

## Alexandria Archaeology Museum Collections Policy



Alexandria Archaeology Museum  
Office of Historic Alexandria  
City of Alexandria, Virginia

August 1985  
Revised August 1988  
Revised August 1993  
Revised June 2006  
Revised July 2016  
Revised January 2021  
Revised April 2022

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## **Introduction**

The City of Alexandria has created and supports an ongoing effort to discover, protect, and preserve the unique character and heritage of the city, through the museums and programs that make up the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA). In these activities, the city is supported by the interest and efforts of its residents. Each City program has established, with the assistance of its resident advisors and supporters, its goals and objectives and the role of a collection in meeting these.

The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) enhances the quality of life for City residents and visitors by preserving and interpreting Alexandria's historic properties, archaeological sites, cultural resources, artifact collections, objects, archives, records, and personal stories, and by encouraging audiences to appreciate Alexandria's diverse historic heritage and its place within the broader context of American history.

Alexandria Archaeology is a municipal institution, owned and operated by the City of Alexandria, Virginia as a division of the OHA. The Museum is the central archaeological repository for Alexandria, managing over two million artifacts and supporting documentation collected from over 230 archaeological excavated across the city. The collection is held in public trust, to be preserved and protected as a resource and legacy for future generations of Alexandria residents and visitors.

Staff members adhere to the professional Code of Ethics developed by the OHA, and employ standards established by the American Association of Museums for accredited institutions in the registration, storage, care, and exhibition of artifacts in its custody.

## Mission, Vision, and History

### *Mission Statement*

The Alexandria Archaeology Museum is dedicated to preserving and studying Alexandria's rich archaeological heritage and fostering within residents and visitors a connection between the past and present while inspiring a sense of stewardship and adventure.

### *Vision*

The city of Alexandria is built upon its past. The ground beneath modern Alexandria is a record of this past and contains an array of archaeological sites, features, and artifacts. The Museum is charged with the preservation, study, and interpretation of this archaeological heritage.

Alexandria Archaeology is a significant research center and a national leader in community archaeology. The division's museum, library, research materials, and collection are an important resource for the public, students, professional archaeologists, scholars, and City staff. The Alexandria Archaeology Museum promotes archaeology in Alexandria through exhibitions, digital presentations, social media, public programs, publications, professional engagement, and volunteer activities. Alexandria Archaeology is responsible for museum programming, preservation planning, and code enforcement as well as the identification, investigation, interpretation, and the curation of sites spanning the city's history and prehistory.

### *History*

Alexandria Archaeology's collection, that would have otherwise been lost to development, is due to community efforts to protect and recover the city's buried heritage, dating back to the 1960s. Much of the collection is the direct result of the City of Alexandria's Archaeological Protection Code adopted by City Council in 1989. The Code, incorporated into the City's Zoning Ordinance in 1992, requires that applicants work with City archaeologists to evaluate and sometimes excavate archaeological resources before ground disturbance on construction projects. Beyond the requirements of the Code, City archaeologists also partner with homeowners, realtors, and neighborhood groups to search for, study, and share our rich buried history. Alexandria Archaeology staff offers preservation assistance before renovation or new construction takes place. ***Alexandria's Archaeological Standards*** provide guidance on how to meet the City's archaeological preservation requirements set forth in Section 11-411 of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, Zoning Ordinance. These guidelines extend to how collections are processed, cared for, and documented to be acceptable for accession.

The museum is supported by the Alexandria Archaeological Commission (since 1975) and the

Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (since 1986). The Alexandria Archaeology Museum was established in 1984 to promote the preservation, study, and interpretation of archaeological resources within the city of Alexandria for the residents of the city and surrounding communities and for visitors from across the country and abroad as well as educational institutions. It was accredited as part of the OHA museum system by The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) in the Fall of 2012.

## **Statement of Authority**

Alexandria Archaeology is administered by a City Manager form of government under the authority of the Alexandria City Council. The Mayor and City Council act as the Board of Trustees. The staff is responsible to the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, who reports to the City Manager.

The primary responsibility for the daily application of the policies and procedures set out in this document lies with the staff of Alexandria Archaeology. The collections policies will be administered by the staff member designated as the Collections Manager. Decisions regarding accessions and loans will be made jointly by the City Archaeologist and Collections Manager. All donations are formally accepted by City Council or as delegated to the City Manager.

## **Scope of Collections**

The research and collection goals of Alexandria Archaeology are centered upon the investigation, interpretation, and preservation of historic and prehistoric sites within the current city limits of Alexandria and their related documentation and artifacts. Alexandria Archaeology is responsible for the curation of archaeological materials that the City holds in title or trust. These materials, because of their important research value for the City and for the field of archaeology, will be preserved and protected in perpetuity as a resource and legacy for future generations.

