




Western Cape Archives and Records Service

WESTERN CAPE ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

**PROCEDURES FOR THE USE AND HANDLING OF ARCHIVAL MATERIAL DURING
COVID -19 PANDEMIC**

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VISITING THE ARCHIVES' READING ROOM TO CONSULT ARCHIVAL RECORDS

- 1.1 The careful handling of archival records in the Reading Room remains a priority. The existing Reading Room regulations regarding the handling of archival records must always be adhered to. Failure to do will result in your removal from the building, and a possible suspension from the Archives.
- 1.2 All persons will be screened and their temperature tested before being permitted to enter the building. Clients with temperature above 37.5°C will not be allowed to enter the building.
- 1.3 All persons entering the Archives building must wear a face mask. Researchers must wear their masks while stowing any belongings in the lockers, while using the toilets and while in the Reading Room. Persons who do not wear masks will be denied entry to the building.
- 1.4 All persons entering the building must sanitise and / or wash their hands, on entry to the building. Frequent sanitising and/or washing of hands during your visit will be required and enforced.
- 1.5 All persons entering the building will be required to maintain social distancing practises of at least 1.5 metres and adhere to any instructions / directions and signage regarding social distancing by Archives staff.
- 1.6 Required social distancing practises include:
 - Only one person pursuing a research enquiry will be permitted to use the reading room, no groups will be permitted.
 - No queuing in front of the reference desk.
 - No congregating in groups in the Reading Room.
 - Sanitise laptops, etc., before entering reading room
 - Ensure a minimum distance of 1.5 meters between yourself and anyone else.
 - Comply with any directive from reading Room staff regarding social distancing.
- 1.7 The total number of researchers permitted in the Reading Room will be limited to 10 persons to comply with social distancing requirements, with one person

seated per table. None of the closed consultation rooms will be available for use. The current table number system which is in use in the reading room will continue to be used to limit the number of users in the reading room. The tags representing table numbers will begin from 1-10.

A tag and the locker key will be handed to the researcher at the foyer when they enter the Archives building and they must return the both items upon exiting the building. The tag and the locker key must be sanitised before being issued and upon return. Researchers must be encouraged to bring their own pencils with for use when dealing with records; if not the reading room employees must sanitize pencils before issuing to the researchers.

- 1.8 Only one person will be served by a member of the Reading Room staff at a time, to ensure adherence to social distancing practises
- 1.9 Protective gloves will be made available on request for working with archival material. The regular sanitising and washing of hands is encouraged, as gloves can make the handling of records difficult.
- 1.10 Only one person will be allowed in the finding aid room of the reading room at a time, to ensure adherence to social distancing practises.

2. REQUISITION AND SUPPLY OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS TO THE READING ROOM

- 2.1 The careful handling of archival records remains a priority. This includes the use of records in the Reading Room for consultation; as well as while supplying records to the Reading Room – that is, the retrieving, transporting, and refiling of records within the building.
- 2.2 There will be a limited number of archival records provided, to avoid damage to records, and to manage hygienic handling of the records.
- 2.3 Archives staff working to supply the Reading Room with records must practise social distancing while retrieving, transporting and refiling records in the strong rooms, as well as in the lifts and passages. Staff may only carry two volumes per person, and these two volumes must be carried in both hands. For transporting more than two items at a time, a trolley must be used. There should be two staff members in a lift.

- 2.4 Once records are finished being consulted; must be taken to a separate space for quarantine, at least 3 days before use by other clients or returned to the relevant stack rooms. Trolleys must be sanitised before and after each use.
- 2.5 Staff working to supply records will be divided into different supply work streams to promote social distancing practises: some will exclusively supply records, while others will refile.
- 2.6 One records supply staff member, will be responsible for providing records to archivist staff working in their offices. To limit movement around the building, no archivist staff will be permitted to retrieve records from the stack rooms.

3. ACCESS TO ARCHIVAL RECORDS

- 3.1 Reading Room staff must ensure that all researchers adhere to regulations pertaining to general to Reading Room conduct, as well as to ensure that the wearing of personal protection equipment (PPE) is adhered to and that social distancing practises are maintained.
- 3.2 Reading Room staff will ensure that the tables are sanitised immediately after each use, before use by another researcher.

4. RESERVATION OF ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

- 4.1 No reservation of archival materials is permitted while the Western Cape Archives remains under any level of COVID -19 pandemic alert.

5. REPRODUCTION SERVICES (COPIES OF DOCUMENTS)

- 5.1 Reproduction services will continue to be provided on request, these are: photocopies, digital prints and scanned images of archival materials that can be copied.
- 5.2 Services to remote clients will remain the same; archivists will continue to respond to emails and telephonic enquiries. No photocopies/ copies will be forwarded via postage during this period of the COVID-19; copies will be scanned and sent via emails.

6. READING ROOM OPENING TIMES

In attempt to help curb the spread of Covid-19, reading room at the Western Cape Archives the opening and closing times have been revised to ensure safety of the researchers using the Reading Room Services. Extended service hours and Saturday's services have been terminated until further notice. The Reading Room opening times are from Monday to Friday: 10:00- 14:00.

7. CONTACT DETAILS

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