

State of Maine | Executive Branch

PRESS RELEASE

Department of Administrative and Financial Services

For Immediate Release: Friday, July 10, 2020

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Maine State Archives, State Library, and State Museum Closed to the Public to Receive Critical Mechanical Systems Upgrades



AUGUSTA, Maine – The Cultural Building, which was built in 1967-69 and has since housed the Maine State Archives (MSA), Maine State Library (MSL), and Maine State Museum (MSM), is closed to the public for the foreseeable future to allow significant upgrades to the facility’s mechanical systems. The duration of the closure has yet to be determined, but the scope of the work to be completed is substantial. It is likely that the building will be closed for several months for the initial stages of the work, then closed in whole or in part for months thereafter. The full extent and patterns of the closure will not be known until the plans for the full project have been completed.

“We’re pleased to be taking on this much-needed renovation project,” said Kyle Hadyniak, director of communications for the Department of Administrative and Financial Services (DAFS) which is managing the renovation. “The facility has asbestos in many areas housing electrical and mechanical components. The repairs and improvements to the Cultural Building are long overdue.”

The Bureau of General Services, a part of DAFS, has hired a Portland architectural and engineering firm, Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions, to design new mechanical systems, as well as oversee asbestos abatement.

The Governor proposed and the Legislature approved \$15 million in funding through the Maine Governmental Facilities Authority program, which will bring entirely new heating, cooling, and electrical systems to the facility – this in addition to entire abatement of existing asbestos. While the process of improvement will be time-consuming and require patience and flexibility, the

outcome will be a huge advance for these cultural agencies' ability to care for and share the state's precious legacy of history and knowledge.

In a joint statement, Deputy Secretary of State for Archives Kate McBrien; State Librarian James Ritter; and Museum Director Bernard Fishman said, "while we are sad at the prospect of a long full or partial public closure of the facility, we collectively agree that bringing such systems up to modern specifications will be much better for our visitors, the valuable collections and our staff. The planning for this project has been taking place for some time, and we agree that the existing heating and cooling systems must be replaced sooner rather than later."

Each agency is developing plans to continue core staff operations, and potentially offer some level of public services – even if scaled down – from an alternative location(s).

"We are committed to making sure that each agency's staff members are relocated with a minimal amount of disruption, and we will support each agency's ability to find ways to continue serving the public," said Hadyniak. "These agencies' service to Maine citizens is invaluable, and we're going to find creative ways to make sure we can help each agency sustain its important work."

For more information about each of the three agencies, please contact:

Maine State Archives: <http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc> or call the archives at 207-287-5790

Maine State Library: <http://www.maine.gov/msl> or call the library at 207-287-5600.

Maine State Museum: <http://www.mainestatemuseum.org> or call the museum at 207-287-

2301.

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