Alexandria Archaeology is the official repository for all archaeological materials collected within the current City limits of Alexandria. Artifacts, faunal remains, ecofacts and soil samples, and all associated documentation which comprise the collection are acquired primarily through survey and excavation conducted by contract archaeologists working within the bounds of the Code and by the staff of Alexandria Archaeology. Donations will ordinarily consist of artifacts and associated documentation collected by cultural resource management archaeologists, research institutions, or by Alexandria Archaeology staff as part of their official duties.

Donations of artifacts resulting from chance finds or other excavation activities within the current City limits of Alexandria will be carefully considered by staff for their archaeological merit including relevance and importance to the history of Alexandria as well as the degree and quality of the collection and any associated documentation. Materials of historic interest but without archaeological context are best collected by other divisions within the OHA.

The City recognizes the importance of context for archaeological materials and will thus maintain and preserve in perpetuity physical and digital field notes, catalogues, research data, images, reports, and other supporting materials along with the artifact collections. Recognizing that technology changes rapidly, Alexandria Archaeology and the City will forward migrate digital assets as needed and as resources allow, ensuring they are readable and accessible in the future.

## **Ethics**

Adhering to the highest ethical standards allows the Museum to fulfill its mission and continue holding collections in the public trust. Alexandria Archaeology staff and volunteers will maintain the highest ethical standards of the Archaeology and Museum professions as outlined by the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) and the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). Copies of the RPA Code and Standards and the AAM's "Code of Ethics for Museums" are provided to all staff members. Volunteers will be subject to the same rules of conduct as professional staff and are required to sign an agreement abstracted from the RPA Code and Standards.

### **Institutional Ethics**

Alexandria Archaeology staff and volunteers will abide by Code of Ethics (2011) established by the OHA and the City of Alexandria, Virginia. Museum and historic site personnel observe the following professional standards of conduct, in addition to adhering to the Office of Historic Alexandria's Code of Ethics.

1. The staff is committed to providing responsible and professional care for museum collections and historic sites. This includes maintenance of records which accurately document the identity, location and condition of collection objects, and the preservation of the historic sites.
2. The staff will maintain high standards for programming, striving for authenticity and accuracy in all interpretive and educational programs and museum exhibitions.
3. The staff shall in no way compromise its professional ethics by acquiring for private use any object which could be construed as a conflict of interest. This includes the personal collection of objects which fall within the scope of the OHA collections and acquisition of objects deaccessioned from the museum collections. No employee or volunteer of Alexandria Archaeology shall make or expand personal collections of artifacts derived from archaeological contexts. Any staff member interested in privately acquiring an object which competes with the collection policy must first offer that object to the City of Alexandria.
4. The staff will not accept objects for the permanent collections which do not transfer clear and full title to the City of Alexandria.

5. The staff will not prepare appraisals for objects in the collections to be accessioned or deaccessioned. Staff will not give appraisals for any purpose, including establishing the tax-deductible value of any donation. Appraisals of potential accessions and deaccessions should be conducted by an outside professional to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure the most accurate and objective valuation. Tax related questions should be directed to a qualified tax professional. The exception is the assignment of insurance values to objects already in the Alexandria Archaeology collection.
6. The staff will refrain from accessioning objects which might knowingly be deaccessioned.
7. All research, documentation, photographs, and other intellectual property related to collections that have been gathered by staff becomes the property of OHA for the City of Alexandria.
8. The staff will not grant unauthorized persons access to the collections in accordance with established security practices. Upon approval of the Collections Manager or City Archaeologist, special visitors and researchers may enter limited access areas or examine collection objects if attended by authorized staff.
9. Staff members will not accept private gifts from persons with whom they have associated as a result of their position with OHA.
10. Staff will not abuse their positions for personal gain within the local civic community or the professional museum community.
11. Volunteer staff shall not be granted special rights or privileges other than those deemed appropriate by the OHA director.

**Authentication:** Identification and authentication of artifacts may be given for scientific or educational purposes, but not when there is reason to believe that such information will be used for commercial purposes. When staff members identify or authenticate artifacts, Alexandria Archaeology is not responsible for the accuracy of these determinations.

### **Archaeological Ethics**

Archaeology is a profession, and the privilege of professional practice requires professional morality and professional responsibility, as well as professional competence, on the part of each



practitioner. Alexandria Archaeology staff and volunteers abide by the RPA Code of Conduct and Standards of Research Performance. The Code of Conduct outlines the archaeologist's responsibility to the public, colleagues, employees, students, employers, and clients. The Standards of Research Performance outlines the archaeologist's responsibility to the archaeological record.

