

COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Resources for the Museum Field



Steps for Collections Professionals

As collections professionals think about how they can protect the collections they care for and continue their work during the disruptions caused by the pandemic, the Collections Stewardship Professional Network of AAM prepared this list of recommendations.

These recommendations are not to be taken as legal advice or a definitive answer for any particular museum, but rather as a guide for preparedness for the field.

- 1. Limit the number of people entering collections storage areas.** Many disinfecting agents cannot be used on or near collections, so it is best if as little contamination chances occur as possible. If cleaning must happen, limit the amounts of agents used, and cover as best as you can any items that may be affected by cleaning.
- 2. Revisit your museum's emergency response plan.** If you don't have one, start writing it. If you do, does it include a contingency plan? If not, now would be a good opportunity to include one. How can staff ensure the safety of the collections while limiting time at the museum? Who is allowed in? What kind of work is possible from off-site? Does everyone who needs access to files, or the database, have that access?
- 3. Before leaving the museum for a shutdown, be sure to secure collections.** Perhaps you can create a schedule when certain people can walk through the museum to check on conditions. Can climate readings be delivered digitally? Cover and secure collections that cannot go into storage. Ensure that all security measures are functioning properly.
- 4. Consider the potential projects you can accomplish from home.** These include, but are not limited to: policy writing and updating, scanning, updating databases, planning future projects, researching future granting opportunities, writing blogs on behalf of the museum, and making any digital resources such as images and videos available to museum patrons.
- 5. Inform museum patrons, volunteers, interns, researchers, etc. of your plans.**

Thanks to Sebastian Encina of the Collections Stewardship Professional Network for contributing to this resource. If you would like to contribute to a resource guide, please contact AAM's Content Team at content@aam-us.org.