

Best Practices for Navigating Visitor Feedback and Concerns
Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens
Visitor Services Volunteer (VSV) Training

March 2024

How visitors can share feedback

Hillwood values visitor feedback and offers a variety of options for guests to share their insights, questions, and suggestions with the staff:

- **In-person** | For on-site visits, direct those visitors to the visitor services staff members at the front desk of the visitor center. Staff will document their feedback and ensure it reaches the relevant department.
- **Email** | Visitors are welcome to email their feedback or questions they may have to info@hillwoodmuseum.org.
- **Post-Visit Survey** | Visitors who provided an email address when checking in for their visit will receive a ten-question post-visit survey via email within two weeks of their visit. Survey answers are anonymous, so we encourage guests looking for a response to email Hillwood instead.

How volunteers can navigate visitor concerns

Every now and again, we'll catch wind of an individual's negative opinion of something about Hillwood, for instance regarding our Russian collection. Most times the comments are conversational, and standard interpretive messages and graciousness will see you through:

Interpretive messages for the Russian collection:

- Marjorie Post was in the Soviet Union at a time when the government sold imperial-era objects to finance industrialization. There, she purchased through government-sponsored commission shops.
- She continued to collect for the rest of her life through well-established dealers and auction houses.

Graciousness:

- I appreciate your concern and encourage you to submit your comment to visitor services staff at the visitor center. The museum's administration will respond to you.

On rare occasions, a person might elect a more confrontational way of sharing their view. In this case, if reinforcing interpretive messages does not bring the visitor's behavior back in line, the protocol is:

- Excuse yourself from the visitor(s) and contact nearby staff (i.e.: visitor services or Security).
- From this point, staff will navigate the situation.
 - *What's the staff protocol?* In most circumstances, Security/visitor services staff will first remind the visitor of expected museum behavior. If the person feels they can comply and continue their visit without further disruption, they will be permitted to do so. If not, they will be asked to leave and escorted from the estate.
- You should gather yourself and, if possible, return to your volunteer duties.
- Should you find it necessary to seek further assistance or support, please notify the volunteer management staff promptly.