



Access Policy and Rules Governing Use of the Museum Collection

Please read and sign below

Introduction

The Fort Vancouver NHS museum collection encompasses archaeological and historic objects, natural history specimens, and archives. Museum collection facilities are not public areas. For the preservation and security of the collection, access is limited. There are occasions, however, when visitors may have access to collections in storage. Examples of legitimate use include scientific, historical or cultural research; exhibit planning and development; guided tours; and educating staff/volunteers about the resources and history of the park.

NPS Director's Order 24 (*NPS Museum Collection Management* section 4.3.23) requires promotion of access to cataloged collections for research and interpretive purposes through a variety of means and media. Access must not conflict with federal or state legislation or NPS policies pertaining to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) disclosures, copyright, privacy, publicity, obscenity and pornography, defamation and resource protection.

Purpose and Scope

This policy states the conditions placed upon NPS staff/volunteers, researchers, and visitors for access to and use of the Fort Vancouver NHS museum collection (hereafter referred to as the "collection"). It also outlines the level of customer service that visitors and researchers should expect from NPS staff managing the museum collection. This policy will be made available to anyone seeking access to the museum collection.

Unless otherwise noted, it encompasses access to all museum objects, scientific specimens, archives and manuscript collections, museum collection records, and information about these resources (subject to legal restrictions) within the museum collection. The research library is not considered a part of the museum collection and is not addressed in this policy.

Definition of Researchers and Visitors

Researchers are defined as NPS staff/volunteers or members of the public with a defined topic of interest or inquiry. All serious research is encouraged regardless of educational level.

Visitors are defined as any person outside of the park Cultural Resources staff, curatorial volunteers, and Graduate Research Assistants assigned to work at the park. For the purposes of unsupervised access to museum spaces, visitors include, but are not limited to, archaeology volunteers, NPS staff and volunteers from other divisions, NPS staff from other parks, contractors and technicians, participants in a guided tour or open house, and interested members of the public.

Access policy

- **Access to the museum collection is by appointment only and subject to staff availability.**
- Museum staff will endeavor to respond to requests for access within 5 business days.
- At least 24 hour advance notice is required, but does not guarantee staff availability. One week advance notice is recommended.
- All researchers will complete and sign a *Research Request Form* and *Copyright and Privacy Restriction Statement* prior to their visit. These forms are retained in curatorial files and will be considered confidential to the extent allowed by law.
- All researchers and visitors will sign the Visitor Log when entering secure collection areas.
- Researchers will read and sign the *Handling Procedures* document prior to touching museum objects or archives. Visitors not conducting research will not be allowed to touch museum objects or archives.
- Researchers and visitors will be accompanied by Cultural Resources staff at all times when accessing secure areas.
- Only pencils may be used in the collection areas. Pens and markers are not allowed.
- Coats, bags, backpacks, purses, and briefcases are not allowed in the collection areas. Storage cupboards are available or personal items may be left outside the collection areas but in view of the owner.
- Food, liquids, living or dried plants, and animals (excepting service animals) are not allowed in the collection areas. Smoking is not allowed inside any building or within 25 feet of an entrance.
- Researchers will follow handling guidelines, including the use of cotton or nitrile gloves as appropriate. Researchers should be aware that the collections may have unidentified contaminants.
- Photography, photocopying, scanning, or recording must be pre-approved. Photocopying is available for very limited quantities. Permission to reproduce does not constitute permission to publish or use for commercial purposes. Also see the *Copyright and Privacy Restrictions Form*. Approved reproductions of collection items will credit the National Park Service and include the item's catalog number.
- The park reserves the right to limit access to fragile or restricted collections.
- Researchers or visitors who disregard these rules or adversely affect the work of others will be asked to leave and denied future access.
- The National Park Service, as a courtesy, requests digital or paper copies or photo documentation of any work, published or unpublished, based on utilizing the results of research conducted with park resources.

I understand the rules and agree to adhere to Fort Vancouver's policies regarding access to the museum collection.

Printed Name of Researcher/Visitor

Signature of Researcher/Visitor

Date