Alexandria Archaeology abides by all current legal provisions outlined in federal, state, and local regulations regarding archaeological research and repositories. Federal standards for curation and collections management as outlined in 36CFR part 79, *Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections* state that a repository has the capability to provide adequate long-term curatorial services based on professional museum and archival practices.

## **Risk Management**

### **Insurance**

Alexandria Archaeology's accessioned collections are irreplaceable parts of the City's history, with significant research and educational value. The collection is insured by Willis Fine Art through the City's Risk Management Division. Collections shipped to Alexandria Archaeology are insured during shipping and transport by the shipper.

### **Disaster Plan**

The Museum in coordination with the Torpedo Factory Art Center maintains a disaster plan for addressing natural and man-made threats to museum staff, volunteers, visitors, and collections. Alexandria Archaeology is also covered by a Continuity of Operations Plan as mandated by the City of Alexandria.

## **Intellectual Property**

Intellectual property, defined as a work or invention that is the result of creativity, gathered or authored by staff members during work hours are the property of Alexandria Archaeology for the City of Alexandria. Works may include, but are not limited to, research notes and articles, documentation, interpretation, and educational programming, or photographs.

Staff are responsible for properly documenting their work so that it is usable by others in the future. This may include saving documents in a shared network location, providing written documentation explaining a work or notes, or including metadata.

## **Photography**

Reproduction of images in any form requires written permission from Alexandria Archaeology. Use of images does not negate Alexandria Archaeology copyright over them or future use of them. Further guidelines can be found in the OHA wide policy.

Photography is welcome at Alexandria Archaeology, sites, and events. In accordance with the Museum's mission, we encourage photography of our publicly viewable collections, exhibit spaces, sites, and events, unless otherwise specified.

Photos taken in the Museum can be used for personal, non-commercial purposes unless a written

request is made and approved by Alexandria Archaeology. unless a Special Request for Photography is submitted.

The Museum does not own copyright of images taken by a non-staff photographer. Whenever images of the Museum or our collections are published, we ask that the photographer identify the Museum as "Image courtesy of Alexandria Archaeology, City of Alexandria, Virginia."

Members of the press/media and public are welcome to take pictures using handheld equipment. If using a tripod or other equipment, please contact the museum for approval.

Artifacts that are not publicly displayed may be available for photography. Qualified researchers or members of the press/media must submit a written request to Alexandria Archaeology.

## **Collections Acquisition**

All donations require approval and acceptance by the Alexandria City Council. This is a devolved responsibility designated to Alexandria Archaeology in the form of the City Archaeologist and Collections Manager.

Alexandria Archaeology does not actively seek out new additions to its collection. As a repository, it collects materials as development and research projects produce new archaeological collections.

### **General Policy**

1. Acquisitions must support furthering the mission and goals of the City's museums and historic sites.
2. Monetary donation may be accepted for supporting Alexandria Archaeology projects, collections, and educational initiatives.
3. If the donor holds the copyright for the object, it can be accepted with the non-exclusive license to use and reproduce the object for standard museum purposes, including but not limited to archiving, exhibition, outgoing loan, public display and/or performance, publicity, scholarship, and educational endeavors, including educational publications.
4. In the exceptional case where an object of rare or unusual quality is offered to the museum with restrictions, those restrictions must be outlined in the deed of gift and approved by the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria.
5. The museum may request that an appraisal of the object's value be obtained from a professional appraiser, at the donor's expense, before the object is accepted into the permanent collection. To avoid conflicts of interest, the museum staff will not appraise objects for the potential donors. Staff may render impartial assistance to donors by recommending several independent, qualified appraisers.
6. Gifts to the museum are tax deductible to the extent allowed by state and federal law. OHA staff does not provide tax advice and it is the donor's responsibility to consult a tax professional.
7. OHA reserves the right to refuse any gift or bequest it does not deem appropriate and in the best interest of the museums and historic sites or the City of Alexandria.

8. OHA staff members will not knowingly accept any object which has been stolen or obtained in a false or suspicious manner. Decisions on the disposition of such objects found to be in the collection will be made by the director on a case-by-case basis.
9. Alexandria Archaeology staff prepares a list of all acquisitions which is annually presented to City Council for formal acceptance into the City's historic collections.

