of the Museum or may give visitors an expanded view of relevant social, cultural, or scientific themes. Temporary exhibitions normally are organized and researched by Museum staff or visiting Curatorial Staffs.
  - c. Traveling Exhibitions come from a variety of sources and are selected

to complement or augment Museum collections for the purpose of bringing new ideas and information to the visitors. Traveling exhibitions are leased or rented from service agencies or museums and are normally received as a complete product including objects and the associated interpretative materials.

5. The Museum endorses the concept that it has a primary responsibility to use the collections for creating and disseminating new knowledge through various means including exhibitions. It is also a fundamental obligation of the Museum staff to ensure that information in exhibitions is honest, objective, and accurate. However, in meeting this obligation, the Museum has neither the wish nor intent to misuse its role as an institution “in the service of society.” To avoid conflict while meeting its social commitment, the Museum does not authorize certain kinds of exhibitions. The follow represents the kinds of exhibitions that are considered unacceptable:

- a. Exhibitions that publicize or promote commercial products or services.
- b. Exhibitions that willfully, with malice aforethought, impugn the reputation of any person.
- c. Exhibitions that do not support the notion of human dignity.
- d. Exhibitions that threaten the health and safety of the staff or visitors.
- e. Exhibitions that are intended to promote and/or enhance a particular religious belief, attitude, or dogma.
- f. Exhibitions that intentionally or unintentionally promote an attitude of prejudice against any person or persons.
- g. Exhibitions that perpetuate myths or stereotypes viewed as negative or demeaning to a people, race, gender, religion, or ethnic group.
- h. Exhibitions that compromised the artist’s or scholar’s rights.

#### B. Exhibitions Procedures

The following procedures are to be interpreted to support an attitude of professional, quality, public-oriented exhibitions in accordance with the Museum’s Exhibitions Policy and as supporting the educational mission of Victoria College as defined in Victoria College’s Mission Statement.

1. The selection, scheduling, budgeting, and executing of exhibitions is the authority and responsibility of the Director with input and assistance from a number of sources including, but not limited, to the following:

- a. Ad hoc community advisory groups;
  - b. College department or faculty representatives;
  - c. Individuals or special interests groups from the College or community; and
  - d. Professionals in areas of special interest.
2. Requests for exhibitions may originate with any person or persons from the College staff or faculty, support organizations, or community; however, all requests must be recommended by and presented through the Museum Advisory Board, the Director, or the Curatorial Staff. Initiators must complete and submit an Exhibitions Request to the Director.
3. The selecting and scheduling of exhibitions is based on the College's academic and fiscal year (September through August). The Director establishes a concept of exhibits for the year in accordance with perceived College, Museum, and community needs. In selecting and scheduling exhibitions, the following criteria are addressed:
- a. Relevance to the Museum's mission. (In Re: Museum Mission Statement and Exhibitions Policy).
  - b. Accordance with the unifying concept for the exhibition period as established by the Director.
  - c. Support a balance of exhibitions to represent appropriately the Museum's collections.
  - d. The degree of financial support available.
  - e. Proper utilization of objects and collection management practices including attention to all legal and ethical concerns described in the Collections Management Policy.
  - f. Educational and inspirational value.
  - g. Museum personnel and time limitations.
4. The Director establishes a schedule of exhibitions and appoints an exhibit team to oversee the planning, development, and execution of each exhibition. The team includes a Curatorial Staff, a designer, an educator, a team coordinator, and/or other pertinent persons as designated by the Director.

The exhibit team in the course of planning, development, and execution:



- a. Acts on the Director's committee charge;
  - b. Makes periodic progress reports to the Director;
  - c. Adheres to established Museum policies and procedures;
  - d. Coordinates with other Museum divisions;
  - e. Assumes no financial, contractual, personnel, or facility obligations associated with or to the Museum, either implied or expressed, without explicit authorization from the Director; and
  - f. Is accountable for the installation, presentation, and disposition of the exhibition (following its removal from the gallery).
5. Only the Director is authorized to sign contracts or make verbal agreements with persons, institutions, or agencies that encumber the personnel, facility, or financial resources of the Museum. (This statement does not supersede the general College policy relating to contracts and agreements as defined in the Policies and Procedures of The Victoria County Junior College District Board of Trustees).
  6. A schedule of exhibitions is made available to the Museum staff, faculty, and support associations on a regular basis.
  7. Exhibitions, within the museum complex buildings or on the grounds, may not be photographed for commercial or publicity purposes without prior consent of the Director, and as applicable, the lending institution, individual, or agency. Commercial photographers must show written permission from the Director before photographing any exhibition or exhibition item. Use of flash or high intensity lighting units, movement of exhibition items, or other special arrangements must be included in the Director's permission statement.

## VII. Research Policy

### A. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline, delineate, and reinforce the policies of the College with regard to the conduct of research and scholarly activity by members of the Museum staff and faculty. This policy also is intended to endorse research as an activity appropriate to the use of museum collections and an integral part of the Museum's Collection Management Policy.

1. Scholarly activity, including research, is vital to the Museum's educational and public service mission. Therefore, within the framework of existing College policy and the constraints of Museum Division policy and procedure, faculty and staff of the Museum are free to:
  - a. Choose the subject of research or scholarly activity;
  - b. Initiate and conduct such activity;
  - c. Seek the necessary resources to conduct such activity, and to exercise control over those resources;
  - d. Disseminate the results of such activity in an appropriate manner.

