

**Wingfield Heritage House Museum
Code of Ethics
Adopted December 12, 2023**

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I. GOVERNANCE AUTHORITY; MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

The Wingfield Heritage House Museum (WHHM) is operated by the Village of Ruidoso. Its activities and those of its employees, volunteers, and associated persons are governed by the policies of the Village of Ruidoso and the Office of the Village Manager. Acceptance of a paid or voluntary position at the museum requires adherence to the letter and spirit of those provisions, as well as a responsibility to uphold the stated mission, vision, and values of the Museum and Village of Ruidoso.

A. Mission

The Wingfield Heritage House Museum serves as a gathering place that tells the story and preserves the history of Ruidoso and the surrounding area through education, collaboration, and community engagement.

B. Vision

Where Ruidoso Does History

C. Values

Wonder
Hometown
Heritage
Memories

II. GUIDING ETHICS PRINCIPLES

Supplemental to the above, employees, volunteers, and persons associated with the museum are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the following ethical responsibilities:

A. Public Trust

As a civic institution, the Wingfield Heritage House Museum has a great responsibility to the public. The institution, collections, programs, facilities, and staff positions are a public trust. The positions that are held as a public trust include permanent, temporary, and contracted full-time and part-time staff, volunteers, support organization members, Village of Ruidoso public officials, and others who may serve on committees or otherwise be associated in an official capacity with WHHM from time to time.

All persons associated with WHHM in the positions listed above shall:

- fully and conscientiously fulfill the duties of their positions in relation to WHHM;

- avoid conflicts of interest;
- maintain WHHM's name, reputation, property, and services, and never compromise its good will in the community.

B. Conflict of Interest

All persons associated with WHHM should never abuse their official positions or their contacts within the museum community, compete with the museum, or bring discredit or embarrassment to WHHM in any activity, museum-related or not. They should endeavor to conduct all of their activities in such a way that no conflict will arise between their own interests and the policies, operations, or interests of the Museum. The appearance of such conflicts also should be avoided.

Persons associated with WHHM should not attempt to derive any personal material advantages from their connection with the Museum. Museum property should only be used for official purposes, and no personal use of the Museum's collection, property, or services is allowed in a manner not available to a comparable member of the general public. No employee, Village of Ruidoso public official, or member of the Cultural and Natural History Committee may acquire objects from the collections of the museum.

To ensure understanding and acceptance of the terms and restrictions listed here, museum employees, members of the Cultural and Natural History Committee, and museum volunteers will sign a copy of this policy.

C. Maintenance of Institutional Reputation

The reputation and name of WHHM are valuable assets and should not be exploited, either for personal advantage or the advantage of any other person or entity. Information about the administration, intra-staff conflicts, or scholarly activities of the institution that an employee or volunteer may acquire in the course of his or her duties, and which is not generally known or available to the public, must be kept confidential. Such information may not be used for personal advantage or for purposes detrimental to WHHM.

D. Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Through programs, exhibits, collections, and other museum operations, WHHM recognizes that the values of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion are critical to our mission. WHHM strives to reflect and embrace these core values in public offerings, interpretive experiences, museum collections, and the WHHM workplace.

III. THE COLLECTION

Stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust and carries with it the presumption of rightful ownership, permanence, care, documentation, and accessibility. Acquisition and disposal of any objects from the collections shall be performed according to the policies outlined in the Collections Management Policy. The guiding principles for the management, maintenance, and conservation of WHHM's collections are also stated in the Collections Management Policy.

A. Loans

Museum staff will provide the same degree of professional and ethical care and stewardship towards artifacts on loan from other individuals or institutions as it does for its own collections. While loans of objects by volunteers or staff can be of benefit to WHHM, it should be recognized that exhibition at the museum can enhance the value of the exhibited object and thus the loan may be perceived as a conflict of interest. Care should be used to maintain objectivity in such cases.

B. Commercial Use

In arranging for the manufacture and sale of replicas, reproductions, or other commercial items adapted from an object in WHHM's collections, all aspects must be carried out in a manner that will neither discredit the integrity of WHHM nor trivialize or damage the original object. WHHM is an educational institution holding the objects in the collections in its care as a public trust. As such, WHHM cannot loan or lend objects for commercial purposes. The display of brand name objects in museum exhibits does not constitute an endorsement of that product. The acquisition or display of any museum object shall not be influenced by commercial support.

