

Research Room Rules

- All Researchers must complete the Orientation and a Research Registration Form and present a government issued photo ID
- No one under the age of 14 will be permitted in the Research Room
- No food or drink of any kind (this includes candy, gum, mints, etc.) is permitted in the Research Room).
- Secure outer garments and other personal items in the lockers provided outside the Research Room
- Set cell phones to silent. Step outside to receive or make calls
- Copies are available (for a fee)
- Staff provides pencils, notepaper, and other supplies in the Research Rooms

Inside the Research Room

- When working with textual records: You are responsible for safeguarding the condition of the records that have been brought to you.
- You may work with only one box or bound volume at a time.
- You may review only one folder from a box at a time.
- The records should stay flat on the table at all times.
- The records must be kept in the same order in which they are given to you. If folders in a box or pages in a folder appear to be out of order, do not rearrange the records yourself. Alert the staff instead.
- If taking photos using a camera, you must turn off the flash.

What's allowed in the Research Room?

- Religious head coverings
- Small kerchiefs or handkerchiefs
- Cell phones or smart phones
- Sweaters and sweatshirts with or without hoods (only indoor wear)

- Clear plastic bag no larger than 10 x 10 for holding items
- You can bring a coin purse or wallet into the research room.
- We will provide (at some locations) notepaper, and a pencil.
- Pre-written notes must be on loose paper (not on a pad or in a notebook).
- The staff must stamp your notes to identify them as belonging to you. Stapled notes can be stamped once on the back. Pressure sensitive notes, such as Post Its, must be removed or stapled to the page.
- You may not bring items such as books, magazines, or newspapers unrelated to your research in the Archives into the research room. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the staff for
- Materials closely related to your research. Excepted materials will be stamped or tagged
- Computers and other electronic devices may be used depending on individual facility accommodations. Consult the local staff for details.

Prohibited items not permitted in the Research Room

- Food or drink
- Coats, overcoats, jackets, or other types of outerwear
- Hats, caps, or scarves (religious head coverings are permitted)
- Large purses, fanny packs, briefcases, suitcases, handbags, backpacks, bags, equipment bags, computer cases, etc.
- Envelopes, notebooks, pads, binders, folders
- Pens, markers and highlighters are not allowed, nor are pressure sensitive notes, such as Post Its.
- Auto-fed Scanners
- Flash photography or artificial light source
- Multiple CDs or DVDs

Federal Law/Penalties

Federal law, under Title 18 U.S.C., provides penalties of up to 10 years in Federal prison for:

- Removal or attempted removal of records
- Embezzlement
- Knowingly receiving stolen records
- Willfully damaging Baldwin County assets
- The Baldwin County Department of Archives and History is duty bound to protect the records of Baldwin County.
- Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Before you begin your Research

- Complete the research form
- Store your personal property in a locker
- Have any papers you need for your research inspected and approved by research staff
- Lockers are provided for temporary use and must be emptied by the end of the research time. Any property stored in the lockers is subject to random inspection

Using the records

- The records you are using are irreplaceable original documents
- All researchers are subject to electronic surveillance while on the premises
- While you are using the records, You are responsible for their safety and security
- Remember, **You** help us protect the records
- Please report any activities that may endanger Baldwin County's holdings
- Whenever archival records are handled, they are at risk
- It is important that you handle materials carefully to prevent damage

Keep the records as they are

- Use One box at a time and One folder at a time!
- You must follow this rule to make sure that records are kept in order
- Disarranged records lose their usefulness for future researchers.
- If you believe the records are out of order, you must let the Research Room staff know.
- DO NOT REARRANGE THE RECORDS!
- DO NOT TRY TO FIX A PROBLEM BY YOURSELF!
- When you are finished using the records, make sure the records charged out to you are complete and in the order you received them

When handling records:

- DO - Leave a clear space on the table for the records
- DO - Support records fully on the table
- DO - Lay the folder flat, and review the documents one at a time
- DO - Consult one folder at a time, and turn one page at a time
- DO - Hold records lightly but securely when turning pages
- DO NOT - Lean on, write on, fold anew, trace, or handle the records in any way likely to cause damage
- DO NOT - Let documents overhang on table edges – documents can accidentally break off or tear
- DO NOT - Flip or fan through records

Basic Preservation

- Handle records carefully to avoid causing tears and breaks
- Never remove staples or other fasteners. If the fastener is interfering with your use of the records, consult the staff member
- Work with gloves as required by the staff
- Do not use lotions or hand sanitizers immediately before handling records since these can leave stains or cause inks to smear
- Never moisten fingers before turning pages

Special Preservation Issues

- Handle Documents and folders one at a time
- Consult one folder at a time and turn one page at a time
- Do not flip or fan through records
- Do Not remove records from their clear plastic sleeves
- Records are in clear plastic sleeves to protect weak or damaged items
- Consult staff if sleeves contain more than one document
- If you receive an oversized document that is larger than your table, do not open it
- Consult with Research Room Staff
- Use two hands when handling oversized documents

Cotton Gloves

- “Shouldn’t I use cotton gloves when handling historic records?”
- Not necessarily
- Cotton gloves can hinder dexterity and snag textual documents and therefore are not required when handling these records.
- When handling photographs or magnetic media, check with the Research Room staff – you may be required to use white cotton gloves, which we provide.

Making Copies

- Notify Research staff if you need copies including your personal scanner or camera
- The staff will inspect the records, determine if they may be copied and how, and provide you with further instructions
- If the records can be copied: Use colored paper to differentiate your copies from originals
- Remove the originals when finished
- Staff will make sure that you have not accidentally combined originals with your copies
- Photocopies are .25 each up to 11 X 17
- Photocopies are \$1.00 each for 12 X 18