

# CURATORIAL GUIDELINES



The Alutiiq Museum’s curatorial guidelines are designed to aid researchers and organizations in preparing materials for long-term care at the museum. These guidelines are based on widely accepted professional standards and provisions outlined in the museum’s Collections Policy and its Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of Objects. These documents, which provide additional information on the acquisition process, can be downloaded from the collection pages of the museum’s website, or obtained from Curator of Collections Amanda Lancaster. Anyone wishing to curate a collection at the Alutiiq Museum should contact us to discuss their specific situation.

## Acquisition

- The Alutiiq Museum’s board adopted collections policy outlines the procedure for adding materials to the museum’s holding both as long-term loans and donations, and the conditions under which materials will be accepted and cared for. Those wishing to curate materials at the museum should familiarize themselves with the acquisition process. The museum’s staff is ethically bound to uphold all museum policies and may not alter stipulations for any reason.
- All acquisitions must follow the museum’s Guidelines for the Spiritual Care of objects. Staff members have pledged to uphold these guidelines and do not have the authority to alter them.

## Culturally Sensitive Material

- Before handling, cleaning, conserving, labeling, packing, or shipping any culturally sensitive material, please contact the museum for guidance to ensure proper treatment.
- Before shipping, depositors must inform the museum of the presence of human remains or spiritually sensitive material in any collection. This will allow the museum to consider the appropriate treatment and disposition of the material and prepare for its arrival.
- Any box containing human remains or culturally sensitive materials should be clearly labeled “sensitive” so it can be unpacked by the appropriate staff member.

## Shipping

- It is the depositor’s responsibility to ship collections to the museum in a secure manner. The museum strongly recommends that depositors insure collections while in transit and use a trackable shipping method. Federal Express, United Parcel Service, Alaska Airlines, and the United States Postal Service all provide regular, secure shipping to Kodiak. Materials may also be delivered by a courier (e.g., a museum professional, an art handler, a researcher).
- Please be aware that some shippers (e.g., Alaska Airlines) deliver only to the Kodiak airport and not to the museum. While shipment directly into the museum is preferred, depositors can discuss the possibility of an airport pick-up with the museum.
- The museum requires that depositors who ship collections to Kodiak create a package inventory listing all boxes and their contents, so all packages can be accounted for upon arrival.
- Depositors should schedule shipments/couriers to arrive at the museum during business hours.
- Depositors should provide the museum with shipping information—shipper name, shipment tracking number, expected arrival.

## Conservation

- All collections should arrive at the museum clean, conserved, and ready for storage, unless the depositor has negotiated a contract with the museum to complete cleaning and conservation, or if the collection is less than 100 pieces and the curator of collections determines that cleaning or conservation will not burden the museum's staff or resources.
- All samples (carbon, fauna, soil, wood, etc.) should be air-dried and double bagged in clean, archivally-sound, plastic, zip-lock bags to prevent mold, enhance preservation, preserve provenance information, and reduce the chance of spillage.

## Labeling

- All collections deposited at the museum must be cataloged, unless the depositor has negotiated a contract with the museum to complete labeling, or the collection is less than 100 pieces, and the curator of collections determines that labeling will not burden the museum's staff or resources.
- Every individual object in a collection (artifact, sample, photograph, etc.) should have a unique catalog number. The museum will not accept artifacts cataloged in lots.
- The museum can provide guidance on cataloging methods and materials. Our preferred, archivally-sound method of labeling artifacts, is as follows and is demonstrated in a video available at - [https://youtu.be/uMIOByGE\\_qs](https://youtu.be/uMIOByGE_qs)
  - Type catalog numbers into a spreadsheet;
  - Print catalog numbers in 4-point font on archival paper;
  - Apply a base coat of Acryloid B-72 to the artifact;
  - Press a unique catalog number label into the tacky bottom coat of the Acryloid B-72;
  - Air dry;
  - Apply a topcoat of acrylic gloss over the label; and
  - Air dry.
- Artifacts, samples, and photographs may also be cataloged by:
  - Securely attaching an archival quality tag labeled with archival quality ink; or
  - Placing in archivally-sound boxes, file folders, or plastic holders (e.g., photo sleeves) and labeling with archivally-sound ink or pencil; or
  - Placing in archival quality plastic bags labeled with Sharpie marker. If double-bagged, label both the inner and outer bags.

