Dept. of Social Welfare Records

Finding aid created by California State Archives staff using RecordEXPRESS
California State Archives
1020 "O" Street
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 653-2246
ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov
http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/
2016
Descriptive Summary
Title: Dept. of Social Welfare Records
Dates: 1906-1980
Collection Number: R251, R350, F3621
Creator/Collector: Board of Charities and CorrectionsDepartment of Social WelfareDepartment of Social Services
Extent: Collection contains 242 cubic feet of textual records, one 16 mm film, one slide, two photograph negatives, three negative slides, and a number of photographs.
Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California 95814
Abstract: The records of the State Department of Social Welfare contain about 242 cubic feet of textual records one 16 mm film, one slide, two photograph negatives, three negative slides, and a number of photographs. The records cover the period from 1906 to 1980.
Language of Material: English
Access
While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions. Records that are over 75 years old are open without restrictions, per Government Code Section 12237.
Publication Rights
For permission to reproduce or publish, please consult California State Archives staff. Permission for reproduction or publication is given on behalf of the California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, as the owner of the physical items. The researcher assumes all responsibility for possible infringement that may arise from reproduction or publication of materials from the California State Archives' collections.
Preferred Citation
Dept. of Social Welfare Records. California State Archives
Acquisition Information
The California State Archives acquired the Dept. of Social Services Records in a series of agency transfers according to state law.
Biography/Administrative History
The creation of a State Department of Social Welfare, in 1927, was a manifestation of earlier attempts, beginning in 1903, to place supervision of charitable activities in the hands of the state. The State Board of Charities and Corrections, created in that year, was charged with evaluating and reporting on 12 charitable and correctional institutions, 60 county hospitals and charity houses, 57 county jails, and 300 city and town jails and lock-ups. (Statutes of 1903, Chapter 363) In 1911, the Board was empowered by the Legislature to supervise the licensing and placement of dependent children in homes. In 1925, the Board was reorganized into the Department of Public Welfare. (Statutes of 1925, Chapter 18) Meanwhile, the State regulated most children’s activities under the State Board of Control – Children’s Department, formed in 1913. (Statutes of 1913, Chapter 323) This was superseded by the Bureau of Children’s Aid of the Department of Finance in 1921. (Statutes of 1921, Chapter 603) The State Department of Social Welfare was created in 1927 by the merger of the State Department of Public Welfare and the Bureau of Children’s Aid. (Statutes of 1927, Chapter 49) Creation of this department united the supervision of state aid for children, traditionally the responsibility of state fiscal authorities, with the investigation and licensing work of the previous Board of Charities and Corrections. Along with the State Department of Social Welfare was a seven-member State Social Welfare Board, which was appointed by the Governor whose members served at his pleasure. Originally, the Board was responsible for the administration of the Department and selection of the Director of the Department. In 1945, actual administration of the Department was moved to the Director, who in turn was selected by the Governor (Statutes of 1945, Chapter 1395). The Board’s chief responsibilities at that time were to study the causes and effects of poverty in California and recommend legislative and procedural remedies to the Governor and the Legislature. The onset of the Great Depression and World War II witnessed a proliferation of welfare programs in California. Public assistance to accommodate the needs of the blind and the aged were added in 1929. The federal Social Security Act of 1935 introduced a program of social insurance for the aged and a federal-state system of unemployment compensation; a program of categorical public assistance supported by federal grants – in – and for the aged, blind, and dependent children; and a program of health and welfare services providing for maternal and child health service to crippled children and child welfare services. Aid to needy disabled was added in 1957. One of the more significant programs also added in 1957 was the Public Assistance Medical Care Program, forerunner to Medi-Cal as it was implemented in 1966. Medical aid to the aged (under the federal Kerr-Mills Act) began in 1961. In 1963, children’s aid was expanded to include the needy
children of unemployed parents. By 1970, the Department of Social Welfare was responsible (1) for supervising the county administration of all state-county programs for the care of the needy aged, blind, disabled, and children; (2) for advising other state agencies extending services to welfare recipients; (3) to the federal government for the administration of federal funds in California; and (4) for investigating and licensing boarding homes, institutions for the care of the aged and children, child-placing and adoption agencies In 1963, the state Department of Social Welfare was among the departments included as part of the Health and Welfare Agency under section 12803 of the Government Code. In 1974, the Department of Social Welfare combined with the Employment Development Department-Division of Accounts and Collections, and the Audit Section of the Department of Health to create the Department of Benefit Payments. AB425 and AB1950 of the 1973-1974 legislative sessions effectively dissolved/dismantled the Department of Social Welfare. At that time, the Old Age and Disabled programs in the federal Social Security Program were taken over by the Agriculture and Services Agency. Meanwhile, the Department of Benefit Payments handled the audit and disbarment functions for Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Aid to Needy Children, and the Employment Development Department handled other aid disbursement. The Department of Social Services under the Health and Welfare Agency was formed in 1978 and over took many of the responsibilities of the former Department of Social Welfare. Additional agency history information, due to the complexity of the many categorical aid and other programs, is also provided throughout the Inventory at the Branch, Division, Bureau, Unit, or Program level.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

The records of the State Department of Social Welfare contain about 242 cubic feet of textual records one 16 mm film, one slide, two photograph negatives, three negative slides, and a number of photographs. The records cover the period from 1906 to 1980. The records document the plans, goals, studies, and day to day operations of the department from its inception until it was disbanded. The records are organized into three record groups: the State Board of Charities and Corrections, State Social Welfare Board, and the Department of Social Welfare. Within the Department of Social Welfare record group, the records are further broken into various subgroups, sub-subgroups, and sub-sub-subgroups. The Department of Social Welfare files are divided into 192 record series. The State Board of Charities and Corrections files are organized into 5 record series. The 16 mm film, one slide, two photograph negatives, and the three negative slides are separated from the collection and stored separately in cold storage for preservation purposes. However, the multiple photographs throughout the collection have been sleeved and remain with their original records. Researchers should note that while the dates of record keeping for this agency span the years from 1927-1974, the approximate dates of creation of some of the records are from 1906-1980. Further scope and content of the records is described at the sub, sub-sub, sub-sub-sub records group level and series level.

[Dept. of Social Welfare Records]