PURPOSE

This policy outlines how MiCA is operating while considering the COVID-19 pandemic as of August 2020. The coronavirus has greatly impacted the operations of archives across the world and MiCA is no exception. A number of MiCA procedures have been affected by COVID-19 which will be discussed below.

POLICY

When considering how we function as an archives during a serious pandemic in full effect, MiCA operates strictly under the guidelines of both public health, university, and government authorities. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a public health crisis, MiCA’s operations will temporarily adapt to account for the evolving health guidelines of the university, city, province, and federal government in order to keep MiCA staff, community partners, and/or donors safe and comfortable. This policy is ever-changing and will be updated to reflect the evolving situation.

PROCEDURES

PUBLIC CONTACT

1. Due to COVID-19’s severity, MiCA staff will aim to avoid any in-person meetings with potential donors or community partners/members to reduce spread. Conversations, meetings, and discussions should be held virtually.
2. The Impressions description of the donated records must be recorded entirely by the donor/creator. If the donor wishes to do an audio or video recording, to reduce spread and contact with others, MiCA staff cannot lend equipment to record the Impressions description nor can they record the donor/creator either.

ACQUISITIONS

1. Physical, in-person site visits to inspect a donor’s records will be put on hold in favour of multiple virtual meetings with the donor using existing telecommunication technologies in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread for both the donor(s) and MiCA staff.
2. Archival materials for donation will be picked up or shipped to the university. Depending on the level of comfortability on the part of the donor and MiCA staff, pick up of archival materials for donation can occur in multiple ways. The first option is for curbside or porch pick-up of boxes/containers by MiCA staff to reduce contact with the donor and the inside of their home. Another option would be for MiCA to arrange for a third-party courier service to conduct curbside pickup and have the materials shipped to the university where it will eventually be stored at the university. Shipping and receiving of acquisitions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Depending on which stage of the pandemic we are in, the shipping and receiving procedures will change and may or may not consist of one of the above two options.
SEE Policy 99.2 for the most current policy and procedures for shipping, receiving, and storing of archival acquisitions.

3. MiCA can provide storage supplies for the donor to pack donations and will provide training in how to do so effectively.

4. All acquisitions that arrive at the university must be left untouched for at least **72 hours – 5 days** to ensure that the COVID-19 virus does not linger on donated, paper-based documents. If any of the donated materials include plastics (i.e. cassettes, VHS tapes, and so on), those materials must be separated early on when packed by the donor and before arrival into MiCA’s facilities because they must be quarantined for at least **5 days** for the coronavirus to no longer pose a threat to MiCA staff. These recommendations are based on the [OCLC’s REopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums Project (REalm Project)](https://www.oclc.org/realmproject/). The REalm Project conducted tests by placing the COVID-19 virus onto a variety of archival, library, and museum materials and determining how long it took for the virus to no longer be detected, thus, earmarking it as potentially safe to handle.

5. MiCA staff will monitor the results and recommendations of the REalm Project in order to ensure we take correct precautions in light of COVID-19 when handling archival materials. For more detailed guidance, especially a breakdown of how long specific materials should be quarantined, see the [REalm Project](https://www.oclc.org/realmproject/) website.

**PROCESSING**

1. Following the appropriate quarantine of acquired materials, MiCA staff may begin archival processing of physical materials if they are comfortable to do so. When processing, MiCA staff must wear appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) to reflect the type of materials donated and under the guidance of public health and government authorities. The minimum requirement is to wear gloves and a medical mask when handling donated materials.

2. Because archival processing occurs in the IIS office, no other IIS staff shall be in the office while a MiCA staff member processes the acquired materials in order to ensure the safety of all IIS personnel.

3. When processing materials, do not leave the room in which the materials are in until you are finished with the work unless absolutely necessary (i.e. to the washroom, kitchen, etc). This is to reduce cross-contamination into other spaces at the IIS office. Remove gloves when leaving the space, wash and sanitize hands before leaving the office.

4. Wash hands and/or sanitize before entering the archival processing space. New gloves and a new mask should be worn before entering the space.

**ACCESS**

1. Access to any physical materials by the public is prohibited during the pandemic.

2. Only MiCA staff may have access to the archival materials.