

**§ 121-4. Powers and duties of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.**

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) To accept gifts, devises, and endowments for purposes which fall within the general legal powers and duties of the Department. Unless otherwise specified by the donor or testator, the Department may either expend both the principal and interest of any gift or devises or may invest such funds in whole or in part, by and with the consent of the State Treasurer. The Department may recognize gifts by naming exhibits, features, or programs administered by the Department.
- (2) To conduct a records management program, including the operation of a records center or centers and a centralized microfilming program, for the benefit of all State agencies, and to give advice and assistance to the public officials and agencies in matters pertaining to the economical and efficient maintenance and preservation of public records.
- (3) To preserve and administer, in the North Carolina State Archives, such public records as may be accepted into its custody, and to collect, preserve, and administer private and unofficial historical records and other documentary materials relating to the history of North Carolina and the territory included therein from the earliest times. The Department shall carefully protect and preserve such materials, file them according to approved archival practices, and permit them, at reasonable times and under the supervision of the Department, to be inspected, examined, or copied: Provided, that any materials placed in the keeping of the Department under special terms or conditions restricting their use shall be made accessible only in accordance with such terms or conditions.
- (4) To have materials on the history of North Carolina properly edited, published as other State printing, and distributed under the direction of the Department. The Department may charge a reasonable price for such publications and devote the revenue arising from such sales to the work of the Department.
- (5) With the cooperation of the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction to develop, conduct, and assist in the coordination of a program for the better and more adequate teaching of State and local history in the public schools and the institutions of the community college system of North Carolina, including, as appropriate, the preparation and publication of suitable histories of all counties and of other appropriate materials, the distribution of such materials to the public schools and community college system for a reasonable charge, and the coordination of this program throughout the State.
- (6) To maintain and administer the North Carolina Museum of History, to collect and preserve therein important historical and cultural materials, and according to approved museum practices to classify, accession, house, and when feasible exhibit such materials and make them available for study.
- (7) To select suitable sites on property owned by the State of North Carolina, or any subdivision of the State, for the erection of historical markers calling attention to nearby historic sites and prepare appropriate inscriptions to be placed on such markers. The Department shall have all markers manufactured, and when completed, each marker shall be delivered to the Department of Transportation for payment and erection under the provisions of G.S. 136-42.2 and 136-42.3. The Secretary is authorized to appoint a highway

- historical marker advisory committee to approve all proposed highway historical markers and to establish criteria for carrying out this responsibility.
- (8) In accordance with G.S. 121-9 of this Chapter, to acquire real and personal properties that have statewide historical, architectural, archaeological, or other cultural significance, by gift, purchase, or devise; to preserve and administer such properties; and, when necessary, to charge reasonable admission fees to such properties. In the acquisition of such property, the Department shall also have the authority to acquire nearby or adjacent property adjacent to properties having statewide significance deemed necessary for the proper use, administration, and protection of historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural properties, or for the protection of the environment thereof.
  - (9) To administer and enforce reasonable rules adopted and promulgated by the Historical Commission for the regulation of the use by the public of such historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural properties under its charge, which regulations, after having been posted in conspicuous places on and adjacent to such State properties and having been filed according to law, shall have the force and effect of law and any violation of such regulations shall constitute a Class 3 misdemeanor.
  - (10) To coordinate the objectives of the state-created historical and commemorative commissions with the other policies, objectives, and programs of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.
  - (11) To organize and administer a junior historian program, in cooperation with the Department of Public Education, the public schools, and other agencies or organizations that may be concerned therein.
  - (12) With the approval of the Historical Commission, and notwithstanding Article 3A of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, G.S. 143-49(4), or any other law pertaining to surplus State property, to dispose of any accessioned records, artifacts, furnishings, and agricultural products in the custody of the Department that are determined to have no further use or value for official or administrative purposes or for research and reference purposes.
  - (13) To promote and encourage throughout the State knowledge and appreciation of North Carolina history and heritage by encouraging the people of the State to engage in the preservation and care of archives, historical manuscripts, museum items, and other historical materials; the writing and publication of State and local histories of high standard; the display and interpretation of historical materials; the marking and preservation of historic, architectural, or archaeological structures and sites of great importance; the teaching of North Carolina and local history in the schools and colleges; the appropriate observance of events of importance to the State's history; the publicizing of the State's history through media of public information; and other activities in historical and allied fields.
  - (14) With the approval of the Historical Commission, to charge and collect fees not to exceed cost for photographs, photocopies of documents, microfilm and other microforms and other audio or visual reproductions of public records or other documentary materials, objects, artifacts, and research materials; and for the restoration and preservation of documents and other materials important for archival or historical purposes.
  - (15) To encourage and develop, in cooperation with the Department of Administration and in consultation with the Department of Transportation, the

Department of Commerce, the Department of Environmental Quality, the North Carolina League of Municipalities, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, and the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., a central clearinghouse for information on historic preservation for the benefit and use of public and private agencies and persons in North Carolina.

- (16) Repealed by Session Laws 2004-203, s. 51, effective August 17, 2004.
- (17) To enter into an agreement with a private nonprofit corporation for the management of facilities to provide food and beverages at the North Carolina Museum of History. Any net proceeds received by the private nonprofit corporation shall be devoted to the work of the Department. Any private nonprofit corporation entering into an agreement with the Department with regard to the management of the facilities may enter into further agreements with private persons or corporations concerning the operation of the facilities. The Department may enter into an agreement in regard to obtaining or installing equipment, furniture, and furnishings for such facilities. (Rev., ss. 4540, 4541; 1907, c. 714, s. 2; 1911, c. 211, s. 6; C.S., s. 6142; 1925, c. 275, s. 11; 1943, c. 237; 1945, c. 55; 1955, c. 543, s. 1; 1957, c. 330, s. 1; 1959, c. 68, s. 1; 1971, c. 345, s. 3; 1973, c. 476, s. 48; 1977, c. 464, s. 38; 1981, c. 721; 1989, c. 379; c. 727, s. 218(83); c. 751, s. 11; 1991, c. 757, s. 5; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 959, s. 30; 1993, c. 522, s. 8; c. 539, s. 915; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2004-203, s. 51; 2011-284, s. 86; 2015-241, s. 14.30(s), (u); 2021-158, s. 12.5; 2023-70, s. 2(a).)