

New York State Archives

Strengthening Archives

SAMPLE REFERENCE POLICY

[Name of Program]

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

[This section provides background information for users about your mission and what you collect. It should be based on your mission statement.]

HOURS:

[Clearly state the hours that your facility is open and, if you accommodate users “by appointment” at other times, you should state how the users can make these alternative arrangements.]

REGISTRATION:

[Explain briefly the registration process and the information users will be required to provide, including whether or not you require them to present valid identification.]

REGULATIONS:

[What follows are boilerplate regulations for using historical collections. You will need to review each of them carefully and make appropriate revisions for your own situation; delete any that don't apply; and add any specific rules that aren't included here.]

1. Coats, briefcases, parcels, and personal books are not permitted in the research area. Please leave them at the registration desk.
2. No ink of any kind may be used in the research area; use pencils only. Computers may be brought into the archives and used at the discretion of the archivist.
3. Smoking, eating, and drinking are prohibited in the archives.
4. All archival materials must be handled carefully: use only one folder at a time and keep the papers in their existing order. Do not place books or volumes face down. Do not lean or press on archival materials. Do not trace maps or other records.
5. No material in the archives may be removed from the research area.
6. Persons requesting access to restricted materials must contact the person or agency imposing the restrictions. The archives cannot permit access to these materials without written authority.
7. Researchers are advised that it is their responsibility, not the archives, to obtain copyright clearance to publish or otherwise reproduce or distribute archival

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material. Whenever possible, the archivist will provide the names and addresses of copyright holders.

8. If publishing material from the archives, please credit the archives:
[citation format and sample citation should be included]

PHOTOCOPYING:

Unless restricted or protected by copyright conditions, photocopies of material will be supplied for research purposes at the rate of [amount here] cents per page. Although there is no precise limit on the number of pages, it may not be possible to fill an order on the day requested, and the Archives reserves the right to carry out the work over a period of time.

Users requiring copies of photographs, maps, sound recordings, or moving image materials are requested to consult the archivist about conditions and charges.

Researchers are not allowed to copy archival materials using their own cameras or other equipment.