

Property Management Handbook

Responsible Housekeeping, Digitization, and
Emergency Solutions for Collections at Risk.



*"Give me six hours to chop down a tree
and I will spend the first four
sharpening the axe"*

-Abraham Lincoln

This Handbook and the National SUVCW

This handbook is designed to provide the Camp Commander with an organized approach to property management. It does not seek to change any parts of the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Regulations. It has been carefully drafted to maintain consistency and always refers back to them for guidance. For maximum transparency, you will see in-text citations to help the reader understand why things were structured a certain way. Its two key objectives are to serve those great documents in a manner that has not been fully addressed. Still, this handbook remains within the limits that the Constitution allows.

The goals of this document:

- 1) Describe what preservation challenges we have
- 2) Understand the handbook's objectives
- 3) Understand the handbook's terminology
- 4) To learn new roles of Camp leadership
- 5) Lay out a procedure for digitization
- 6) Instructions for a Camp audit
- 7) Provide example form and note space

Definitions

PMH:

Property Management Handbook.

EPMG:

Emergency Property Management Guidelines.

Property:

Common Definition: That which a person owns; the possession or possessions of a particular owner.

With regard to PMH: The PMH is designed to preserve and archive Civil War, GAR, SV, SVR, SUVCW, or any affiliated "Daughters" & "Auxiliary" documents, relics, keepsakes or property of interest. Property is recorded and archived by Trust Administrators in two categories :

1) Camp Property & 2) Grantor property.

The PMH definition of "property" will never include "real estate" in this document. Real estate acquisitions will need to be addressed by the National Organization solely.

Grantor:

Common definition: A person or institution that makes a grant or conveyance.

With regard to PMH: A Grantor is someone who owns a collection of property and asks a particular Camp to safe-keep, digitize, or distribute according to the broad guidelines in Article II of the SUVCW Constitution.

Trust:

Common definition: An arrangement whereby a person(s) (a trustee) holds property as its nominal owner for the good of one or more beneficiaries

With regard to PMH: The Trust is the Grantor's property, The Trustee is the Camp itself. Beneficiaries are the public and their access to it. Terms of management are made between the Camp Council (**) and the Grantor(s).

Trust Administrator:

Common definition: A person who has been given the power to act for another person or entity.

With regard to PMH: They help manage all property of the Trusts. They may also manage Camp owned property at the Commanders behest. They keep records of all their subsequent activity. They must be in good standing with the SUVCW. Trust Administrators assess the scale of a trust in order to decide "who" and "how many" Security Holders receive property.

Security Holder:

Common definition: A person or entity in which a thing deposited or pledged as a guarantee of the fulfillment of an undertaking may be forfeited in case of default.

With regard to PMH : It is someone appointed by a Trust Administrator to safeguard, digitize, or display property. This is a person(s) or entity who is trusted to hold property in good faith without claim to its ownership. Further responsibilities may be defined by the initiatives of the Trust Administration, Grantor, National SUVCW, the Department, and/or the Camp.

Elected Officer:

It is either the Jr. Vice, Sr. Vice, or Commander in good standing with the SUVCW. It is someone who can enact the EPMG.

Camp Council:

Camp council is a 3 member committee. More information can be found in Chapter I, Article X of the Blue Book rules and regulations.

***Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter 1, Article 5, section B) assigns Camp Council with drafting contracts.*

Introduction

Sadly, collections of G.A.R. records have a long history of becoming lost. By the 1920s GAR Posts began folding up. Relics were picked through like spoils and records were tossed into attics and basements across the country. Poor storage conditions eventually destroyed these important documents. Additionally, it didn't take long for other records to become trash when buildings inevitably changed hands. Thankfully many people went to great lengths to preserve the records and relics we have today. The hard truth is that it wasn't even close to being enough. This loss has permanently severed many descendants from their familial connections to the GAR. They will never be found again.

SUV Camps are on the front lines of historical collections in their communities. When a collection becomes in danger, Camps need the tools to handle a rescue mission, and FAST! Once safe, there can be breathing room for Camps to digitize documents or find a better home for relics. Having a protocol already in place is essential. We must be ready to fulfill our promise to Article II of the SUVCW Constitution. Additionally, confronting how we manage our own Camp property will create more integrity to our mission.

Handbook Objectives

Objective # 1:

To structure the responsible management of camp owned property.

Objective # 2:

To prepare a Camp for the emergency response of receiving property in order to preserve, digitize, and distribute trusted relics and documents.

Overview of Objectives

Objective #1:

Four key parts of property management (*b)

Part 1) Trust Administrators are identified and instructed to inventory and record all camp property and locations. They record the Security Holder information that safeguards camp property.

Part 2) Security Holders are asked to return Camp property when no longer in good standing with the Camp, property is no longer safe, a security holding institution dissolves, or when Trust Administrators decide to reallocate trusted property.

Commanders must always approve the reallocation of Camp owned property (*f). Trusts are controlled by the Trust Administrators.