## **Criteria for Acquisition**

To be acceptable for the Alexandria Archaeology Collection, objects or assemblages of objects must meet the following conditions:

1. **Provenience:** Objects must have been discovered in an archaeological context within the current City limits of Alexandria. The actual provenience (location of find) and provenance (how the item was found and its record of ownership) must be made known by the collector or donor to Alexandria Archaeology. Materials will preferably derive from scientifically controlled and recorded excavations.
2. **Title:**
  - a. The donor must have free and clear title to the objects to be transferred to Alexandria Archaeology. Any objects found on private lands remain the property of the landowner until donated to the City. The donor must convey this title and all rights of ownership to the Museum without restrictions.
  - b. Alexandria Archaeology is the proper and lawful repository for any archaeological materials collected from lands to which the City holds title.
  - c. When objects are presented which are not the property of the prospective donor (ex. Construction crew discovering and bringing in artifacts), Alexandria Archaeology may accept temporary custody of said objects and attempt within 30 days to contact the landowner regarding donation or return of the objects. If no landowner is located or is unresponsive, Alexandria Archaeology will follow protocols outlined in the **Temporary Custody Agreement** section for managing unclaimed property.
3. **Documentation:**
  - a. Alexandria Archaeology will issue a receipt for any artifact or collection left at the museum for any purpose (Deed of Gift for donations, an Incoming Loan form for loans, a MOU/MOA for repository items, and a Temporary Custody Receipt for

- all other scenarios). These documents will clearly include the owner's contact information and signature over a clear statement of intent.
- b. Collections will be accessioned as a unit consisting of artifacts collected on a site and with all related field notes, catalogues, reports, and other supporting documents.
  - c. The Collections Manager will work with the Code Archaeologist and Museum Technician to file all associated paper and digital files for long term preservation.
  - d. Though not preferable or advised, when certain items from an archaeological assemblage are retained by the original owner, Alexandria Archaeology will make a photographic and written catalogue record of these items.
4. **Special Considerations:** Objects resulting from chance finds, construction activities, or excavations may be accepted based on their archaeological merit after consideration by the City Archaeologist and Collections Manager, when ownership of the object(s) by the potential donor can be ascertained.
  5. **Ethical Considerations:** It is not the policy of Alexandria Archaeology to acquire archaeological specimens which it has reason to believe unethically collected, as outlined by the RPA.
  6. **Restrictions:** Alexandria Archaeology cannot accept collections on which the donor has placed restrictions.

## Accession Records

Alexandria Archaeology staff shall prepare and preserve records for all accessioned objects, including Deed of Gift and/or loan forms signed by the donor and an Alexandria Archaeology representative, any required permits and right of entry agreements, and Virginia Department of Historic Resources site registration forms. The representative may be the Collections Manager or the City Archaeologist. Accession records may refer to the total assemblage collected from one provenience, in lieu of or prior to the completion of an itemized catalogue. It is understood that certain assemblages will be held for future research and will not be catalogued upon acquisition.

Once in Alexandria Archaeology's custody, the collection is assigned an accession number, which appears on the Deed of Gift and is recorded in the Museum's collections management database. Copies of the Deed of Gift and other associated accession documentation will be filed with the field and analysis documents of the project, in the Accession files in the Collections Manager's office, and scanned to be stored electronically in the departmental file, to be backed-up daily per shared file protocol. The original will be transferred to City Archives. The Museum

will provide a signed copy of the final Deed of Gift and a letter of appreciation to the donor for their records.

## **Temporary Custody Receipt**

City archaeologists may accept artifacts for identification, photography, study, or potential donation by generating a Temporary Custody Receipt signed by the staff member and the owner. This document outlines specific rights and responsibilities pertaining to artifacts left in Alexandria Archaeology's custody. Artifacts left in custody will receive the same professional care provided to the permanent collection, but Alexandria Archeology assumes no additional responsibilities or liabilities in regard to such objects. Every object or collection that is left in the Museum's care for these purposes will have an associated Temporary Custody Agreement that includes the owner's mailing address. It will be the responsibility of the accepting staff member, in consultation with the Collections Manager, to arrange the return of the artifacts or to obtain the owner's signature on a Deed of Gift or incoming loan form before the end of the agreed period.

Artifacts resulting from Alexandria Archaeology excavations on private property will be accepted in the laboratory when accompanied by a Temporary Custody Receipt. The Receipt and a copy of the Right of Entry agreement will be submitted to the Collections Manager. It will be the responsibility of the field supervisor or project director to negotiate with the landowner and to obtain the landowner's signature on the receipt and, before the expiration of the Receipt, on a Deed of Gift or incoming loan form.

Alexandria Archaeology may, after the specified removal date listed on the Temporary Custody Receipt, request the owner or authorized agent to remove the object(s). If the property is not claimed within 30 days, Alexandria Archaeology may place it in storage or return it, at the owner's risk and expense. If the property has not been claimed after one year of initial notification, it shall become an unrestricted gift to Alexandria Archaeology, in consideration for the care and storage provided. The object(s) will then be the legal property of Alexandria Archaeology to use as it sees fit.

## **Repository Agreements**

In some cases, Alexandria Archaeology may store, manage, and care for collections belonging to another entity, including those from state and federal lands. The Museum commits to ensure the safe storage and management of these collections in accordance with 36 CFR 79.

