

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

CURATORIAL FACILITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
Benchmarking Excellence

FIELD REVIEW QUESTIONS

To be completed by Field Reviewer

Curatorial Facility

Field Reviewer

Mailing Address

Mailing Address

Telephone (area code and number)

Telephone (area code and number)

Fax (area code and number)

Fax (area code and number)

Contact

Email

Email

Date of visit

Signature of Field Reviewer

GUIDELINES

The Field Review part of the certification process consists of an on-site evaluation of the curatorial facility's situation and operation by a visiting field reviewer. The purpose of the Field Review Questions is to guide the field reviewer in the evaluation. The areas of focus for the Field Review Questions are the same as those for the Self Evaluation; governance, finance, policies, procedures, physical facilities, staff, visiting scholars and researchers, records management and collections care. The field reviewer will ask questions and make notes of the answers during the field review. The field reviewer will not necessarily ask all of the Field Review Questions directly, as some questions may have been answered already by the responses to the Self Evaluation, and some questions can be answered by observations made during the visit. The field reviewer will, however, ask questions that relate to a specific circumstance at the curatorial facility, as revealed by the responses to the Self Evaluation. They also will ask any questions to clarify issues of concern identified during the Self Evaluation and Required Documents Assessment. In this way, the specific set of the field review questions asked is customized to reflect the unique situation at each curatorial facility.

Responses to the Field Review Questions assist the field reviewer in evaluating how the curatorial facility is meeting its own stated purposes with the resources at hand. The field reviewer uses the responses to the Field Review Questions and the responses to the Self-Evaluation in completing the Written Narrative Report and Certification Recommendation.

GOVERNANCE

1. Do the state-associated collections reflect the curatorial facility's stated scope and purpose as set forth in the mission statement?

2. Is there periodic evaluation of the mission statement to ensure that the scope and purpose of the curatorial facility remains relevant?

FINANCE

1. Is the current budget adequate to manage and care for state-associated collections?

2. Does collections-related staff have input into formulating/requesting the curatorial facility's annual budget and establishing funding priorities?

POLICIES

1. Do the state-associated collections conform to the written acquisition policy?
2. Has the curatorial facility ever deaccessioned and permanently transferred a state-associated collection from their institution to another? If yes, what were the circumstances? If not, when would the facility consider it?
3. Does each staff member have a copy of the Collections Management Policy?

PROCEDURES

1. How are the written procedures used to guide day-to-day activities?

2. How are the pest management procedures carried out in the collections areas?

PHYSICAL FACILITIES

1. In which type of facility does the curatorial facility exist?

Modern

Historic

An adaptation of an older structure

A structure containing other non-repository/museum operations

Other (specify)

2. Is the curatorial facility's location safe from natural hazards?

3. Is there a back-up power source in case of emergencies?

4. Is the building checked periodically for structural and systems maintenance problems?

5. Are environmental controls regularly maintained and in good repair?

6. Are there provisions for access and circulation by handicapped persons?

7. Is there an adequate dock and/or entrance for the loading and unloading of incoming and outgoing objects?

8. Is there adequate provision for processing incoming and outgoing objects?

9. Are the grounds and building adequately lighted after dark?

10. Is there a security alarm system in place?

11. How is access through entrances and exits controlled?

12. Is the fire prevention system adequate?

13. Where is the closest fire hydrant?

14. Is the building periodically checked by the Fire Marshall?

STAFF

1. Describe the delegation of authority for day to day operations at the facility.

2. Describe the delegation of authority for day to day operations regarding collections at the facility.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

1. Please explain and provide a walk-through of the accessioning procedure.
2. Please explain and provide a walk-through of the cataloging procedure.
3. Please explain and provide a walk-through of the spot-check inventory procedure.
4. How frequently are spot check inventories conducted? How are the results cross-checked with collections records and discrepancies resolved?
5. Is a standardized lexicon/vocabulary or classification used for accessioning and cataloging?
6. Is the Smithsonian trinomial system of site designation in use? If not, what system is used?
7. Can accessioning and cataloging systems be cross-referenced with the site designation?
8. Is there a functioning record system for the preservation of all data associated with the objects in the collection?

9. Are records of temperature and relative humidity readings retained in the curatorial facility's files?

10. How does the record keeping system permit easy retrieval of objects and data?

11. Please select an accession record at random and physically retrieve the object. (It is expected that this will be accomplished within 30 minutes).

12. Do the records provide a description of objects that could assist in their recovery in the event of their loss?

13. Describe how records are housed and organized in a systematic and accessible manner.

14. Are records kept in a central location or distributed throughout the curatorial facility?

COLLECTIONS CARE

1. What preventive conservation procedures does the curatorial facility practice?
2. Are objects periodically checked for deterioration? How often and by whom?
3. Do objects that are deteriorating receive conservation attention?
4. How are temperature and relative humidity monitored to assess effectiveness of the environmental controls and how is the monitoring documented?
5. How are the collections protected from fluctuations and extremes of temperature and relative humidity?
6. How are the collections protected from high light intensity?
7. How are collections protected from ultraviolet light in housing areas?
8. How are the collections protected from ultraviolet light in other areas?

9. How are any UV filtering materials monitored to ensure their effective operation?

10. Describe any monitoring system in place for detection of pest problems.

11. How are collections housing areas maintained and cleaned?

12. Is eating, drinking, and smoking prohibited in collection housing and workroom areas?

13. Are collections periodically reviewed to determine if their packaging materials should be replaced?

14. How are the various collections housing units (cabinets, shelves, etc.) identified and labeled?

15. How is the collection housing area kept secured?

16. How is access to the collections housing area monitored?

17. Is the collections housing area used solely for housing collections, or do other activities also take place?

18. Does the curatorial facility provide a collections work area separate from the collections housing area?

19. Is there a system that records the temporary relocation of collections during in-house use?

20. Are there plans for expansion of the collections space?

21. Are the housing units lockable?

22. Do any open housing units provide protection from particulate pollution?

23. What type of protective padding is used in housing unit drawers and on shelving?

24. How are objects individually supported within collections housing units?
25. Is the collections housing area free of overhead utility pipes and radiators?
26. Is the collections housing area free of utilities that require monitoring or servicing by non-curatorial personnel?
27. Where and how are flammable substances stored and housed?
28. Are chemicals that should not be stored together, such as various acids and bases, stored in separate cabinets?