Textual Research Room Alters Layout And Copying Arrangement

The Research Support Branch at College Park will soon implement a new layout of the Textual Research Room (Room 2000). The new design will change the arrangement of copiers in the room and is intended to enhance our document preservation and security measures while improving reproduction and other customer services.
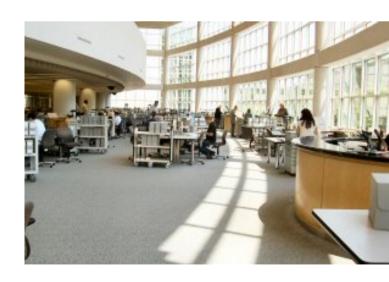
As many of you know, we installed a new copy card system in September 2005. In February 2006, we replaced all of our research room copiers with new machines. The anticipated layout changes in Room 2000 are scheduled to occur in March or early April. The design change occurs as part of a final stage of measures implemented to meet the goals of improving document preservation, security, and service.

We are moving all reservation copiers (both the one-hour and full-day reservation copiers), the book scanner, and Kodak Picture Maker to the north end of Room 2000. Grouped together in front of the staff service desk, this equipment will be enclosed by a clear partition or wall that is approximately waist-high to create a copy center. In doing so, we must shift a few research tables to other parts of the room.

The four "first-come, first-served"—or "5-minute"—copiers will remain in the same place by the service desk at the south corner of the room. As always, researchers with scanning equipment and digital cameras should have their equipment and documents checked at any

of the copy service desks in the room before starting work. All standard research room preservation and declassification procedures will remain the same.

The new copy center will position staff more closely so that we are available to assist with your copying needs. The copy center will enable us to pay better attention to preparing both you and the records for copying.

We urge you to handle the records safely and to support our goal of ensuring that the records can be used by generations to come.

Archives II Changes Research Room Security Procedures

The National Archives at College Park is improving its document security procedures in the research complex.

Protecting our nation's records is our most important mission. It ensures that you as researcher—and the research public generations from now—will have unhindered access to the complete wealth of our nation's documentary heritage.

The changes in procedure will involve some additional requirements. These changes are partially the result of a document security pilot conducted during the summer of 2005 in the Textual Research Room. During the pilot, we paid close attention to researcher needs and comments. We used that experience so that we could plan and implement changes in a way designed to minimize researcher inconvenience as much as possible.

❶ You will notice "STOP" signs posted at the exit of each research room. With these changes, researchers will be required to present for inspection any papers and/or personal equipment in their possession prior to exiting the room. Staff will check only those exiting with papers and equipment in hand. The standard security checks administered by security personnel will also remain in effect for everyone entering and exiting the research complex on the first floor. Please be assured that we will make every effort to check your materials as quickly as possible.

❷ To facilitate the process, researchers planning to leave the research complex immediately after exiting a research room will be given a new option. If you are leaving the research complex, you may ask staff to place any papers and copies that they search into a green NARA currier bag. After the search of your materials is complete, staff will lock them in the bag. You may then take the bag down to the security guard at the complex exit. *(Note: Although certain larger copies may not fit into the bags, this new option will accommodate the vast bulk of standard legal sized copies and other notes typically carried by researchers.)* Because the items have already been examined and cleared, security guards will not be required to re-check the bag's contents. The guard will unlock the bag and give you the items without search. (If the locked bag becomes damaged or any concern arises involving its physical integrity, security will re-examine its entire contents.) Please note that materials not secured in a locked bag—plus equipment like laptops, cameras, and scanners—will be checked as usual by the guards.

❸ To have your materials checked as efficiently as possible, please note the following suggestions:

- **Bring into the research complex** only those items needed for research that day.
- **When making copies**, make sure that the reproductions bear the "Reproduced at the National Archives" imprint and that they are properly marked as declassified.
- **Before leaving**, take a moment to organize your materials, check your desk area, scanners, lap top computer, etc.
- **If leaving the room for a brief period of time**, you may leave your materials at your desk, provided that NARA records are properly returned to their folders and box, etc.

We hope that these changes demonstrate our commitment to protecting the records for you and future generations. We urge your cooperation in following these new procedures. We appreciate the support that so many of you demonstrate by your actions, helpful suggestions, and feedback.

New Reference Service & Research Team Procedures

The Customer Services and Textual Archives Services Divisions will soon institute a number of new research room procedures aimed at improving and simplifying reference services.

