

College Operating Procedures (COP)



Procedure Title: Art Gallery and Museum Security
Procedure Number: 08-0826
Originating Department: Public Safety

Specific Authority:

Board Policy 6Hx6:7.03
Florida Statute n/a
Florida Administrative Code n/a

Procedure Actions: 01/01/10

Purpose Statement: To establish a procedure for the security of all campus art galleries and museums.

Guidelines: Museum collections are widely varied, often unique objects that form a core activity for **exhibitions**, **education**, **research**, etc. This differentiates it from an **archive** or **library**, where the contents may be more paper-based, replaceable and less exhibition oriented. There are collections of art, of scientific specimens, of historic objects, of living zoological specimens, etc.

It should be assumed that threats to any collection, including vandalism, accidental damage, theft, extortion, ransom, fire, or disaster are foreseeable to any collection.

Definitions:

Museum: A place, regardless of its exact name, where the public is invited to view, handle, or study items that have been assembled into collections. These might include art, coins, decorative arts, photographs, curios, antiques, or similar items. Any facility referred to as a museum.

Florida SouthWestern State College maintains the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery and the Richard H. Rush Library Special Collections Exhibit Hall and Reading Room on the Lee Campus as well as various collections on the College's other campuses.

Object: Any item on display or in storage as part of the College permanent collection or any items on loan in the museum, which can include art, artifacts, specimens, etc.

Procedures:

The term "protection" is best thought of as an overall program in effect to safeguard the College's various collections. "Protection" is a concept that integrates "security" and "fire prevention" with disaster and strategic planning and post-theft recovery.

Every public safety officer (PSO) must view protection of the collection from potential threats as one of the important objectives of his/her duty.

It is recognized that the display of valuable and important objects, often results in a risk which might not be acceptable for other valuable or important commodities. Therefore, protective steps must be taken to safeguard the collection from threats and to overcome the inherent risks of display and exhibition.

Any time the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery or the Rush special collections exhibit hall are open, an officer must be present. While public safety personnel will provide security for these two museums in some cases it may be acceptable or necessary to assign gallery and perimeter security duties to properly trained and screened non-security personnel such as receptionists, docents, gallery attendants, or other museum staff. The decision to use non-security personnel should depend upon the risk involved, the value or importance of the collection, its vulnerability, display methods, and other factors. These decisions will be made in conjunction with the Director of the gallery.

The security procedures are applicable to everyone and that no one, because of his or her position, rank, title, status or for any other reason, is exempt from compliance with the policies and rules that are designed to protect the collection, visitors, and staff.

Inspections:

The museums will be opened at the scheduled times and the public safety officer will make a careful inspection of the entire exhibition immediately after opening and again immediately before closing to ensure nothing is missing or damaged. The PSO will make periodic patrols thru the exhibit areas, especially when people are present and at least hourly. The PSO should report any damage, theft or suspicious circumstances immediately.

Alarms:

Whenever there is an activated alarm a public safety officer(s) must respond. Alarms should not be ignored nor should assumptions be made about their origin. Fire departments will respond and verify the alarm status.

Access to non-public portions of the museum should be limited to those persons needing access to carry out their duties.

Visitors:

Visitors should be welcomed to the gallery, encouraged to sign the guest book and offered handouts. An accurate count of visitors should be maintained daily on the specific form. PSOs should assist visitors with questions.

When visitors are present a PSOs attention must be vigilant, s/he cannot be reading, engaged in distracting conversations or outside the exhibit area.

Food or beverages are not permitted in the exhibit areas.

Employees and vendors will not be permitted to work or to remain in the museums after hours if doing so results in diminished security unless prior approval from the Director of the Gallery.