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INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS ADVISOR

A RESOURCE FROM IHS LOCAL HISTORY SERVICES

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SPECIAL EDITION COLLECTIONS MINIVISOR: EVALUATING DEACCESSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

By Karen DePauw, manager, IHS Local History Services

This is a short-term weekly mini version of Collections Advisor to give you some ideas of things to do from home to propel our work with museum collections. If you would prefer not to receive the weekly editions but would like to continue to receive the monthly COLLECTIONS Advisor, please email collectionsadvisor@indianahistory.org to let us know.



[Aerial View of the State House from the Southeast Includes a View of the Grounds, 1931](#) (Bass Photo Co. Collection, Indiana Historical Society)

Although we have already discussed generally looking over all of your policies and procedures, this is a good time in particular to look at those policies and procedures that directly relate to deaccessioning. There are many conversations currently surrounding museums and the financial crisis many will face due to COVID 19. Some may be tempted to reevaluate how funds from deaccessioning are used to support the museum and its mission. This is certainly something you can do. Any museum should reevaluate how they accomplish their work from time to time, usually done in the form of updating existing plans. However, it is important to keep in mind that although many things have changed due to the effects of COVID 19, the ethics, values and laws that govern museums have not.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

[Collections Advisors](#)
(Indiana Historical Society, Local History Services)

[The Ethics of Deaccessioning \(recorded webinar\)](#)
(Indiana Historical Society, Local History Services)

[A Modest Proposal for Museum Collections: Apply the principle of direct costs for deaccessioning](#)
(American Alliance of Museums)

[Deaccessioning and Capitalization of Collections](#)
(American Association for State and Local History)

Here are a few major pieces of the puzzle to consider when looking at deaccessioning policies and procedures for your museum. Even if you do not anticipate a major change in finances from the pandemic, it is still a good idea to frequently review your deaccession policies and procedures and make sure they continue to align with the values and ethics of the museum field and any federal, state and local laws.

[AAM Code of Ethics for Museums](#)

[AASLH Statement of Standards and Ethics](#)

[Direct Care of Collections: Ethics, Guidelines and Recommendations](#)

[Guidelines on Deaccessioning of the International Council of Museums](#)

[Indiana Law Title 32, Article 34, Chapter 5 "Property Loaned to Museums"](#)

If you ever have questions or want to talk through deaccessioning, something often seen as a big, scary topic, feel free to call on Local History Services (localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org). We are here to assist in whatever way we can!

This is a free publication. Anyone may subscribe.

[Local History Services](#)

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