

# Genealogical Standards

## Guidelines For Using Records Repositories And Libraries

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Recognizing that how they use unique original records and fragile publications will affect other users, both current and future, family history researchers habitually—

- \* are courteous to research facility personnel and other researchers, and respect the staff's other daily tasks, not expecting the records custodian to listen to their family histories nor provide constant or immediate attention.
- \* dress appropriately, converse with others in a low voice, and supervise children appropriately.
- \* do their homework in advance, know what is available and what they need, and avoid ever asking for "everything" on their ancestors.
- \* use only designed work space areas and equipment, like readers and computers, intended for patron use, respect off-limits areas, and ask for assistance if needed.
- \* treat original records at all times with great respect and work with only a few records at a time, recognizing that they are irreplaceable and that each user must help preserve them for future use.
- \* treat books with care, never forcing their spines, and handle photographs properly, preferably wearing archival gloves.
- \* never mark, mutilate, rearrange, relocate, or remove from the repository any original, printed, microform, or electronic document or artifact.
- \* use only procedures prescribed by the repository for noting corrections to any errors or omissions found in published works, never marking the work itself.
- \* keep note-taking paper or other objects from covering records or books, and avoid placing any pressure upon them, particularly with a pencil or pen.
- \* use only the method specifically designated for identifying records for duplication, avoiding use of paper clips, adhesive notes, or other means not approved by the facility.
- \* return volumes and files only to locations designated for that purpose.
- \* before departure, thank the records custodians for their courtesy in making the materials available.
- \* follow the rules of the records repository without protest, even if they have changed since a previous visit or differ from those of another facility.

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