
User Agreement

September 2025

User Agreement - Terms and Conditions

AOR Account

1. Archives of Ontario accounts are valid for the life of the user, or until otherwise stated. They do not require renewal. As a condition to being issued an account, users agree to abide by the terms and conditions of this agreement. The Archives of Ontario (AO) reserves the right to cancel the user's account and revoke user privileges of any person for any reason including the violation of the terms and conditions of this agreement.
2. Users are required to sign in and out with their AO researcher account at the Reception Desk when they enter and leave the AO premises.

Use of AO Facilities

1. If an emergency alarm sounds, unless otherwise instructed by AO staff or the AO Emergency Evacuation Supervising Staff, users must evacuate the building immediately, exiting through the main door of the Reading Room and out the main lobby doors. Users shall follow the instructions of AO staff or the AO Emergency Evacuation Supervising Staff. If you require assistance in the event of an emergency, please alert on-duty security or the Archives Service Representative on the main floor to this fact each time you enter the building.
2. Users are required to leave their personal belongings in the Client Lounge lockers, including all briefcases, purses, backpacks, folders, umbrellas, overcoats, raincoats and any other items that the AO deems, in its sole discretion, to be harmful to the collection material or the facilities, or that could inconvenience other users or staff of the AO facilities. AO reserves the right to refuse entry to any person who attempts to enter the AO facilities with belongings or materials that AO staff determine to be harmful to the collection material or facilities, or that could inconvenience other users or staff of the AO facilities.
3. Locker keys that are issued to users shall not be removed from the AO facilities. Locker keys shall be returned to reception upon leaving the AO.
4. Researchers may bring pencils, wallets, research notes, computers, tablets, phones and digital cameras into the Reading Room.
5. Digital cameras must be attached to a neck or wrist strap, which must be worn while photographing images. Users must not stand on tables or chairs or place collection material on the floor to capture an image. Any device that AO deems, in its sole discretion, to be unsuitable for use because of its potential negative effect on the preservation of AO documents or material, is not permitted in the AO facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, flash photography and flatbed scanners.
6. Tripods are not permitted in the Reading Room.
7. Phone conversations are strictly prohibited in the Reading Room and in the Microfilm Service Area (Rotunda).
8. The AO will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

9. The AO provides complimentary Wi-Fi access in the Reading Room to users who bring their own laptop computers. The Wi-Fi password can be obtained at the Reception desk and Reference Desks in the Reading Room.
10. Public internet access is available on the computer terminals located in the Reading Room outside the Rotunda. Should the demand for public computer terminals exceed the number available, a time limit may be imposed on computer use.
11. Users are not permitted send, receive or display text or graphics that are illegal or perceived as obscene or offensive in the Reading Room.
12. Users must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and refrain from any behaviour likely to cause inconvenience or annoyance to others. Users shall not engage in loud, threatening, disrespectful or abusive language or behaviour.
13. For health and safety reasons, users must keep their footwear on at all times.
14. Users are not allowed access to the vault areas or to staff offices unless they have made special arrangements and are accompanied by a staff member.
15. The public spaces and research facilities are under video surveillance.

Care of AO Collections

The holdings of the AO are unique and often fragile and must be preserved for future generations.

1. Reference material viewed in the Reading Room, the Meeting Rooms and the A/V Rooms must not be removed from those rooms under any circumstances (unless authorized by a staff member). Users shall not leave collection material unattended. All materials must be returned to the Reference Desk at the back of the Reading Room when leaving the Reading Room.
2. While users can order as many records as needed, only six boxes can be reviewed at any one time. However, the AO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to place limits on the amount of boxes that can be signed out by a user at any one time.
3. Documents shall be handled as little as possible and with extreme care. Hands must be clean and free of hand lotion, alcohol-based hand sanitizer or cream before collection material is handled. Some documents may be in poor condition and, on rare occasions, contaminated with mould. Please notify staff immediately of any suspected problems.
4. Users agree to never rearrange the order of archival material.
5. Users shall work with one file at a time. Documents must be realigned in the file folders before returning the material to its container. Users shall not tap folders, or their contents, down on the table. Documents must be realigned manually, individually and carefully. Users shall not remove documents from protective sleeves. Lids of boxes must be closed to avoid light damage to the documents contained inside.
6. Users shall not stack or overlap documents and shall not lean on documents or boxes. Users shall not press down on documents or bound materials. Staff will provide special handling aids to assist users to review and photograph documents.
7. Users shall not annotate, mark, tear, fold or damage collection material. Users shall not remove paper clips, staples, pins, string or any other fasteners from collection material.
8. Users agree to use the paper flags provided at each research table to indicate pages for copying.
9. Special care is required when handling photographs, bound volumes, maps, rolled plans and other fragile items. Staff will inform users of procedures specific to these collection materials.
10. Only pencil may be used to take notes. (The exception to this rule is when Archives staff require the use of pens to sign documents).
11. Users are responsible for all collection material loaned to them.
12. Users must comply with any instructions communicated by AO staff regarding the handling of AO materials.

Reproduction of AO Collections

1. Users agree that AO collections materials are protected by intellectual property right laws.

2. Users warrant that they will not use, reproduce, perform in public, publish, translate, adapt, communicate by telecommunication or rent out AO collections in a manner that would infringe on copyright, or other intellectual property or other rights. Any liability that arises in respect of the user's actions or inactions, as it relates to AO collections materials, is assumed in full by the user. The AO accepts no responsibility for the use of collection material by users.
3. Reproductions made for customers cannot be represented as an official version of the document reproduced or as having been made in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the AO **unless** said copy has been certified as such by the Archivist of Ontario or its Designate.
4. The reproduction of records held at the AO is subject to the requirements of the [Copyright Act](#) and its related regulations.
5. Users agree that they will consult the *Copyright Act* and/or seek legal advice when the interpretation of copyright raises questions. It is not the role of the AO to interpret the *Copyright Act* for users, but rather up to the users to be aware of copyright issues. Users shall allow adequate time for researching ownership and, when needed, obtaining the required written permissions.
6. For preservation reasons, users shall not make print copies of original archival documents; only authorized Reproduction staff can do so. User requests for reproductions can be submitted to Archives Service staff at a reference desk in the Reading Room or online.
7. Users requesting the reproduction(s) shall not distort, mutilate or otherwise modify or use the copyrighted work(s) in any way that will prejudice the honour or reputation or in any way violate the moral rights of the creator or author of the work(s).
8. Self-serve microform printers and microform scanners in the AO may be used only to make copies of unrestricted collection material.
9. Users shall not photograph any person, including AO users and staff, at the AO facilities without their express permission. Users shall not photograph Archives of Ontario research and exhibition facilities without express permission from the Archives of Ontario.
10. Reproductions, whether in digital or print format, can only be used for personal or research purposes. Any other use requires users to submit a request to publish, exhibit or broadcast.

The Archives of Ontario reserves the right to update these terms and conditions at any time. Users will be notified of updates on the Archives of Ontario website. Users who do not agree to updated terms and conditions may have their card revoked at the sole discretion of the Archives of Ontario.