Part 3) Trust Administrators turn in copies of their records upon request from Camp Council or any higher ranking authority. This includes requests by the Camp Commander.

Part 4) In case of the surrender or forfeiture of the Camp Charter, Trust Administrators in conjunction with the Camp Council will assist the Camp Commander at his behest. They will collect all Camp property from Security Holders. They will send Camp owned property to The Commander-in-Chief, return all Trusted property to the Grantors. If Grantors no longer want the property, it defaults as camp property and is relinquished to the Commander-in-Chief (*e). If a Grantor is not reachable or is otherwise pleased with the property placement in such institutions as historical societies, libraries, museums, or the like, the Trust Administration in conjunction with the Camp Council will notify in writing, both parties of the camp dissolution and provide the parties with each others contact information.

Objective #2:

How EPMG is managed in three steps (*a)

Step 1) An elected Camp officer or Trust Administrator is notified of an emergency storage issue, a collection at risk, or potential loss. They determine there is an emergency. They may enact the EPMG accordingly.

Step 2) Once an Officer or Trust Administrator enacts the EPMG, Trust Administrators now step into action and follow the guidelines. If a Grantor (3rd party owner of property) is involved, the Camp Council is tasked with drafting any necessary agreements (*c).

Step 3) The Camp and its Trust Administrators take control of creating an inventory, record keeping, digitization, maintenance, and reallocation of property. All in the spirit of preserving history so it can be used to education and make available to future generations. (*d)

Step 4) The Camp Council makes necessary agreements for reallocation of property, private or trusted. (*c)

Citations for Pages 5 & 6

*(*a) O.L.B. Objective 1 : To prepare a Camp for the rapid response of receiving property in order to preserve, digitize, and distribute trusted relics and documents.*

*(*b) O.L.B. Objective 2 : To Organize responsible management of camp owned or trusted property.*

*(*c) Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter 1; Article V; section B) assigns Camp Council with drafting contracts.*

*(*d) Blue Book; Constitution, Article II,
To perpetuate the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic and of the men who saved the Union 1861 to 1865; to assist in every practicable way in the preservation and making available for research of documents and records pertaining to the Grand Army of the Republic and its members; to cooperate in doing honor to all who have patriotically served our country in any war;*

*(*e) Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter I, Article I, Section V: In case of the surrender or forfeiture of the Camp Charter, all the Camp property and money assets shall be turned over to the National Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War via the Department Commander of the affected Camp acting as his duly authorized representative, to collect and hold all such property in trust for the National Organization*

*(*f) Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter 1, Article VII, Section I :
States that the Commander approve all orders or requisitions made on the Treasurer or Camp Council for appropriations of money, or any property of the Camp,*

Duties and Further Clarifications:

Trust Administrator:

Trust Administrators are made up of the commander & past commanders in good standing with the SUVCW.

Each camp will have at least (3) Trust Administrators. If not enough past commanders are alive or in good standing, the elected officers of the camp will fill in those positions by rank seniority. A Trust Administrator is somebody who grants "Security Holder" status to an individual, group, or organization unless vetoed by a 2/3rd majority of the Trust Administration. All dissenting opinions between the Trust Administrators will be settled with a 2/3rd majority vote(*d).

Trust Administrators assess the scale of the emergency in order to decide "who" & "how many" security holders become activated and able to receive property.

This is somebody who has additional record-keeping and reporting obligations. Trust Administrators will inventory items and distribute the property to Security Holders based on their ability to receive, safeguard, and process (such as cleaning, maintenance or digitization of files, etc.) Trust Administrators are tasked with making sure that collections are free from hazards and are relevant for purposes of education and historical preservation. Any gifted property of no use or integrity may be disposed of. Any parts of a Grantors collection may be refused if it serves no purpose deemed by Article II of the Constitution.

All Trust Administrators of O.L.B. are obligated to notify Camp Officers as well as other Trust Administrators when there is any O.L.B. activity. This guarantees transparency and offers a chance to discover potential objections.

A trust Administrator can also be a Security Holder as long as he is appointed by another Trust Administrator. They are responsible for their own record keeping. This includes all Security Holders in good standing, Security Holder agreement forms, and any property that is held by the Security Holders.

They are responsible for handing in copies of their records to any higher SUVCW authority or to the Camp Council upon request. (*)

Security Holder: Security Holders sign an agreement that acknowledges their voluntary action of storing, archiving, maintenance, and digitization of the property. This agreement is an acknowledgment that the Security Holder is NOT the owner of Trust or Camp property regardless of possession. Security Holders can refuse property for any reason.

Examples of great candidates for Security Holders: historical societies, museums, libraries, education houses, or trusted members of the SUVCW when nothing has yet been arranged.

Security Holders will store items until a new more permanent and appropriate location is secured by the Trust Administrators or Grantor of the property. Any historical documents will become digitized while in the possession of a Security Holder.