Alexandria Archaeology may enter into repository agreements with federal agencies and other public or private entities to manage collections, under the following conditions:

- The collection is in accordance with the Museum's mission, vision, and scope as defined above.
- There are adequate financial resources or a plan to acquire financial resources for the proper management and care of the collection.
- All parties agree on the procedures governing the management, care, access, and use of the collections.

Federal agencies retain ownership of collections obtained from their lands, and deposit artifacts with Alexandria Archaeology through a Memorandum of Agreement (see 36 CFR 79 for an example). A one-time curation fee is assessed for storage of federal collections. Please consult Alexandria Archaeology prior to excavation.



## **Deaccession and Disposal**

Deaccessioning is the formal process of removing an object from a museum's permanent collection or to document the reasons for an involuntary removal. Disposal refers to the way in which an object is removed from the collection. Accessioned collections or artifacts in the facility will be retained permanently if they continue to be relevant and useful to the purposes and activities of Alexandria Archaeology and if they can be properly stored, managed, and used. Deaccessioning or transference of collections or artifacts may be considered when these conditions no longer prevail. Because museum collections are held in the public trust, responsible and ethical management of the collection requires that deaccessioning be a serious and well-documented transaction.

Alexandria Archaeology reserves the right to deaccession objects that no longer fit its mission, for legal reasons, or due to the lack of archaeological integrity of the object(s).

Deaccession must be initiated by the Collections Manager and City Archaeologist, with the approval of the Director of the OHA. Deaccessions require approval by the Alexandria City Council.

### **Redundant Materials, Sampling, and Discard**

Archaeologists recognize the importance of an assemblage over the individual object. Thus, all artifacts and materials will be retained from any proveniences of archaeological significance. Archaeological collections consisting of an entire assemblage of artifacts collected from one site may be accessioned prior to their complete examination, cataloguing and analysis. This policy acknowledges that some redundant classes of artifacts are often included in accessioned collections. These may be sampled and or discarded following guidelines outlined in the **Alexandria Archaeology Standards** and at the discretion of the Collections Manager or Project Director, if done in the field.

### **Process for Deaccession and Disposal**

When deaccessioning collections or artifacts, Alexandria Archaeology will ensure that the manner of disposition is in the best interests of the Museum, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in maintaining the collections, and the scholarly community of which it forms a part.

1. Before deaccessioning any collection or artifact from the facility, reasonable effort will be made to ascertain that Alexandria Archaeology has clear title to do so. Where restrictions as to use or disposition of the collection or artifact under question are found to apply, Alexandria Archaeology shall act as follows:
  - a. Mandatory restrictions shall be strictly observed unless deviation from their terms is authorized by a court of competent jurisdiction.
  - b. If there is any question as to the intent or force of restrictions, Alexandria Archaeology shall seek the advice of legal counsel (City Attorney).
2. Considerations:
  - a. Consideration will be given to returning to the community, state, or nation collections that are part of the historical, cultural, or scientific heritage of the community, state, or nation.
  - b. Consideration will be given to placing the collection or artifacts, through exchange, in another institution wherein they may serve the purpose for which they initially were acquired.
3. Restrictions:
  - a. No gifts shall be made of property held in the public trust.
  - b. No exchanges shall be made with an individual.
  - c. No items will be retained for personal use by any staff member.
  - d. No items will be given or sold to museum staff, volunteers, other City staff, members of the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, City Council, or their representatives.
4. The City Archaeologist in consultation with the Collections Manager will make a written recommendation for deaccessioning to the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria. This recommendation will discuss the source of the object, estimated market value, justification for deaccessioning, and suggested means of disposal. The Director of OHA must approve the recommendation before the object is deaccessioned.
5. The City Attorney and City Manager are notified of the Museum's intent to deaccession and may be consulted as to the correct policy to follow in disposition of City property.
6. As trustees for the City's historic collections, the City Council must approve the Museum's decision to deaccession.
7. A record of the conditions and circumstances under which collections and artifacts are deaccessioned shall be made and retained as part of the Alexandria Archaeology's Collection Database or pertinent artifact catalogue.
  - a. This will include a full physical description of the object, accession, date of deaccession, and reason for deaccession.
  - b. A deaccession folder is compiled on the object. This folder includes: the deaccession form, original catalogue card (if one exists) and photograph of the

object, all related documents such as correspondence, memoranda, receipts, and appraisals.

- c. Deaccession folders are organized in a deaccession file in order of the objects original accession numbers.
- d. The museum's accession number will be removed from any deaccessioned objects.

### **Acceptable Methods of Disposal**

Artifacts previously accessioned that do not relate to Alexandria or are not from an archaeological context may be transferred to another museum or institution.