### B. Staff/Faculty responsibility

In return for this freedom to conduct scholarly activity and research, a member of the Museum's faculty or staff is responsible for:

1. Maintaining professional integrity within and external to the College and the Museum.
2. Honoring professional obligations to the College and Museum, and when relevant, to external funding entities.
3. Maintaining collegial relationship with members of the Museum faculty and staff.
4. Respecting the boundaries of collection authority.
5. Adhering to the highest standards of museum practices regarding the proper care and maintenance of collections.

6. Acting in an ethical and professional manner as defined by the Code of Ethics for the Museum.

C. Administration action

In recognition of the importance of professional research activities, the Museum's administration normally does not intervene in the research or scholarly activities of a faculty and staff member except to render assistance. However, situations may arise where it is necessary for the Museum administration to recommend suspension, modification, or termination of scholarly activity or research for adequate cause. Adequate cause for such action includes but is not limited to:

1. Demonstrated evidence of professional incompetence, supported by documentation;
  2. Continuing or repeated substantial neglect of professional responsibilities;
  3. Professionally unacceptable activity in the conduct of scholarly work (plagiarism, research fraud, etc.);
  4. Endangerment of collections objects beyond professionally acceptable limits;
  5. Creating a health or safety hazard for Museum faculty, staff, students, visitors, or volunteers;
  6. Other College-related issues as defined in the Victoria College Employee Handbook.
- D. To ensure academic freedom and professional research and scholarly opportunities, Museum faculty and staff have the right to respond to actions that impede or prevent such activities.

## VIII. Definitions

**Accessioning**—Accessioning is the formal process used to accept and record an item as a collection object. It is the transfer of clear title or an object or the registration of a held-in-trust object.

**Acquisition**—Acquisition is the addition of an object to a collection by means of purchases, gift, bequest, exchange, or other transaction.

**Collection object**—A collection object is an item, artifact, or specimen that has been accessioned into the collection.

**Collections Records** – The written record of all objects and collections of objects on loan, held in perpetuity, or held-in-trust by the Museum. Among those items generally found in the Collections Records are the Deed of Gift, Loan agreement, description, any other documentation associated with the objects, accession number, accession record, and photograph (if deemed appropriate).

**Conflict of interest**—Any action or behavior on the part of the Museum Advisory Board, The Board of Trustees of Victoria College, administration of the College or Museum, staff, students, or volunteers, as an individual or group, that competes with the institution, or takes advantage of their position or privileged information for personal gain.

**Deaccessioning**—Deaccessioning is the formal process by which an object is removed permanently from the Museum’s holdings. Records of a deaccessioned object remain with the Museum along with documentation of its disposal.

**Disposal**—Disposal is the method by which a deaccessioned object is sold, traded, transferred to another institution, or destroyed.

**Loans**—Loans are temporary assignments of collection objects from the Museum (outgoing loans) or temporary assignments of objects to the Museum (incoming loans) for stated museum purposes such as temporary exhibition, research, or examination for possible gift or purchase (incoming).

**Mission**—The purpose, usually expressed in a written statement, that establishes direction and goals with respect to subject matter, time, location, and function(s) of the Museum. (The Museum of the Coastal Bend’s Mission statement was developed in September 2002).

**Museum Advisory Board**—The Museum Advisory Board of the Museum of the Coastal Bend is the governing body of the Museum with the Trustees of Victoria College as the policy- setting authority assigned and accepting the ultimate fiscal and fiduciary responsibility to maintain and enhance all aspects of the institution, including collections, operations, and services.

**Museum**—A museum is a permanent non-profit institution, open to the public on a regular basis that collects, preserves, researches, and exhibits collection objects for study, education, and enjoyment for the benefit of society.

**Museum collection**—The body of objects and documentation accepted and held-in-trust by the museum for research, exhibition, and education.

**Museum of the Coastal Bend**—The Museum of the Coastal Bend refers to all structures, facilities, collections, and associated materials using property allocated to the Museum by The Victoria College. The Museum is comprised of the main building.

**Personal collection**—Personally owned objects that are relevant to the Museum's collections.  
**Staff member**—A person formally affiliated with the Museum who assists with its functions. Staff members include paid personnel, research associates, visiting Curatorial Staffs, adjunct faculty, and volunteers.

**Student**—A person formally enrolled in an institution of higher education, and because that person uses Museum facilities, collections, exhibits, or programs for academic purposes, is expected to work within the parameters defined by the Code of Ethics of the Museum.

**Support and/or Associated Group**—A group organized and chartered in cooperation with the Museum that supports the purpose of the Museum, has members, and provides financial, programmatic, and general assistance to the Museum.

**Victoria Regional History Center**—A department of the Victoria College/University of Houston-Victoria library, the Victoria Regional History Center holds the Texas and Regional History Book Collection, the Special Collections, the Institutional Archives, the Regional Historical Resource Depository, and the photographic archive. The History center is located in the Library.

**Visitor**—A visitor is any individual, or group of individuals, not directly affiliated with the Museum that is on-site to interact with museum staff and/or to utilize the exhibits, programs, or collections of the Museum.

**Volunteer**—A volunteer is an unpaid member of the staff.