

FEDERAL CURATION FEE POLICY
Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory
Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
Maryland Historical Trust

The Basis of Federal Curation Fees

Federal curation at the MAC Lab is a fee-for-service program. Fees are based on the estimated staff time needed to curate Federal collections in compliance with *36 CFR §79: Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections*. There are four kinds of required fees:

- **Annual Curation:** A minimum maintenance fee is charged every Federal fiscal year for each standard box (16" x 13" x 10" or 1.3 cu. ft. volume) of artifacts curated.
- **Inventory fees:** Inventory charges apply every five years. An inventory is performed when a collection is delivered to the MAC Lab to ensure that all of the artifacts listed in the catalog actually made it to the Lab. This serves as the baseline for subsequent inventories, which are required every five years to meet the 36CFR§79 mandate for periodic inventories.
- **Data-Entry:** Data-entry fees are charged during the first year of curation only. Data-entry is performed to integrate catalog and location information into the MAC Lab's systems for ease of access and record keeping. This meets the 36CFR§79 accessibility requirements.
- **Conservation Assessment:** A conservation survey fee is required in the first year of curation so that each box can be examined by a conservator and recommendations can be made to Federal owners if artifacts are deteriorating. 36CFR§79 requires repositories to ensure that artifacts are not falling apart, or, if they are, to alert the Federal owner.

Determining the Fee Amount

The fees vary each year because they are tied to staff time and salaries change annually. A quote for curation must therefore be obtained from the MAC Lab's Federal Curator prior to delivery. The quote will be customized according to the following criteria:

- The number of standard artifact boxes (16" x 13" x 10" or 1.3 cu. ft. volume) to be delivered
- The estimated date of delivery
- The number of years of curation that the Federal owner wishes to pay for at one time

Fee Delivery Mechanisms

There are several ways that Federal clients can work with the MAC Lab to initiate a partnership and pay fees:

- **Memoranda of Understanding (MOU):** MOUs are mechanisms that allow the MAC Lab and Federal partners to outline the obligations of each party in great detail, and they include fees and a billing schedule. MOUs tend to be most appropriate for clients with large collections whose fees exceed government credit card limits. MOUs may require intensive legal review when initiated, but they can last a long time and eliminate the need for purchase orders each year.
- **Purchase Orders:** A purchase order is a basic fee-for-service agreement whereby the MAC Lab promises to curate collections in accordance with 36CFR§79 for as long as the purchase order is in effect. Purchase orders tend to be preferred for smaller collections where fees do not exceed government credit card limits. When fees do exceed government credit card limits, purchase orders may be cumbersome for clients who have to get multiple bids or justify a sole source purchase.
- **Third-Party Exchanges:** Occasionally curation fees are included in excavation project budgets. Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firms who conduct excavations on Federal property may therefore find themselves with funding for curation at the end of the project. The MAC Lab accepts payments for curation from contractors as long as the Federal owner is aware of the transaction and knows that they will be responsible for fees long-term. The MAC Lab can customize a quote and purchase order to match the allotted curation fees in the possession of the CRM firm.
- **Combinations:** Clients who have already entered into a long-term agreement, such as an MOU, may decide to use a different funding mechanism if they need to add new boxes. For example, a client with an MOU may initiate a small purchase order or include curation fees in a CRM project budget in order to streamline the delivery of new collections without amending the MOU. The new collections can then be rolled into the MOU agreement when it is renewed.

The MAC Lab accepts credit cards and checks payable to “Maryland Department of Planning/JPPM”. For large fee amounts attached to MOUs and certain purchase orders, the MAC Lab will invoice the client through its parent departments, the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland Department of Planning.

Contact Information

To initiate a Federal Curation partnership with the MAC Lab or get a quote for services, contact the Curator of Federal Collections, Sara Rivers Cofield at sara.rivers-cofield@maryland.gov or 410-586-8589.