- 1. Transfer to other divisions of OHA shall receive priority.
- 2. Transfer to another Alexandria Historic properties, national museums and other museums, universities, and research facilities.
- 3. Destruction of the object in extreme circumstances.
- 4. Professional and ethical museum practices prohibit the following individuals from acquiring deaccessioned objects by means of private sale or as gifts: Museum staff and their relatives; Museum volunteers, members of the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology; members of other City of Alexandria museums; members of the Alexandria Archaeological Commission; and members of the Historic Alexandria Resources Committee.

## **Loan and Borrowing Provisions**

Alexandria Archaeology both borrows and loans artifacts for research or exhibition. Loan agreements typically last one year with the option of renewal. Indefinite or permanent loans are discouraged. Alexandria Archaeology reserves the right to terminate loans at any time before the expiration date with 30 days written notice to the owner or borrower.

### **Outgoing Loans**

Object(s) from the Museum's permanent collection which are borrowed by another museum, historical agency, or other entity for use in a temporary exhibit or are forwarded to a research institution or conservation facility for professional study and treatment are outgoing loans.

Alexandria Archaeology may lend artifacts for the purpose of exhibition or study at the recommendation of a staff member and with approval of the Collections Manager and City Archaeologist. Loans will be made to museums, institutions, or public facilities for the purpose of exhibition when this will not interfere with research or exhibition within the OHA. Loans will be made to institutions or individuals with institutional sponsorship for the purpose of research or education only when such research will directly benefit Alexandria Archaeology or the OHA.

All outgoing loans shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. Borrowers must provide proof of insurance for the full amount specified by Alexandria Archaeology.
2. Borrowers must arrange and pay for all shipping and processing fees and permits in both directions unless otherwise mutually agreed upon. The method of shipment must be agreed upon by both parties. Artifacts must be returned in equivalent or superior packaging to that in which they were received.
3. Artifacts placed on exhibition must be placed in a secure area and with regard to the environmental needs of individual items as specified by Alexandria Archaeology.
4. No artifacts may be altered in any way without the written consent of the Collections Manager. No tape, glue, pins, nails, or other attachments may be used for mounting.
5. Alexandria Archaeology may require that loans be accompanied by a staff member and that unpacking, mounting, dismounting, and repacking be done under supervision of a staff member at the borrower's expense.
6. Proper credit must be given to Alexandria Archaeology in any exhibition or publication of loaned artifacts.
7. An inventory list, copy of the outgoing loan agreement, and list of special packing and care instructions will be prepared by the Alexandria Archaeology Collections Manager.

Copies of this information will be forwarded to the borrowing museum before the object is shipped and will also accompany the shipment.

8. Original outgoing loan documents and correspondence are stored in the outgoing loan file.
9. All loans will be made in accordance with the provisions stated on the Outgoing Loan Form.

## **Incoming Loans**

Objects borrowed by the Museum from an outside source for use in temporary exhibits are defined as incoming loans. Incoming loans may be accepted for the purpose of exhibition or research with the approval of the Collections Manager and City Archaeologist. All incoming loans will be recorded on an Incoming Loan Form, and copies will be retained of any forms required by the lender. Alexandria Archaeology will acknowledge the lender in the exhibit according to the lender's wishes. Loans will be administered and monitored by the Collections Manager.

### **Procedures for Recording and Storing Incoming Loans**

1. All objects borrowed for museum exhibits shall be recorded by the museum on an Agreement for Incoming Loan form which lists the borrowed object(s), indicates the loan identification number, and specifies the agreed upon loan conditions and the loan period. This document is jointly signed and dated by the lender and the museum. The original copy of this agreement will be placed in the Loan file with a designated number and will contain any relevant correspondence between the lender and museum.
2. A condition report is made on the object(s). A copy of this report will be sent to the lender as quickly as possible. This report will be reviewed before the object is returned to the lender.
3. A storage location is assigned and prepared for the loan object(s).
4. Loan objects will be stored in appropriate archival conditions and a record of the following information will accompany the material: name of lender; lender's address and phone number; date of loan; loan identification number; identity of object(s). Objects may also be tagged with non-permanent acid free identification labels.
5. If the museum staff seeks to extend the loan period, the loan agreement must be amended prior to the end of the original loan deadline. A new agreement for Incoming Loan form is drafted, signed by both the lender and the museum, and attached to the museum's copy of the original agreement.

Insurance will be carried by the City of under an all-risk wall-to-wall Fine Arts Policy unless the lender elects to maintain his own insurance coverage or insurance is waived by the lender. The lender is responsible for notifying the museum of updated insurance valuations. It is the responsibility of the lender to update Alexandria Archaeology in writing (physical or digital) to changes in ownership, mailing address, or other changes in contact information.

