



Code of Ethics for the Montezuma County Historical Society & Montezuma Heritage Museum

I. Ethical Standards & Governance

- a. All those who work on behalf of the Montezuma County Historical Society (MCHS) and Montezuma Heritage Museum (MHM) understand and support its mission and public trust responsibilities.
- b. The MCHS & MHM collections and programs, and their physical, human, and financial resources, are protected, maintained, and developed in support of the mission.
- c. Working relationships among board members, staff, and volunteers are based on equity and mutual respect.
- d. Policies are articulated, and prudent oversight is practiced. Governance promotes the public good rather than individual financial or personal gain.

II. Diversity and Inclusion

- a. Everyone makes history. American History is inclusive history. Through staffing, training, collecting, programming, and marketing, the MCHS & MHM will strive to reflect the diverse communities we serve.

III. Intellectual Freedom

- a. Historical scholarship and interpretation depend upon free and open exploration and interpretation of the human experience. The MCHS & MHM will respect all legal, ethical, and cultural standards regarding individual privacy and access to and use of sensitive cultural materials.

IV. Collections

- a. MCHS & MHM shall act legally and ethically in collecting, acquiring, storing, reproducing, exhibiting, transporting, lending, and disposing of items. Collections are accounted for and documented, and access to the collections is permitted and regulated. Collections-related activities promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.
- b. Collections shall be acquired, cared for, and interpreted with sensitivity to their cultural origins. All efforts should be made to be transparent about and representative of these origins.
- c. MCHS & MHM board members, staff, and volunteers shall not offer appraisals of monetary value for any items within or offered to MCHS/MHM.

- d. In compliance with the American Association of Museums' (AAM) & the American Association of State & Local History's (AASLH) professional standards, it is the policy of MCHS not to capitalize (meaning assigning a monetary value for accounting purposes) its collections or to treat them as financial assets in any way. MCHS & MHM shall not use revenues from the disposal of its collections to provide financial support for institutional operations, maintenance, capital improvements, or for any purposes other than the acquisition and direct conservation of collections.

V. Interpretation

Historical interpretation may be presented in a variety of formats.

- a. MHM's historical and cultural interpretation shall be founded on scholarship and marked by intellectual integrity.
- b. MHM's historical and cultural interpretation shall be accessible, encourage participation of the widest possible audience, and respect pluralistic values and concerns.

VI. Revenue Producing Activities

- a. The MCHS & MHM will ensure that no revenue-producing activities violate or compromise the integrity of our mission. These activities should not hamper the ability of an institution or individuals to meet professional standards or endanger an institution's nonprofit status.

VII. Promulgation

- a. The majority of the Montezuma County Historical Society & Montezuma Heritage Museum's Code of Ethics was adapted from the American Association of Museums (AAM) [Code of Ethics for Museums](#), 2000 & the American Association of State & Local History (AASLH) [Statement of Standards & Ethics](#), 2018. It is a living document, designed to be disseminated, used, and updated. This Code of Ethics will be:
 - Reviewed at new employee orientation for all new staff;
 - provided to MCHS board members as part of the Board Packet;
 - disseminated to all museum volunteers;
 - publicly available on the museum's website.