C. Availability of Collections

WHHM assumes, as a primary responsibility, the safeguarding of its collections. WHHM also recognizes that the public must have reasonable access to the collections on display on a nondiscriminatory basis and makes them available to the general public within regularly maintained and publicized hours of opening. Non-display collections will be made available for the active scholarly pursuits of staff members and scholars according to Collections Management Policy.

D. Human Remains and Sacred Objects

The care of human remains and sacred objects shall be in compliance with the Collection Management Policy and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Public Law 101-601; 25 U.S.C. 3001-13; 104 Stat. 3042; FL Statute 872.02, and all other relevant federal, tribal, state, and local laws and regulations.

IV. INTERPRETATION

WHHM's interpretation is dedicated to facilitating meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences for visitors and program participants, inspiring engagement, and fostering an appreciation for our region's history and culture.

A. Truth in Presentation

It is the responsibility of WHHM professionals to prepare all interpretive programming and displays through a process which focuses on accuracy, current information, intellectual honesty, and objectivity. WHHM professionals should also be able to field questions on controversial historical issues in a manner consistent with Village of Ruidoso standards and expectations.

B. Programs and Exhibits

Revenue-producing activities and those that involve relationships with outside organizations are compatible with the mission of WHHM and support its public trust responsibilities. Programs and exhibits promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.

C. Commitment to Education

WHHM professionals recognize that education is central to the mission of the museum. Whether through exhibits or programs, WHHM professionals are committed to engaging our community and serving the needs and interests of the widest possible audience. They respect the diversity of perspectives, values, traditions, and concerns of the cultures and communities represented in our interpretation and the members of our audience. WHHM professionals demonstrate excellence in content knowledge and continuously learn through subject education and professional development.

V. THE STAFF

A. Personnel Practices and Equal Opportunity

The employment practices of WHHM are bound by and follow the policies of the Village of Ruidoso.

B. Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in WHHM. It is incumbent on the paid staff to be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers, and willingly provide them with appropriate training and opportunity for intellectual enrichment. Volunteers have a responsibility to WHHM as well, especially with access to WHHM's collections, programs, and privileged information. Access to WHHM's

internal activities is a privilege and the lack of material compensation for effort expended on behalf of WHHM in no way frees the volunteer from adherence to the standards that apply to paid staff. Volunteers must work toward the betterment of the institution and not for personal gain other than the natural gratification and enrichment inherent in museum participation.

C. Use of Museum Property and Services

No person may use WHHM's collections, facilities, personnel, services, resources, or documents and/or records for personal for-profit use or in any manner that compromises the integrity of WHHM.

D. Use of WHHM Name and Reputation

The name and reputation of WHHM will not be exploited for personal advantage or for the advantage of another person or entity. Every staff member is entitled to personal and professional independence not in conflict with his or her staff responsibilities. However, employees must be aware that in the eye of the public the private business or professional interests of an employee cannot be divorced entirely from the interests of WHHM.

E. Service on Boards and Commissions

Occasionally, employees may be asked to serve in a professional capacity on boards or commissions. To eliminate conflicts of interest or the appearance of potential conflicts, such service will be reported in writing to the Museum Manager. Employees may serve on boards so long as the activity does not impair the employee's ability to act with total objectivity regarding WHHM's interest and such service is in-line with Sections 8-5 (Other Employment) and 8-6 (Political Activity) of the Village of Ruidoso Personnel Policies.

F. Outside Volunteer Activities

Staff members are encouraged to take part in voluntary outside activities with community groups or public service organizations. If a staff member volunteers for an organization or museum and s/he could appear to be acting in an official capacity as a staff member of WHHM, disclosure is recommended to avoid possible misrepresentation. Museum staff should conduct themselves so that their activities on behalf of community or public service organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of WHHM.

G. Speaking out on a public issue

When a member of WHHM staff speaks out on a public issue, they should make sure to do so as an individual. It is important to avoid the appearance of speaking or acting in an official capacity or on behalf of the Wingfield Heritage House Museum.

Political Activity is governed by Section 8-6 of the Village of Ruidoso Personnel Policies.

H. Confidentiality

Staff members and volunteers must respect the confidentiality of any inside information such as names of donors or lenders who are requesting anonymity, names of potential donors, values of artifacts in WHHM's collections, storage locations of artifacts, location of storage areas within the building, and museum security systems to which their museum activities give them access.

