

CHAPTER 14  
EXHIBITIONS POLICIES

**223—14.1(303) Purpose.** Exhibitions are created by the museum for the purpose of promoting an understanding and appreciation of Iowa history through exhibition of the material manifestations of that history. In fulfilling this purpose the museum is cognizant of its equally significant role in the collection and preservation of the state's material culture.

**223—14.2(303) Location.** Several forms of exhibitions are created by the museum. These exhibitions are:

**14.2(1) *Permanent.*** These exhibitions are located at the Museum, State Historical Building, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, (515)281-5111 and at the historic sites operated by the society.

**14.2(2) *Temporary.*** These exhibitions are located at the Museum, State Historical Building, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, (515)281-5111 and at the historic sites operated by the society. Temporary exhibitions are displayed in the museum for a limited period of time.

**14.2(3) *Traveling.*** Reserved.

**223—14.3(303) Collections principles and practices.**

**14.3(1)** Original artifacts, specimens, documents, and images shall be the focus of and utilized in all exhibitions, unless they cannot be provided adequate preservation and protection while on exhibit.

**14.3(2)** Reproductions or models shall be used only as props or as required for the preservation of original materials. The incorporation of reproductions as the focus or subject of an exhibition shall be justified only by the lack of representative artifacts, extreme security or preservation requirements, or the overwhelming significance of the subject matter to Iowa history.

**14.3(3)** Reproductions and models shall be clearly identified as such, when necessary to distinguish them from historical collections. If reproductions are used as exhibit props or graphic tools and are not the focus of the exhibition, they need not be specifically identified as reproductions.

**223—14.4(303) Conservation principles and practices.**

**14.4(1)** All exhibitions shall be designed to meet the conservation needs of the artifacts, images, and documents that are used.

**14.4(2)** If an artifact, image, or document cannot be exhibited without threatening the preservation of the item, it shall not be exhibited, and a reproduction shall be used.

**14.4(3)** The exhibition environment shall be monitored on a regular basis to ensure maintenance of optimum environmental conditions for the items on exhibit.

**223—14.5(303) Education principles and practices.**

**14.5(1)** All exhibitions shall incorporate the highest standards of scholarship.

**14.5(2)** Exhibit design shall employ learning theory and shall be designed for the appropriate cognitive and age developmental levels of the audiences.

**14.5(3)** Exhibits shall minimize enclosed casework and barriers between visitors and the artifacts consistent with artifact security and preservation requirements.

**14.5(4)** Items shall be displayed within appropriate interpretative frameworks.

**14.5(5)** Written text shall support the exhibition of original artifacts, specimens, images, and documents, but shall not be the focus of the exhibit. If extensive labeling is required, presentation in a format other than a museum exhibition shall be used.

**14.5(6)** Exhibition design shall incorporate appropriate current design concepts, fabrication techniques, and technologies. Experimental design shall be used as appropriate.

**14.5(7)** Interactive components shall be incorporated in all exhibitions and shall not be confined to a single designated area. No interactive components shall violate the integrity, preservation, or security requirements of the artifacts.

**14.5(8)** Any individual or group from the general public, local groups organized for historical or cultural purpose, or the staff of the society may propose an exhibition. All proposals may be directed

to the Bureau Chief, Museum, State Historical Society of Iowa, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, (515)281-5111. Final selection of exhibition topics, artifacts, and form of presentation rests with the chief of the museum and the administrator of the society.

**14.5(9)** Exhibitions shall be developed by teams that include appropriate representatives of the museum, other bureaus of the society, the scholarly community, and the general public.

**14.5(10)** Whenever possible exhibitions shall be pretested with a representative sample of the intended audience. Exhibition design, fabrication, and installation shall be adjusted appropriately to reflect the results of the testing.

**14.5(11)** The museum shall maintain an ongoing evaluation program and incorporate the results in future exhibition design.

**14.5(12)** Exhibitions shall be designed so as to make guided tours unnecessary for understanding the exhibition.

**14.5(13)** Exhibitions shall create and maintain environments conducive to learning. This includes adequate lighting for comfort and safety; space for group tours and individuals simultaneously; seating and appropriate spaces to relieve visitor fatigue; and clear traffic flow patterns.

**14.5(14)** Exhibition techniques shall not intentionally misrepresent the facts or the authenticity of the collections.

**14.5(15)** The exhibitions shall accurately reflect the social and cultural diversity and heritage of the state.

**14.5(16)** Exhibitions shall consider visitor safety. Design and fabrication shall adhere to all safety and health codes. Potential use and misuse by the public shall be considered.

**223—14.6(303) Professional museum principles and practices.** The staff of the museum shall actively seek and freely share scholarly knowledge, technical expertise, and exhibition content with other museums.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 303.2 and Iowa Code chapter 303, subchapter II.

[Filed 5/12/89, Notice 11/30/88—published 5/31/89, effective 7/5/89]

[Filed emergency 12/2/93—published 12/22/93, effective 12/2/93]

[Filed 1/27/94, Notice 12/22/93—published 2/16/94, effective 3/23/94]