



## Deaccession FAQ

- What does “deaccession” mean?
  - o Deaccessioning is the process of responsibly removing records or objects from a museum’s permanent collection. Deaccessioning and the process of deaccessioning are designed to keep the collections focused on a museum’s mission.
- Why would you deaccession objects in your collection?
  - o The Ohio History Connection’s Collections Management Policy acknowledges the organization’s duty to care for its collections. The Ohio History Connection has been actively collecting since its founding in 1885, and over time, our mission statement has changed to better serve the public to “spark discovery of Ohio history!” Certain objects in our permanent collection are no longer relevant to our current mission and collecting focus. Deaccessioning objects allows us to better care for objects that meet our current needs by providing necessary space and resources to further our mission.
- How do you decide what you keep? And, conversely, how do you decide what gets deaccessioned?
  - o The Ohio History Connection focuses collecting priorities on the formation and functioning of the state of Ohio, Ohio’s natural history, Ohio’s people from its first inhabitants through today, westward expansion and the Northwest Territory, and popular and scholarly research in the fields of Ohio history, archaeology, and natural history. In general, items kept in the permanent collections of the Ohio History Connection retain their physical integrity, authenticity, research value, and usefulness for display or programming purposes. The vast majority of the collection does not qualify for deaccessioning. Sometimes poor condition, lack of documented history or use, or lack of an Ohio connection make it necessary to consider removing an object from the permanent collection. Curatorial staff at the Ohio History Connection carefully research each object or record under consideration for deaccession, taking into account previous owners, Ohio-related companies or makers, and whether or not the item is duplicated or represented by one in better condition in our permanent collection. While the Board of Trustees bears final responsibility for the collection, our curatorial and archival staff members are best qualified to assess the relevance of an object or materials to the collection or Connection programs.
- Once you decide something is going to be deaccessioned, what do you do with it?
  - o When possible, our first priority is to transfer any object recommended for deaccession and in condition to another historical society, museum or peer organization. Our second priority is to transfer the object into our education collections. The education collection consists of objects that can be used as props or hands-on examples during public programs and events. The objects in the education collection can also be displayed and used in our popular Ohio Village. In cases where an object is broken or beyond repair, it is disposed of.

- Do you sell deaccessioned objects?
  - o If an appropriate organization cannot be identified for transfer of a deaccessioned object, and the education department staff decline taking it, the Ohio History Connection's third priority is to offer the object for sale at public auction. The Ohio History Connection's Collections Management Policy states that any funds from the sale of objects will be used for the acquisition and conservation of collections. *Collections are never deaccessioned or disposed of in order to provide financial support for institutional operations, facilities maintenance, or any other non-collections-based purpose.*
  
- What if I'm concerned about an object my family has donated?
  - o For more information on our deaccessioning policies and procedures, please contact the Registrar's Office at [registrar@ohiohistory.org](mailto:registrar@ohiohistory.org) .