



Guidelines for Donating Your Union's Records to the Southern Labor Archives

Southern Labor Archives
Georgia State University Library
100 Decatur Street
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COLLECTION POLICY FOR THE SOUTHERN LABOR ARCHIVES

The Southern Labor Archives collects on a comprehensive level the history of trade unionism in the South from the late 19th century to the present. In a few subject areas, the collecting is national in scope.

Strengths include the areas of clothing; textiles; furniture and wood products; printing; air traffic control; machinery and aerospace; nursing, and AFL-CIO southern regional offices, and state and city labor federations.

As a major research center for the study of labor history, the Archives seeks to continue to collect on a comprehensive level materials that pertain to labor history in the Southern United States, and that of workers and unions with ties to the region, including machinery and aerospace workers throughout the United States and Canada.

The Archives collects from unions, labor organizations, and individuals the following document types: manuscripts, printed materials, audio-visual materials, materials generated by oral history projects, and artifacts.

The Southern Labor Archives is part of Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library.

DONATION INQUIRIES

CONTACTING THE ARCHIVES

If you have historical materials that you would like to donate to the Southern Labor Archives, please contact us at (404) 413-2880 or at archives@gsu.edu.

The archivist for the Southern Labor Archives is available during normal business hours to discuss potential donations and is happy to answer any questions you may have about donation policies and procedures. Contacting the archivist in no way commits you to donating materials to the Southern Labor Archives.

LEGAL MATTERS

With few exceptions, all new donors must sign a deed of gift. The deed of gift transfers all rights the donor may possess to the Southern Labor Archives. The donor and the archivist will negotiate the deed of gift together, discussing restrictions like:

1. Retention of copyright
2. Restricting access to the collections
3. Specifying what to do with unwanted materials

The Southern Labor Archives' obligations and rights:

The Southern Labor Archives will care for and make available all archival collections according to standard professional practices and any restrictions stated in the deed of gift. The Archives reserves the right to reject or dispose of part or all of a donation provided there is no restriction against this on the deed of gift.

Tax deductions:

If you wish to take a tax deduction for the value of the donation and/or for paying for shipping to the library, consult your accountant and/or tax attorney as soon as possible. The Southern Labor Archives may not give advice on these matters and cannot make appraisals for monetary value. If requested, the Southern Labor Archives will send a letter acknowledging receipt of the collection for reporting purposes.

SELECTING MATERIALS FOR DONATION

Once you have spoken with an archivist and signed your deed of gift, you are ready to begin transferring material to the archives.

Guidelines for transferring records to the Southern Labor Archives

The most common question from donors is “What type of records do you want?” The list below divides record types into general WANT and DO NOT WANT categories. These lists are not definitive; they are only meant as broad guidelines. Because records vary so much from one organization to another, the archivist will still want to talk to you to get more details about the records.

The Southern Labor Archives seeks original records. If you have record types not on the list, or believe that your examples of documents on the DO NOT WANT list have value, please feel free to ask about them. We have found that the documents researchers find most useful are documents that describe the day-to-day work of union officers, staff, union members, and committee members.

WANTED:

- Annual budget/audit/union reports
- Membership applications and lists
- Correspondence
 - General/office
 - Officers’
 - Correspondence with union employers
- By-laws/constitutions/charters/ incorporation records
- Conference proceedings/program information
- Meeting minutes and agendas (national/regional/local)
- Contracts/contract negotiations/memoranda of understanding
- Files for committees, councils, regionals, field staff
- Grievances/arbitration/legal files (*with exceptions; see p. 6*)
- Contracts and agreements
- Director’s and officer’s files, also those of staff with policy and project responsibilities
- Events/ program/union activities files
- Elections/legislative information
- Press releases, articles, newsletters related to local union activity
- Strike and organizing materials
- Identified photographs/scrapbooks
- Transcripts, testimonials, speeches, and speech notes
- News clippings/ video and DVD copies of local union activities

DO NOT SEND:

