

Guidelines for NAGPRA Artifacts: Inventory and Management Background

Introduction

For the purposes of following guidelines of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, these terms are defined and related to the Louisiana State Museum collection: associated and unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony as defined in P.L. 101-601 Section 2. (25 USC. 3001). The Louisiana State Museum fully supports the goals of P.L. 101-601 and affirms its obligations to comply with its provisions.

The Louisiana State Museum acknowledges that there are artifacts eligible for repatriation under NAGPRA and culturally affiliated tribes receive summaries, reports, and inventories of these collections in compliance with NAGPRA. The Louisiana State Museum recognizes that objects eligible for repatriation may require additional time from culturally affiliated tribes to facilitate repatriation due to a variety of circumstances.

Access

During inventory and reporting on the ethnology collection, access through direct handling, viewing, and physical proximity will be restricted to designated museum staff. Visitation of NAGPRA related items by tribal representatives for religious purposes is subject to approval from an authorized tribal representative and the director of collections as per tribal consultation recommendations.

Requirements

The Louisiana State Museum may discover objects meeting NAGPRA qualifications in existing collections not found during previous inventories; the museum will proceed with NAGPRA compliance for these objects. NAGPRA objects are not utilized in exhibits and educational programs and curators will not acquire objects qualifying under NAGPRA for any collection.

Research

Research requests for NAGPRA related pottery will conform to existing museum policy regarding access to culturally sensitive materials.

Storage Organization

NAGPRA related items are separated from other collections but stored in the same facility and closed from view. Until a formal request for repatriation is initiated by a tribal claimant, the Louisiana State Museum will maintain the objects in trust. The Louisiana State Museum will strive to provide storage, handling and care conditions in accord with the wishes of tribes as indicated by on-going consultation and dialogue with

authorized tribal representatives, insofar as operationally possible with available museum resources.

Handling

Handling and movement of NAGPRA related material will be avoided when feasible and will be kept to a minimum when absolutely necessary. Professional museum staff handle NAGPRA objects. Recognized professional standards of handling collections as defined by museum collections policy and conservation guidelines are used.