

Collections Ethics

The effectiveness of MH depends on the public's belief that the organization is faithfully carrying out its mission honestly and fairly for the benefit of the community. Therefore, employment (paid or unpaid) by the Society is a public trust, and staff and volunteers are expected to act accordingly.

Ethical standards for MH staff and volunteers must go beyond compliance with legal standards. These standards must be stringent, in order to warrant public confidence. Perceptions of unfair practices are as serious as the practice itself, and care must be taken to avoid even the appearance of self-dealing by the Board, staff, and volunteers.

Conflicts of interest will be avoided. If a member of the Board has a personal or business interest in any of the Society's actions (including accession and deaccession decisions), he or she will make this interest known and recuse him/herself from any vote relating to such actions.

- No Board member, staff, or volunteer will seek to obtain for private collection any object or artifact which would be of benefit to the MH collections.
- Objects deaccessioned from the permanent collection will under no circumstance be given or sold to any Board member, staff, or volunteer unless at public auction. Even under these circumstances, such practice is strongly discouraged. Items abandoned on the premises, which have no ownership determination after the three-month investigation period, will not be given or sold to any Board member, staff member, or volunteer.
- Privacy will be respected, regarding Board members, staff, volunteers, donors, and lenders. Personal information will not be made public, apart from names used in acknowledging gifts, donations, and loans. Donor and lender requests for anonymity in this regard will be complied with to the extent possible.