I. Personal Collecting

The acquisition, maintenance, and management of a personal collection by a museum staff member, though not unethical, can create ethical questions. To avoid any question of conflict of interest, WHHM has created the following policies on personal collecting:

- Museum staff, their immediate families, and any individual closely associated with the museum may not acquire deaccessioned museum objects.
- Museum collections cannot be used in an employee's home or for other personal purposes.
- Employees may not store personal collections on WHHM property or research their personal collections on WHHM time.
- Objects of insignificant monetary value may be brought in to WHHM by staff at their own risk for purposes of educational programs. Such objects must be identified and tracked by the responsible staff member and will not at any time become distributed among or stored with museum collection objects.
- Personal objects may also be used in exhibits but will be treated and documented in the same manner as other objects loaned to WHHM.
- No WHHM employee may use museum affiliation to promote personal collecting activities.
- No WHHM employee may participate in any for-profit dealing of objects similar or related to the objects collected by WHHM.
- No WHHM employee may compete with WHHM in personal collecting activity. Any individual item acquired by an employee that is related to WHHM's collections and purchased in excess of \$50 must be reported to the Museum Manager within 90 days of acquisition. WHHM has the right to acquire any object so reported, at the price paid by the staff member. Relevant objects will be brought to the Cultural and Natural History Committee, and the question of acquisition will be settled within 60 days of notification. Purchases must be in compliance with the Museum Collections Management Policy.
- WHHM's right to purchase personally collected objects does not extend to objects acquired prior to the staff member's employment at WHHM or prior to the institution of this policy. This policy also excludes the purchase of books and materials that are readily available on the open market. Likewise,

personal gifts or inheritances an employee receives are exempt from the above disclosure and right-to-acquire rules.

J. Appraisals

Museum staff shall not provide appraisals of donations or privately owned materials. Staff may direct individuals to online resources to assist with locating professional appraisers but will not recommend specific individuals. WHHM shall establish values for the artifacts in its collection for purposes of internal record-keeping and insuring the collection, taking care not to communicate those insurance valuations to the donor.

The donor of an object must be solely responsible for obtaining and paying for appraisals and valuations for his or her own purposes, including tax deductibility. WHHM shall avoid any action that might appear to be an effort to assist the donor in securing an income tax deduction, beyond those documentary actions mandated by governmental revenue authorities. Curators and others involved with gifts of objects to WHHM must be familiar with IRS Publication 526 dealing with the valuation of donated property, especially as concerns the rules relating to charitable gifts of objects and the appraisal requirements as described in the instructions to IRS Form 8282. IRS Publication 526 can be found on the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/uac/Publication-526,-Charitable-Contributions-1>

K. Gifts, Favors, Discounts and Dispensations

WHHM employees and their immediate families may not accept favors, gifts, loans, or other dispensations of things of value that are available to them in connection with their duties for WHHM. Advertising novelties having wide distribution may be retained by employees. Gifts to employees are governed by the Personnel Policies of the Village of Ruidoso.

L. Outside Employment and Consulting

With the exception of volunteer staff, a WHHM staff member's primary responsibility is to his or her institution. Under this premise, an employee may undertake outside employment within the rules set Section 8-5 (Other Employment) of the Village of Ruidoso Personnel Policies.

M. Teaching, Lecturing, Writing and Other Creative Activities

WHHM staff members are encouraged to teach, lecture, and write outside of their assigned WHHM duties, to aid their professional development. WHHM is prepared to facilitate such activities so long as the activity does not interfere with the employee's ability to carry out regular duties or appear to compromise the integrity of WHHM.

N. Ownership of Scholarly Materials

Scholarship or artistic work, along with applicable copyrights, completed as part of employment and funded by WHHM are the property of WHHM. If the activity is a personal project, done on personal time, and not within the scope of assigned

responsibilities, then the work is the property of the staff member. When an employee engages in such outside activities, they should notify their supervisor. The supervisor will ensure that said activity is compliant with Village of Ruidoso Personnel Policies.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

In the event of any conflict between this WHHM Code of Ethics and policies of the Village of Ruidoso, the terms of the Village of Ruidoso policies will control.

Revisions

The Museum Manager shall consult the Cultural and Natural History Committee to review the Code of Ethics every five years to ensure that it accurately reflects the purpose, mission, and goals of the museum; and that its requirements meet or exceed accepted museum practices and standards. Proposed changes to the policy will be submitted to the Museum Manager who will forward revisions to the Village of Ruidoso administration to facilitate approval.

Code of Ethics Acknowledgement Form

I certify that I have received and read a copy of the Wingfield Heritage House Museum Code of Ethics. Also, I understand my responsibilities with respect to the principles and standards outlined. I further agree to comply with the principles and standards set forth in the Wingfield Heritage House Museum Code of Ethics.

Signature

Date

Name (please print)