Camp Council: Camp Council has the right and should periodically examine all records of Camp property and Trust property for transparency. (*)

Terms between a Grantor and Trustee (Camp) will be arranged by the Camp Council (**). Some agreements may include monetary compensation from the Grantor(s) unless it hinders the good works outlined in the SUVCW Constitution Article II. (**)

Camp Historian: He is appointed by the Camp Commander. He is traditionally tasked with archiving all camp history, documentation, and all donated memorabilia. (*g)

With regard to PMH : No changes are sought to change the function of this officer. Only to audit, document, digitize, and assist in a more transparent and effective way. The PMH understands the magnitude of responsibility shouldered upon this officer and seeks to provide relief at the direction of the Camp Commander.

Digitization of Historical Documents

Digitizing all historical documents is an absolute necessity to maintain one of our most fundamental purposes as the SUVCW (**). In these days of modern technology, the ease of digitizing historical documents becomes an obligation to avoid neglecting our National Charter and Constitution's intentions.

Undigitized historical documents held by a SUVCW Camp/ Department/or National should be addressed immediately.

Security Holders with undigitized paper documents should begin the process of digitizing or forfeit the documents to the Trust Administration for reallocation to someone more ready and able.

At least three copies are to be made of digitized files. One stays with the hosting camp as property stored in accordance to the PMH. One is sent to relevant county or state library system. Finally, one is sent to the highest office of the SUVCW (Department and/or National). Once in higher office, copies of these files will be treated as property in accordance to the PMH (*e)

All files should be examined by Security Holders, Trust Administrators, Camp Council and higher office to determine if additional digitized copies qualify for storage by the National Archives/Library of Congress or many of the other widely used Trusts specialized in archiving such records.

Citations for Pages 10, 11, 12, and 13

(*) *Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter 1, Article V, section E) assigns Camp Council with Examining the books, vouchers and other papers of the different officers.*

(**) *Blue Book; Constitution, Article II,*

To perpetuate the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic and of the men who saved the Union 1861 to 1865; to assist in every practicable way in the preservation and making available for research of documents and records pertaining to the Grand Army of the Republic and its members; to cooperate in doing honor to all who have patriotically served our country in any war;

(***) *Blue Book; National Regulations, Chapter 1, Article V, section B) assigns Camp Council with drafting contracts.*

(*d) *National Regulations per the Blue Book has a very common theme of settling matters with a 2/3rd vote.*

(*e) *Property as stated in the O.L.B. Protocol is to be documented by a Trust administrator and held by a Security Holder.*

Where does a New Camp Commander start?

Step 1) Make the Camp aware of the PMH, the EPMG, and who the Trust Administrators are.

Step 2) Instruct the Trust Administrators to begin auditing all Camp-owned property and who possesses it. The Commander needs to decide if the current location of property is satisfactory and record it in his records. The Commander should set a fair and reasonable time-line for the Trust Administration's audit.

Step 3) Instruct the Camp Council to open the books of all current and past Camp Historians. They examine all potential camp property and documentation. They should report their findings to the Commander for his records. The Commander should set a fair and reasonable time-line for the Camp Council's audit.

Step 4) Instruct all Trust Administrators to begin appointing willing brothers as Camp Security Holders. They should start collecting signed agreement forms. (*) This is to help gauge the potential strength and ability of your Camp to temporarily store documents and relics in case of emergency.

Step 5) Trust Administrators will be instructed to create their own logs of whom the Security Holders are, their agreement forms, and what items they have. (**)

() If camp property is held by someone who is not a security holder, that person should either become a security holder or the property should be re-allocated*

*(**) Trust Administrators should always be mindful of who has paper documents. They should refer to the section about digitization in order to make certain the process of digitizing historical records is under way.*

Security Holder Agreement Form

Administrator, keep original but provide a copy to the Security Holder.

-For Camp Members

(draft a different form for institutions such as museums and historical societies)

Camp: _____ # _____

Department: _____, SUVCW

I, _____ promise to hold property owned and managed by the Camp listed above. I will keep it secure in good faith until it may find a more appropriate location by the Trust Administration. I make no claim of ownership or ask for monetary compensation. The items I hold will be returned upon request from a Trust Administrator. Property will also be returned when I am no longer a member of the Camp, when property is at risk, news of terminal illness, death, or when I no longer wish to hold all or any of the property. If the property is stolen, I will secure a police report for the Camp records and notify Camp Officers and Trust Administrators immediately. I will report any progress of digitization or report any damaged property to Camp Officers and Trust Administration. I promise to keep a copy of this agreement attached to the item(s) I hold.

I reserve the right to not accept property for any reason. I also reserve the right to return property to the Trust Administration and terminate my agreement as Security Holder.

List property below with initials of the Security Holder next to each.

** If the property listed below is Camp-owned, the Camp Commander should be the signing Trust Administrator.*

Security Holder Signature

Date

Trust Administrator Signature

Use any of these blank pages for notes or record keeping.



If you use these pages for notes and records, write your name and other important information on the cover.



