

## Health, Safety and Security Policies and Procedures

### Health and Safety

As an institution in the service of the public, museums are responsible for ensuring their buildings, grounds, exhibits, services and programs are safe for the public. Likewise as an employer, the museum is responsible to provide these measures of safety to the staff and volunteers and to insure that they receive the appropriate training related to their safety. Museums should have a formal statement on their commitment to health and safety and should have procedures in place to fulfill this commitment.

Federal, provincial and municipal legislation will dictate much of these policies and procedures and it is the responsibility of the museum's governing body and administration to insure that the museum is compliant with these laws. As insurance policies require certain standards in these areas, museums should also insure compliance with the insurance companies. Staff and volunteers should be provide with the proper training and be aware of these laws. As legislation represents the minimum requirements, museums should also strive to assess and address any other possible health and safety risks as part of their accountability to the community.

A museum's health and safety policy affects many areas of policy and procedures in the museum particularly those that relate to the staff and museum collections. When considering any policy and procedures always ask how your decisions will affect:

- the health and safety of staff, volunteers and the public
- the preservation of the museum's collections
- the museum's building and grounds
- the general physical environment

Museum health and safety policies and procedures should include:

- a statement on their commitment to health and safety
- statements on the reporting of injuries to staff, volunteers and the public and an outline of procedures in the case of an incident
- a statement on the standards for the physical condition of the museum building and grounds as it related to health and safety and procedures for ensuring these conditions. This section would also be included in the building and grounds policies and procedures.
- procedures that address various emergency situations that may occur. This section would also be included in the emergency preparedness plan of the museum.
- a statement of commitment by the museums to assess the various health and safety risks on a regular basis (also part of the risk assessment policy) and review the policy and procedures on a regular basis.

## Security

Similarly, museums are also responsible for ensuring the security of the staff, public and the collections and therefore need to develop policies and methods of preventing risks and events that compromise that security. This will require that the museum assess and anticipate all possible security risks and address each. Risks to the security of the public and staff can result from acts of violence within the museum or grounds such as during a thief or to the collections or museum's facilities such as with vandalism. As with health and safety concerns, many issues regarding security will appear in various types of policies and procedures related to the people and collections. The key is to have consistency throughout these documents which can be summarized in security policies and procedures.

Within a security policy and procedures these areas should be addressed:

- A statement of commitment to preserving the security of the museum staff, public, collections and facilities.
- An identification of areas of risk and measures to prevent and address security problems i.e. security procedures for the museum collection storage area or what to do in the case of a thief within the museum.
- Identification of levels of security and access within the museum and outline of authority and access by staff, volunteers and the public.
- Security methods for collections during, storage, transport and exhibit.
- Procedures for external security of the building and grounds.
- access to floor plans

### **For more information on this topic see:**

*Guidelines for the Operations of Community Museums in Newfoundland and Labrador*  
The Museum Building and Physical Safety – Page 29  
Security – Page 57

## **Resource for Developing Health, Safety and Security Policy and Procedures**

reCollections – Health and Safety

[http://archive.amol.org.au/recollections/5/pdf/health\\_safety.pdf](http://archive.amol.org.au/recollections/5/pdf/health_safety.pdf)

Western Australia Museums: Museum Management: Buildings and Facilities: Providing a Safe Environment

<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/services/map/musmanage.asp>

The Education Safety Association of Ontario – multiple resources

<http://www.esao.on.ca/clients/museums/links.aspx>

## Sample Museum Operating Procedures

[http://www.esao.on.ca/clients/museums/hazard\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.esao.on.ca/clients/museums/hazard_procedures.pdf)

## Western Australian Museum – Museum Management – Museum Security

<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/services/map/documents/Museumsecurity.doc>

## **Examples of Health, Safety and Security Policy Documents: Available Offline**

### Museum of Health Care at Kingston – Health and Safety Policy

<http://www.museumofhealthcare.ca/moulage.html>