Objects will be returned to the lender following the procedures outlined in the Incoming Loan Agreement. Artifacts will be returned to the lender at the address stated unless the City is

notified in writing to the contrary. Alexandria Archaeology will make a note of an object(s) return in its loan records. Objects returned via mail will include a return receipt that should be filled out and returned to Alexandria Archaeology within thirty days of mailing. If this form is not returned within the specified time, the Museum will not be responsible for any loss or damage.

If legal ownership or authority to act on behalf of the legal owner should change, whether by reason of death, sale, insolvency, gift, or otherwise, the new owner or agent, prior to the return of the object(s), may be required to establish a legal right to receive the object(s) by proof satisfactory to the City.

If the lender fails to take possession of the object(s) upon request, or if no special arrangements have been made for the return of the object(s) and the City's written efforts to contact the Lender or Owner at the expiration of the loan period are unsuccessful, the object(s) will be placed in storage at the lender's risk. If attempts to contact the lender are unsuccessful for a period of longer than five years, Alexandria Archaeology will assert claim to the object(s) pursuant to Virginia Civil Code 55-210.37. Alexandria Archaeology will maintain a record of every attempt made to contact the lender in the loan file.

## **Collections Care**

Care of the Museum collection encompasses: proper professional handling of the collection in storage and on exhibit; maintenance of proper storage facilities and conditions; controlled access to the collection and implementation of security procedures which ensure protection of the collection; establishment of a regular inventory system; and assessing and serving the conservation needs of the collection.

All Alexandria Archaeology staff and volunteers are responsible for preserving and protecting collection objects for current and future research and interpretation. The Collections Manager is charged with monitoring the condition of the collection, developing procedures and handling instructions, initiating corrective actions when problems are discovered, and making recommendations for future improvements.

All those who handle artifacts will receive training and/or supervision in the care and handling of collections. Users will receive written lab procedures and artifact handling notes and are expected to be acquainted and comfortable with these instructions prior to working with artifacts.

## **Conservation/Preservation**

Alexandria Archaeology cares for the collection following best practices and standards in accordance with Federal regulation 36 CFR Part 79, *Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections*.

Archaeological collections are processed, catalogued, and stored in a manner that facilitates access for research and public interpretation and in line with current professional standards. Copies of associated field and lab notes are located in several places, including one digital version on a City maintained server that is regularly backed up (for more recent projects), one archival paper copy located in the project street files (older projects), and the originals are stored at Archives. Artifacts are stored in polyethylene zip top bags with acid-free labels in Hollinger style archival boxes. Boxes are clearly labeled with their contents, including site number and accession number. When removing objects from storage, staff must complete an orange object removal slip. Specific guidance is found in the *City of Alexandria Archaeological Standards* and in the *Alexandria Archaeology Laboratory Reference Book*. These documents are based on current best practices for archaeological repositories and knowledge amassed in the last 50 years of archaeological research in the city.



Alexandria Archaeology maintains two collections storage facilities, one onsite and one offsite. Both facilities are climate controlled and maintained at industry standard temperature and relative humidity levels. Both spaces are regularly monitored with staff checking environmental conditions, the condition of the collections, and the condition of the infrastructure. Onsite storage is checked nearly every day and off-site storage is checked several times a month by either the Collections Manager or the City Archivist.

The offsite Alexandria Archaeology Storage Facility located in the City Archives building was created in 1990, with assistance from the City of Alexandria, the National Science Foundation, and the Institute of Museum Services. The 1,500 square foot facility is located in a City building just over a mile from the museum and can hold a total of 3,564 boxes. The facility provides the environmental conditions necessary for long-term preservation of these important collections. A dedicated HVAC system maintains stable temperature and relative humidity levels, avoiding fluctuations that could hasten the artifacts' deterioration. The space was designed using stable materials for equipment and packaging that do not "off-gas," or give off harmful fume. The storeroom is also equipped with smoke detectors, a sprinkler system, and a separate security alarm.

Compactor shelving was used to maximize space. This shelving moves on a track, allowing nearly twice as much storage capacity as regular shelving. One pound of pressure can move 900 pounds with this mechanical assist system.

General emergency guidance and instructions for the onsite museum in the Torpedo Factory are covered by the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Emergency Evacuation Procedures (2018). The Museum Disaster Plan for Alexandria Archaeology sets forth more specific instructions and provides the procedures in the event of fire, flooding, natural disasters such as hurricanes or earthquakes, looting, or vandalism. Emergency guidance and instructions for the offsite facility are encompassed by the Archives building procedures.

A Disaster Kit is stored in the Archaeology Museum and at the offsite facility. Additionally, there is one in the OHA's shared off-site collections storage facility. Alexandria Archaeology has three quick response emergency bins: one in the front room of the loft storage space of the museum, one below the docent desk in the museum, and one under the countertop at the offsite storage space. The bins are black with yellow lids and clearly marked.

