

Reading Room Regulations for the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia

To ensure the safety and use of archived material at the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia, the following Reading Room Regulations have been adopted, based on the Statutory Order on the Use and Collection of Fees of the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Verordnung über die Nutzung und die Gebührenerhebung des Landesarchivs Nordrhein-Westfalen*), section 6 (1) in conjunction with section 13, dated 29 May 2015 (official gazette GV.NRW. 2015, no. 35, pp.615ff.)

Section 1: Opening hours:

The opening hours and the times when archived material is retrieved from the storerooms are posted on the internet as well as on the notice board in each department of the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia.

Section 2: Sign-in procedure in the Reading Room:

Anyone using the Reading Room must sign in with a Reading Room Supervisor. By signing the Research Request, you acknowledge that you may be monitored by CCTV in the Reading Room.

Section 3: Conduct in the Reading Room

1. Prior to using the Reading Room, you must place all coats and bags in a locker provided for this purpose. The Archives accepts no liability for clothes or other items stored in lockers.
2. Do not make phone calls on your mobile phone, use a scanner, consume food or drinks, smoke or bring pets onto the premises.

Section 4: Handling of archived material

1. All archived items are valuable cultural assets. Unlike library material, archived items are usually unique and therefore irreplaceable if they are destroyed or lost. Over time, the use of originals leads to damage and deterioration. The following rules must therefore be observed when handling archived material.



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2. Whenever available, copies (digital copies, microfilm, microfiche, etc) will be provided instead of the original items. Where microfiche items are provided, make sure you leave them in their original order. When using technical equipment, you must follow the Reading Room Supervisor's instructions.

3. To prevent deterioration, the use of archived material may be restricted, or it may be banned from being used altogether. The nature and extent of use is decided upon by the relevant head of department, based on specialist criteria.

4. Prior to using archived material, make sure you wash your hands. Do not use hand cream.

5. You must treat all archived material with the greatest care. In particular, make sure you leave the order within an archived item unchanged. Do not remove or without consultation add elements to an item. Do not add notes or markings to archived items or erase, change or remove existing ones. All archived items must be returned in the state in which you received them.

6. Documents, open files and books must not be stacked on top of each other. Do not use archived material as a surface for writing, and do not make tracings of archived items. Do not put any unnecessary mechanical strain on archived material, such as resting your elbow or forearm on an item, and do not trace lines with your fingers. When leafing through archived items, turn the pages gently and without moistening your fingers.

7. Only use a pencil for handwritten notes. These can be borrowed from our Reading Room Supervisors. You are not permitted to use any other writing utensils, such as ballpoint, felt or ink pens.

8. If you wish to make copies of archived material with your own equipment, you first need to contact a Reading Room Supervisor (see also "Terms and Conditions for Taking Photographs at the State Archives of North Rhine-Westphalia Using a Private Camera").

9. When you view archived material, Reading Room Supervisors may make it mandatory for you to use certain aids provided by the Archives, such as bookends or wedge-shaped supports for bound items, lead weight tape or small sandbags to weigh down unfolded parchment documents, cotton gloves, card tables for viewing large-format items or paper strips as bookmarks or insert strips, etc.

10. If you have any problems or difficulties with archived materials – e.g. when opening, shutting, folding or unfolding books or documents – you must contact a Reading Room Supervisor. Should you find any damage on archived material, e.g. long tears, brittle paper, holes,



missing pages or any other defects, make sure you contact a Reading Room Supervisor immediately. 11. To protect archived material from unnecessary exposure to light, you must close them whenever you take a break.

Section 5: Returning archived material and signing out of the Reading Room:

When you have finished your research at the Archives, you must return any archived materials and resources to a Reading Supervisor before you leave. If you intend to continue using certain items, they can be reserved for you for up to two weeks.

Section 6: Archive ban:

Anyone who fails to observe these regulations about our procedures, the use of archived material and care in handling items may be banned from further use and may be required to leave the Reading Room.

Section 7: Entry into force

These Reading Room Regulations have been in force since 1 January 2018.