



# Sharing Your Family Collections With Densho

## What kind of historical materials is Densho looking for?

Densho is seeking photographs, documents, letters, diaries, scrapbooks, albums, artwork, full copies of community publications/newspapers, home movies, and audio recordings.



While much of our work relates to the World War II incarceration, we do not limit collecting to that time period or to the West Coast. We collect materials that provide a more complete understanding of the Japanese American experience, ranging from immigration in the 1800s and 1900s to present day activities around remembrance and reflection, all across the Americas.

If you would like to see examples of other families who have shared their collections in the Densho Digital Repository, here are a few you can view online:

- A. Shibayama Collection ([ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-91](http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-91))
- Helen Amerman Manning Collection ([ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-171](http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-171))
- Gerald Kajitani Collection ([ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-294](http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-294))



## What happens when I share my collection?

At Densho we handle each collection on a case-by-case basis so that we can meet the unique needs of every family. However, the basic procedures are as follows:



- Materials come to our office in Seattle, either through a Densho-funded FedEx shipment or scheduled drop off.
- Densho archivists scan the materials using a flatbed scanner, book scanner, or copy stand to digitize the materials.
- We return the materials to the family or help get them to a collecting organization like a museum or archive.
- The digital files are processed and cataloged by Archives Staff.
- We send the family a CD of the digital files for their own use.
- The family signs our Densho Photo and Document Release Form, allowing us to share the materials publicly in the Densho Digital Repository.

## How long does this process take?

It depends. We try our best to meet each family’s unique needs while treating everyone fairly.

We aim to get everything completed as quickly as possible, but the larger a collection the longer the process can take. We also do collections in smaller batches called “accessions” over many years. Sometimes this happens because the family discovers more materials years later, or because there were so many items to sort through they decided to send them in smaller groups.

Stage	Length of Time
Nomination	1 week +
Delivery	1 week +
Scanning queue	3-6 months
Scanning	2.5 minutes per file
Returning materials	2 days +
Processing queue	9 months - 1 year
Processing	7 minutes per file
Publication	2 weeks +



## How is this work funded?

Densho is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our work is funded by individual donors and through grants. Our digitization work with families is always free of charge to them.

Some of our collections work is funded through grants from 4Culture, the federal government, and family foundations. Collections loaned to us often help us fulfill our grants or inspire new grant applications.



If you’d like to support Densho Collections work, you can make a donation at [densho.org/give](https://densho.org/give) or join our History Keepers Society, a monthly membership. Some benefits include: A History Keepers Hour and Priority Registration for Densho Events. Learn more at [densho.org/historykeepers/](https://densho.org/historykeepers/).



## How do I ship materials to Densho?

We cover the cost of shipping to Seattle and back to a location of the family's choice after scanning is complete.

Please email [micah.merryman@densho.org](mailto:micah.merryman@densho.org) for shipping information.



When shipping to Densho please require a direct signature upon delivery. Email [micah.merryman@densho.org](mailto:micah.merryman@densho.org) with the FedEx tracking number and a picture of your receipt so that we can follow the shipment's progress. Please contact Micah Merryman if you have any questions about packing.

### Packing guidelines:

- Make sure the packing envelope or box is the right size. The contents should fit snugly and can be padded with bubble wrap, tissue, or other packing paper. A good rule-of-thumb: if you shake a box you should not be able to hear materials shifting around.
- When using envelopes, it is best to protect the materials and reinforce the envelope with stiff cardboard.
- Try to ship photographs and documents in such a way that they lay flat in folders or envelopes.
- Wrap books, journals, albums, and other bound items in tissue or packing material. When wrapping items in bubble wrap, the bubbles should be on the outside.
- Avoid:
  - Boxes that are hollow or have a lot of empty space as they can be punctured if mishandled by the shipping company.
  - Packing peanuts or newspapers.

## Collections Nomination Form

If you have materials you would like to share with Densho, please fill out the Densho Collections Nomination Form. Someone on the Archives team will be in touch within a week of receiving your entry. Scan the QR code to access the Densho Collections Nomination Form or go to:

<http://bit.ly/DenshoCollectionsNomination>

## Contact Us

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