Twenty-four hour emergency response support can also be provided through the OHA's contract with a professional disaster recovery services firm.

## **Security**

Both archaeological storage facilities are secure spaces with controlled access and electronic security systems. Only Alexandria Archaeology and select other City staff and approved contractors are permitted access to the spaces. All users of these spaces follow written security procedures.

All Museum staff, guided by the City Archaeologist, are responsible for the overall security of the building and the safety of the collection both in storage and on exhibit. The staff works closely with the contract security agencies, ensuring the procedures outlined in the Museum's Operation Manual are strictly followed.

1. All storage and exhibit cases shall be kept locked unless staff is working in the immediate area.
2. All exhibit cases will be inspected on a regular basis.
3. Museum Loft storage will be checked regularly, typically daily.
4. The main floor of the Museum shall not be left open and unattended during open hours.
5. All keys to storage units and exhibit cases are locked in the security lock box. Keys are removed from this box only for the period which they are in use.
6. No unauthorized person(s) shall be allowed free access to the storage area. Workmen, whether City employees or contractors, shall not be allowed in storage areas unless accompanied by a member of the staff.
7. Public access to the collection area or examination of a collection object for historical study must be granted by the City Archaeologist or Collections Manager. The visitor/researcher must be attended by Museum staff when entering limited access areas.
8. No object/materials will be left in an open unattended area.

## **Inventory**

Most artifacts are stored in archival record storage boxes, allowing them to be easily transferred between the museum and storage facility. Each box is assigned a unique record number and entered into the collections management database. Information recorded includes the site and proveniences, a description of the artifacts, storage conditions, conservation needs, and storage location. The artifact catalogue is linked to the box inventory, to track the location of individual

objects. More specific instructions are outlined in the collections care supporting documents.

## **IPM**

Archaeological objects, most of which are non-organic, are not as susceptible to common museum pests as other collections may be. However, Alexandria Archaeology does hold some archaeologically recovered organic material including leather and wood. Both archaeological storage spaces are located within buildings managed by others and thus covered by the pest management strategies of those entities. More specific instructions are outlined in the collections care supporting documents.

## **Objects in Custody**

Objects in custody for any reason other than for a loan, which are governed by other agreements, will be given the same care as objects in Alexandria Archaeology's collection.

## **Access to Collections and Records**

The Alexandria Archaeology Collection is the property of the City of Alexandria and held in public trust. The City encourages study of the Collection and accompanying documentation by responsible scholars and will make every effort to accommodate research requests. Access to the Collection is by appointment only and based on prior written approval from Alexandria Archaeology. Access is subject to restrictions required by the availability of staff to provide adequate supervision and resources. Access may be denied to parts of the Collection put aside for exhibition or for active research by staff members. As is common practice at the federal and state level, records regarding the location of archaeological sites may be restricted to protect surviving sites.

**Scholarly and Professional Access:** Students and scholars requesting access to the collection shall submit a proposal of their planned research project, including collections and data to be examined, objectives, publication information, proposed timetable, and schedule of hours to be spent at Alexandria Archaeology. The City Archaeologist has the authority to allow access to the collection based on the professional qualifications of the individual, the research's support of the Museum's mission, feasibility and merit of the project, the applicability of the collection to the project, and/or the ability to provide adequate staff supervision and resources for the completion of the research. Researchers will submit physical or digital copies of any manuscripts, articles, book chapters, websites, or other media that uses or mentions Alexandria Archaeology collections.

**Public Access:** Public access to the collections and resources of Alexandria Archaeology through exhibition and education programs may be supplemented by individual or group tours by appointment, at the discretion of the City Archaeologist. Members of the public not engaged in approved research will not be permitted to handle artifacts in the collection without the permission of the Collections Manager.

## **Licensing**

Archival, photographic, or other unique materials from the Alexandria Archaeology collections can be reproduced if the following criteria are met:

1. The intended use of the material is approved by the Collections Manager or City Archaeologist.
2. Permission to reproduce is intended for one usage, in one publication, one edition and one language. Additional use of the same image requires a new publication.
3. Special permission must be obtained if the reproduction is to appear on a dust jacket, CD or cassette cover, calendar, brochure, poster, advertisement, video, web page or other commercial product.
4. The credit line for archival or photographic material must be cited as follows:  
Alexandria Archaeology Museum, City of Alexandria
5. The image will remain whole and unaltered, except with special permission.
6. Alexandria Archaeology will receive, gratis, one copy of the publication in which the reproduction appears.

## **Policy Review**

The standard of review and revision of the Field Manual, Disaster Plan, and City of Alexandria Archaeological Standards and Collections Policy shall occur at least every five years or more frequently as necessary.