

**Office of NIH History
Archival Collections Policy
July 2008**

The Archival Collection of the Office of NIH History shall collect materials relating to persons, places, or procedures associated with the 27 National Institutes of Health, especially with its intramural programs. The purpose of the Archival Collection is to broaden and deepen NIH's understanding of its history. The types of documentation sought by the office include materials on prominent NIH scientists, records of NIH's intramural programs, and materials documenting NIH's research advances. Collections may consist of correspondence, memoranda, reports, laboratory and research notes, news clippings, books, audio or video tapes, and scientific data. The office also actively seeks historical material dating from the founding of the Hygienic Laboratory, the progenitor of the National Institutes of Health, to the present.

The current collection consists of records acquired from institutes and former NIH scientists and staff. Donations from private individuals or groups are also accepted. Files in the collection are not available for loan but copies of particular documents may be requested. Files are arranged according to the office file plan: Biography files, Institutes Reference files, General NIH History files, Subject files, AIDS files, Building files, Centennial files, Reference Articles files, Books, and Audio Visual materials. New categories are created as needed.

The Office of NIH History collects and maintains information so as to convey the extensive history of each NIH institute. The Office shall not collect materials relating to the Public Health Service, HEW, and HHS unless they are directly related to activities that took place on the NIH campus. When files are donated to the Office, the NIH Historian and archivist reserve the right to review items for their value to the existing collection. Items received which either duplicate existing materials or do not have significant historical value may be returned to the donor at their request, or discarded by the Office.

As with materials donated by institutes, the Office reserves the right to review these items for their suitability for inclusion in the collection and retains the right to dispose of any materials not germane to the collection. The review of donated material will be undertaken by the NIH Historian together with the Archivist.

Records received from institutes are government property and therefore in the public domain. Donations from former NIH scientists and employees are also government property and therefore in the public domain. Donations from private individuals require the completion of a Deed of Gift form transferring rights from the individuals to the Office.

Upon acceptance into the existing archival collection, materials will be handled in either one of two ways: transferred to new file folders, labeled, and inter-filed in the appropriate existing file categories or assigned an accession number and an inventory (finding aid) created.