## Packaging

- Collections should arrive at the museum in clean, archivally-sound storage materials (e.g., acid free or buffered boxes, inert plastic bags, archival paper, archival foam), unless the depositor has negotiated a contract with the museum to provide storage materials, or the collection is less than 100 pieces and the curator of collections determines that providing such materials will not burden the museum's staff or resources.
- All samples (soil, fauna, charcoal, etc.) should be double bagged. ALUMINUM FOIL IS NOT PERMITTED!
- For advice on packaging techniques, please contact the museum's curator of collections.

## Supporting Documentation

- All collections must be accompanied by a complete, comprehensive inventory (one that individually lists every object, sample, and image), unless the depositor has negotiated a contract for the museum to complete such documentation or the collection is less than 100 pieces and the curator of collections determines that inventorying the collection will not burden the museum's staff or resources.
- Depositors are encouraged to provide electronic copies of collection inventories (on a flash drive, on a cloud-based server, in Microsoft Excel or text format), as well as a paper copy. Paper copies should be laser printed in 6-point Arial font.
- The museum considers documentation a critical part of all collections and will not accept any collection without a complete set of supporting information. For archaeological collections, this includes hard copies of all permits, field notes, field forms, maps, lab reports (e.g. from carbon dating, XRF studies, faunal analysis, etc.) and a representative set of research photographs. Photographs may be scanned to create .jpeg files and copied to a flash drive, hard drive, or shared via a cloud-based server for deposition at the museum.
- Photographs must be numbered and accompanied by an image inventory. The museum can provide sample photograph catalog sheets upon request.
- Wherever possible, copies of collection documentation should be provided on archivally-sound (acid-free) paper to promote long-term preservation.
- Depositors are strongly urged to include project information as part of collection documentation. This includes but is not limited to research proposals, correspondence, technical reports, conference papers, journal articles, books, media articles, and other any documents that provide context for the materials deposited.
- Depositors are strongly urged to forward at least one copy of future relevant publications to the museum to enhance collections documentation. Researchers who fail to provide timely copies of their results may be restricted from future access to the Alutiiq Museum's holdings.

## Storage and Exhibition

- The museum will organize collections to fit its storage space and needs (e.g., to facilitate use for exhibit, educational projects, and research). Depositors should not assume that a pre-established organization system will be maintained. However, storage preferences can be discussed with the curator of collections.
- The museum makes no guarantee that collections curated in our facilities will be exhibited. Exhibit plans are made following the museum's educational objectives, interpretive plan, and strategic plan, not its curation activities.
- Unless otherwise agreed upon, materials will be stored in the museum's secure, climate-controlled collections room.
- The museum will maintain its own documentation on the collection (loan forms, inventories, correspondence) and make the collection and appropriate documentation available to the public by appointment.

## Curation Fees

- The museum reserves the right to determine whether or not it will charge a curation fee. The decision to charge a fee rests with the museum's executive director and will be based on the

owner of the collection, the type of collection (size, curatorial needs, potential uses for museum projects), the conditions of the loan agreement (length, requirements of museum staff), and any other factors that influence the cost of caring for a collection.

- Curation fees are due when objects are deposited at the Alutiiq Museum.
- The Alutiiq Museum assesses the following fees for the curation of collections and their accompanying documentation (photos, field notes, maps, inventories, publications, etc.). Fees are calculated on the size of collections, the length of the storage period, the work needed to prepare a collection for museum storage, and the archival materials needed to house the objects.

Fee Schedule:

Registration Fee: \$375 for each collection deposited. Includes up to 0.25 linear feet of file space.

Object Storage Fee: \$100 for each cubic foot of storage space per year of storage requested. This fee is paid once, at the initiation of curation, and it is multiplied by 10 for long-term storage.

File Storage Fee: \$50 for each linear foot of file storage after the first .25, calculated to the nearest .25 ft. This fee is paid once, at the initiation of curation, and is multiplied by 10 for long-term storage.

Preparation Fee: Depositors can pay the museum to complete the cleaning, cataloging, and conservation of collections that require preparation for storage. Please contact the curator of collections for an estimate of these costs. Preparation fees are determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the size and needs of the collection and the availability of museum staff. Preparation fees will be waived for collections that arrive at the museum appropriately cataloged and conserved.

Materials Fee: Depositors can pay the museum to provide archival-quality storage materials. Materials fees are determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the size and needs of the collection. The materials fee will be waived for collections that arrive at the museum in appropriate storage containers.

Please contact the museum's curator of collections to complete a fee worksheet to determine the costs of curation.

## Contact

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