- **Routine financial records, such as:**
 - Bank statements/cancelled checks/duplicate checks
 - Travel vouchers/ expense reports
 - Receipts (purchases, credit card, deposit)/ invoices and supporting documentation
 - Payroll ledgers
 - Purchase orders and bids
 - Accounts receivable ledgers
 - Wage and Income Tax returns
 - Annual W-2, 1099 or individual tax documents *** (do NOT throw out incorporation documents such as verification of tax status)***
 - Budget entries/cash journals/petty cash slips
 - Record of employee deductions/contributions, dues receipts, related info
- **Office management records, such as:**
 - Routine correspondence
 - Calendars/phone messages/unidentified and/or illegible notes
 - Time cards/attendance records
 - Sick time/annual leave requests
 - Conference planning files and registration forms
 - Contracts with vendors
 - Retirement system files
 - Unidentified photographs
 - Inaudible, unidentified, or poor quality audio or videotape recordings
- **Information available elsewhere, such as:**
 - Widely published books or magazines/ articles on topical areas

Additionally:

- The Southern Labor Archives **will not provide active records management**. If your organization has documents that need to be kept in your office for a certain period of time, please consult your organization's *records retention schedule* and hold on to any relevant documents. Do not send them to the Archives.
- Due to the large number of ***grievance and arbitration files*** created in even the smallest office, we now have a strict policy of keeping only a sampling of these documents. Our guideline is 5 linear feet or 5%, whichever is less. This allows us to maintain a record of the types of grievances encountered by your union or office without repetition or redundancy. If you know of any important grievances, or groups of grievances, that should be kept, you should discuss them with the archivist when sending your records.

- Weed out duplicates (*we only keep two of any one thing*), office supply manuals/catalogs, stationery/envelopes, etc.
- Binders: remove all binder contents and place into manila folders – throw out binders, after transferring information from binder onto folder
- Remove manila folders from hanging files; transfer title information to manila folders if necessary
- With the Archives' storage and staffing constraints, it is increasingly difficult for us to accept loose papers or documents that have not been foldered and labeled as they take more time to review and process than labeled items.

PREPARING TO SEND THE DONATION

Once the deed of gift is signed, the initial and subsequent donations can be sent to the Southern Labor Archives. Before packing materials, donors should call the Archives to provide a brief description of the material. The archivist may then give the donor further advice on which files to send.

Before shipping material, please call or e-mail the archives. This will allow us to prepare a space for the material and ensure it is handled appropriately once it arrives.

Packing

We appreciate any assistance a donor can make in packing and preparing records for shipment.

Packing order:

Records should be in manila folders only. Do not pack hanging folders since they will damage the box en route. *Do not pack loose materials.* The material in the boxes should be in sequential order. For example, if you have six file cabinets of materials, Box 1 should contain material from file cabinet 1, drawer 1. Box 2 should contain the remainder of material from drawer 1 and begin drawer 2, and so on. The last drawer of cabinet 6 should be the last box in the numerical sequence.

Inventory:

We would *greatly* appreciate a rudimentary inventory. Without this inventory we (and researchers) will not know how your files were arranged and to what series or file set the materials belong. The inventory can be as simple as this:

- Box 1: Meeting minutes, 1960-1980
- Box 2: Meeting Minutes, 1980-1985
Grant Applications, 1970-1985
- Box 3: Memoranda, 1960-1970

E-mail the inventory to the archivist. Additionally, within each box, place the inventory for that box on top of the files.

Boxing and Labeling:

All materials should be packed securely, but not tightly, in strong packing boxes that are 10x15x12 only. Fill up empty space with crumpled newspaper. Tape the boxes with strong tape. Indicate which box of the total number it is, e.g., Box 1 of 6. The outside label should read:

TO: Southern Labor Archives
Georgia State University Library
100 Decatur St. SE
Atlanta, GA 30303-3202
(Box 1 of _total number of boxes_)

Shipping:

Anything larger than a packet should be sent via ground shipping. Again, please call or e-mail the archives to inform us of what and how much you are sending before you put it in the mail.