

Welcome to the Archives and Special Collections Research Rooms. In the Archives, you will find archival collections that include official records of the commonwealth, local court records, and private papers relating to Virginia. Special Collections includes broadsides, ephemera, prints and photographs, maps, rare books, sheet music, the State Art Collection, and the Visual Studies Collection.

The rooms are to be used for archival and special collections research only.

Registration

Researchers 18 years or older must have a valid Library of Virginia card in order to use the collections. Researchers age 16 or 17 with a photo ID, but without a Library card, may complete a special registration in order to use the materials. Younger researchers are welcome to use the materials as long as they are accompanied by a parent, teacher, or guardian with a valid Library of Virginia card.

All researchers are required to sign the register daily.

To maintain security of Virginia's irreplaceable documentary heritage, personal items such as outer coats, hats, sweaters, bags, briefcases, purses, waist packs, backpacks, computer or camera cases, packages, clipboards, notebooks in covers, bound or spiral notebooks, bound pads of paper, portfolios, folders, and envelopes are not permitted at the tables in the research rooms. Small lockers and designated shelves/areas are available for storing these items. No food, chewing gum, cough drops, mints, beverage items, or containers are permitted in the reading rooms.

Only pencils, unbound notepaper, index cards, portable devices (including but not limited to cell phones, tablets, and personal computers), photographic equipment, and loose research notes are allowed at the tables. The staff will provide pencils and scratch paper upon request.

Use of Collections

Original records will not be served if a photocopy, microfilm, or digital surrogate is available.

To request archival records, complete a stack service slip. Complete one slip for each request. A copy of the slip will accompany the served records and must be returned.

All materials must remain in the research rooms.

Only the researcher who has signed for the records is allowed to handle the records. Conferences with others must be held outside the research rooms.

All records must be returned with the stack service slip to the desk by 12:55 PM (morning appointments) and 4:00 PM (afternoon appointments). Researchers must exercise care in handling materials. The following rules must be observed:

- Use pencil only.
- Use only one box, one folder of records, or one map at a time. Remove only one folder at a time.
- Do not remove materials from their folders.
- Maintain the existing order of records.
- Do not place anything on top of documents.
- Do not trace or lean on any portion of a map, document, or photograph.

- Materials must be placed flat on tables and not held in the hands or in the lap.
- Use care in turning pages to avoid tearing or other damage.
- Follow correct procedures for photocopy requests (see separate photocopy policy).

Scanners are not allowed. Researchers may take photographs of materials for personal research use and must comply with copyright or donor restrictions.

Reading room activities are monitored. Your research notes and any copies made for you may be examined before you leave the room.

Material in the Archives and Special Collections is available to all researchers on equal terms of access. Privileged or exclusive use of material will not be granted to any person or persons, nor is access to any body of material denied unless specified by legal, donor, or purchase restrictions.

Sections §18.2-107 and §42.1-72 through §42.1-74.1 of the *Code of Virginia* provide for the safekeeping of records and manuscripts housed in the Library of Virginia. Penalties of up to five years' imprisonment may be imposed for the destruction, mutilation, concealment, or removal of records. If a researcher fails to follow the procedures set forth in this document, the staff is authorized to take necessary actions, including refusing further use of records.

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (*Code of Virginia*, §2.2-3705.5) and the Virginia Public Records Act (*Code of Virginia*, §42.1-78) establish guidelines for restricting access to privacy-protected information. Privacy-protected records include, but are not limited to, certain educational, medical, financial, criminal, attorney-client, and personnel records. Privacy-protected information is considered confidential and is restricted from public access for 75 years or more following the date of record creation. In accordance with this legislation, the Library of Virginia can and will restrict, in whole or in part, access to records containing privacy-protected information.

Improper disclosure of privacy-protected information is a breach of confidentiality that could result in the loss of access to the archival collections housed and maintained by Library of Virginia, and could result in legal penalties (*Code of Virginia*, §18.2-186.3).

This access policy applies to state and local government archival collections in both paper and electronic form. Access to privately donated collections may be restricted by the donors of the material.