



Historical Records Theft: Strategies for Prevention and Response

SAMPLE RESEARCH ROOM RULES

WELCOME TO THE RESEARCH ROOM

The goal of our Research Room Rules is to ensure the protection of the collections entrusted to our care. We do that by helping you understand your responsibilities as a researcher and our responsibilities as stewards of our documentary heritage.

Researcher Eligibility

Individuals age 18 or older are allowed to register and enter the research room. Those younger than 18 may do so with permission of staff. U.S. citizenship and New York residency are not required.

Access to Collections

Access to materials in the repository is governed, as applicable, by various state laws, the U.S. Copyright Act, and the U.S. Patriot Act.

Researcher Registration

A researcher must complete the registration form once each calendar year, providing:

- full name
- business or school affiliation (if any)
- U.S. mail address (business, school, or home)
- telephone number(s)
- general purpose of research.

During registration, a researcher must present at least one form of picture identification:

- driver's license
- government, business, or school ID card
- valid passport

The identification must contain the same postal address or affiliation entered on the registration form. An additional form of identification (such as a recent utility bill containing a home address) may be required. Staff may ask a researcher to produce current identification at any time after initial registration, and may require a new registration if identifying information has changed.

Secure lockers are provided to researchers who need to store personal belongings. A locker key will be provided to you during registration. The locker must be emptied and the key must be returned when researcher leaves for the day. The archives is not responsible for lost articles.

Research Aids Permitted in Research Room

Researchers may have the following items in the Research Room:

- pencils (provided)

- loose paper
- note cards (available)
- notepads (available)
- spiral notebooks (without pockets)
- folders (without pockets)
- laptop computer (without case)
- hand-held cameras (without case)
- magnifying glass (available)
- e-tablet
- cell phone (set to silent mode)

The following items are not permitted in the Research Room:

- three-ring binders
- folders and spiral notebooks with pockets
- pens and mechanical pencils
- flatbed scanners
- computer and camera cases
- overcoats
- briefcases and suitcases
- handbags and pocketbooks
- backpacks and fanny packs
- food and drink

Identifying and Requesting Materials for Use in the Research Room

Catalog and finding aids. A researcher may consult the online catalog, finding aids, and reference books. Staff will provide instruction on using the catalog and other reference materials, and will help the researcher identify relevant research materials.

Retrieval schedule. The archives stores materials onsite and in an offsite location. Onsite materials are retrieved at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., with delivery times usually 30-45 minutes later. Vault items and materials stored offsite should be requested one week in advance. Frequently-used microfilm is stored in the Research Room and may be retrieved anytime.

Retrieval request forms. A researcher must fill out retrieval request forms for materials and should be submitted 15 minutes prior to the scheduled retrieval times.

Internet access. Internet access is provided for collection-related research. Public-access internet stations and WI-FI connectivity are available in the Research Room.

Using Materials in the Research Room

Registered researchers only. Only registered researchers may enter the Research Room, except for brief consultations with staff.

Assigned seats. Each researcher is assigned a reading table or a microform reader. Reading table seats and microform reader-printers may be reserved in advance by phone, e-mail, or mail. A microfiche reader may be reserved only in person, and on the same day as the planned use.

Time limits. Staff may limit times at a microform reader if there is a waiting list.

One cart/one box/one volume. Research materials do not circulate. One cart containing research materials will be delivered to a researcher at a time. A researcher should use one box or one bound volume on a reading table at a time.

Reasonable accommodation. A researcher may ask staff about arranging for a reasonable accommodation for a medical need.

Entering and Exiting the Research Room

Sign-in/out log book. A researcher must sign the log book daily when entering the Research Room and sign out when leaving for the day.

Inspection of items taken from Research Room. Each time a researcher leaves the Research Room, he or she must show to staff at one of the reference desks all items taken from the Research Room.

Closing time. Notice of closing the Research Room will be given at about 4:00 p.m. The Research Room will close at 4:30 p.m.; at that time all research materials will be collected and equipment will be shut down. Staff will be available for consultation until 5:00 p.m.

Reserves. Research materials may be placed on reserve for up to two weeks, or longer by special arrangement. Materials not used within the specified time will be returned to storage.

Researcher Responsibilities in the Research Room

Use materials only at your assigned table or microform reader. If you have questions about the materials, ask staff to come to your table.

Remove one folder or item from a box at a time, making sure to keep the materials in order. Mark the place with a paper tag (provided by staff).

Handle research materials carefully. Use a book weight and book cradle (provided by staff) to hold bound materials open.

Write only on your paper placed on the table top. Do not write on top of research materials.

Use cotton gloves (provided by staff) when handling photographs or manuscript documents or maps requiring special protection.

Leave all materials in place, in the order you find them. Do not rearrange files; report any apparent misfilings to staff.

Inform staff when you need more materials delivered to your table or microform reader and/or are finished with materials.

Use paper slips or plastic clips (provided by staff) for marking pages or documents to be copied.

Be considerate of fellow researchers. For extended conversations, go to the catalog-consultation area, the interview room, or the lobby.

Do not use cell phones in the research room. Turn off ringers before entering the Research Room.