

**CANADIAN ART MUSEUM DIRECTORS' ORGANIZATION (CAMDO)
ORGANISATION DES DIRECTEURS DES MUSÉES D'ART DU CANADA (ODMAC)**

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DEACCESSIONING GUIDELINES
ADDITION TO CAMDO ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE DOCUMENT

1. One of the key functions of an art museum is to acquire objects and hold them in public trust. Consequently there should be a strong presumption against the deaccessioning of any items in the collection of an art museum.
2. Where the art museum has legal powers permitting deaccessioning, or has acquired objects subject to conditions of disposal, these requirements must be complied with fully. When the original acquisition was subject to mandatory or other restrictions, these conditions must be observed unless it can be shown clearly that adherence to such restrictions is impossible or substantially detrimental to the institution. Where appropriate, relief can be obtained through legal procedures.
3. The removal of an object from an art museum collection must only be undertaken with a full understanding of the significance of the item, legal standing, and any loss of public trust that might result from such action. There will be a general presumption that a deaccessioned item should first be offered to another public collection before other means of disposal are considered.
4. Decisions to deaccession should be based on clear, published criteria as part of the institution's collections management policy, approved by the governing body. Each art museum should have a policy defining authorized methods for permanently removing an object from the collection through donation, transfer, exchange, sale, repatriation, or destruction, and that allows the transfer of unrestricted title to the receiving agency.
5. The decision to deaccession should be the responsibility of the governing body acting in conjunction with the director of the art museum. Complete records should be kept of all such decisions and the objects involved including the written recommendation of the director. Proper arrangements should be made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the object concerned.
6. Art Museum collections are held in public trust and may not be treated as a realizable asset. Funds received from the deaccessioning and disposal of objects from an art museum collection cannot be applied to operating costs and should be used for acquisitions to that collection. Use of these funds for other than acquisition must be for the benefit of the collection and be approved by the governing body acting in conjunction with the director of the museum.
7. Art museum employees, the governing body, members of art museum committees, their families or close associates may not purchase or otherwise receive deaccessioned objects, from a collection for which they are responsible, offered through public auction, trade, gift or private sale.