The implementation of these new procedures will coincide with other physical changes to the Textual Research Room. They include a revision of research procedures which will standardize service and remove certain restrictions previously imposed on teams.

The new procedures are intended to further our objectives of providing reliable, equitable, and timely reference services for everyone.

These new procedures will go into effect on the day that the physical changes to the Textual Research Room are completed (in late March or early April). **The specific changes involve three areas:**

1 | Each researcher will always request records using his/her personal name. Team designations will no longer be used.

When requesting records in the Textual Research Room, groups of researchers who work together will no longer use team names or complete team sheets listing each member. All requests for records and other transactions will be performed as individuals using first and last name, and researcher ID card number. The elimination of team designations will allow everyone to function on equal terms and will include the following:

■ Those needing to share records may do so, provided that they follow certain guidelines. (See "Guidelines for Sharing Records" below.)

■ The 5-cart limit placed on teams of 3 or more people is lifted. The new standard research room limit is two carts per person with one additional shelf request (of 1 FRC or 3 archival boxes) per person. This limit will apply to all researchers (see section #2 below for details).

■ Researchers will be able to reserve the 1-hour and all-day reservation copiers in the Textual Research Room on equal terms, regardless of whether a person is working alone or sharing records. Since team designations will no longer exist, the limits on copier reservations that pertained only to teams will no longer exist.

■ We will no longer offer the reserved table space that was previously extended to teams comprised of 3 or more members. The vast majority of seating in the Textual Research will be open to everyone on a first-come basis. Those desiring to sit together should find appropriate seating immediately upon arrival.

■ The person who signs out a set of records must be the person who returns them. The researcher who signs the pink copy of the reference service slip is responsible for the proper use of the original records placed in his/her care. Therefore, he or she must be the person who returns and signs for them.

National Archives at College Park

Guidelines for Sharing Records

Lending and borrowing records to/from another researcher:

*Although team names will no longer be used, individual researchers working together on a project will still be able to access records requested in the name of his/her colleague. Each individual who wishes to lend and/or borrow records will be required to create personal lists of the name(s) of partner researchers authorized to use records that are being held in his/her name. These individual authorization lists will expire after 6 months and can be revised at any time upon request. In addition to completing authorization lists including each other's names, **each researcher desiring to share records must:***

- Be under his/her personal cart and/or pull limits. A researcher who has reached the maximum (2 carts, plus 1 shelf request) pull limit will not be able to view records requested by another researcher until he or she has released at least one cart for refile. (See #2 below about limits.)

- Only submit requests for records that they will first use themselves. Before records can be lent to another researcher, the original requestor must use the records at least once. When planning pull requests, be sure to make the request in the name of the person who will use the records first. Records will not be charged out to another researcher if the original requestor has not used them.

2 Clarifying records request (pull) limits

Each researcher may request and place on hold a **maximum of 2 carts of records**, regardless of how many boxes are on those carts. The person may also have one additional shelf request. Researchers holding no carts or only one cart will be limited to no more than 5 shelf pulls at any given time. Shelf pulls consist of 1-3 archival boxes or 1 larger FRC box. *(They are called "shelf pulls," because a large cart is not needed to pull them.)* Records requested from the Nixon Presidential Materials staff, John F Kennedy Assassination Records Collection, and reels of U.S. Navy muster rolls will be included when counting the limits. However, records held for reproductions and certifications will not. These pull limits are consistent with our past procedures when pulling records for individual researchers. However, since team designations will no longer exist, the former limits on teams will no longer apply.

3 There will be a 30-day limit on how long researchers can continuously hold records

In consideration of researchers waiting to use records charged out to another researcher, we are establishing a 30-day limit for how long a researcher can continually hold the same archival records. We will automatically refile records continuously used and held by the same researcher after 30 days. If records are refiled due to the 30-day limit, that researcher will have an opportunity to request those records again after 10 business days have passed. Under this policy, researchers are urged to consider the time required to conduct research and request records in amounts that can be reviewed within 30 days. If the nature of one's work requires slow and thorough research through each box over a period of days, we urge requesting only a few boxes. This will avoid tying up an entire cart of material that nobody may use for a long time. If everyone requests only what is needed for a limited timeframe, then others will have more timely access to the records that they need.

As everyone adjusts to these significant changes in research room procedures, we encourage and welcome feedback. Anyone who has questions or comments in regard to the new procedures may contact Shawn Smith at 301-837-2946, or via e-mail at shawn.smith@nara.gov .