
Inventory of the Department of Employment, Social Workers Placement Service, 1941-1953

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Inventory: F3806

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Descriptive Summary

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Agency History

Beginning in 1940, a group of social work executives began meeting informally and discussed among themselves the need for an employment service which would bring unemployed social workers and available jobs together. Further exploration of the topic disclosed that many agencies and workers would welcome such an employment service. An informal committee to explore setting up such a service, and establish standards began in late 1940. Educational training and job experience were seen as essential requirements for social workers. An official Advisory Committee to the Social Workers Placement Service was appointed on January 28, 1941, by the Director of California Department of Employment, R. G. Wagenet. Original Advisory Committee members were Aleta Brounlee, chairman, Dr. H. M. Cassidy, Lexie Cotton, Eva Hance, Alma Holzschuh, Esther Hutson, Elizabeth B. Mac Latchie, Louis Miniplier, and Emily Minton. The Advisory Committee's duties were to advise the Department of Employment on matters of policy interviewing applicants, promoting public relations and conducting studies. The Advisory Committee set up subcommittees which prepared a questionnaire and explored the job classification system in social work.

The Social Workers Placement Service Office opened March 18, 1941, with one staff person. Mrs. Nello Shelton, the Secretary of the Advisory Committee, became the first Supervisor of the Social Workers Placement Service Office and occupied this position until the service ended in 1953.

Personnel in the office increased in 1944, but five employees were typically employed. The SWPS office functioned as a clearinghouse interviewing and registering qualified social worker applicants; published the *Guide to Employment for Social Workers* and the *Guide to Personnel for Employers* for employers and employees, and maintained records on service users.

Throughout the 1940's the service operated in placing social workers in positions in the eleven western states and the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii, and accepted employee listings from throughout the United States. Beginning in 1949, the WSPS limited its service to applicants seeking work in California alone, due to severe budget cuts. Since services could no longer be provided on a regional basis a proposal was made that a national social worker employment agency be established. A grant from the Columbia Foundation financed a demonstration of the *Guides* which continued to be published until 1953.

In 1951, the staff was reduced from five to four in the SWPS office. In 1952, the State Recreation Commission requested that the SWPS act as an agency for recreation workers. This was agreed to, and a fifth person joined the staff.

The SWPS name changed on February 28, 1953, to Employment Service for Welfare and Recreation and expanded service began. Further staff cutbacks continued during 1953, and to save funds the office closed down between September 10 and October 10, 1953.

James G. Bryant, Director of the Department of Employment announced on October 15, 1953, the Department of Employment's reorganization and that the Employment Service for Recreation and Welfare was abolished as of that date. Gertrude Wilson, chairman, California Committee on Employment Service for Recreation and Welfare, and other social work agencies protested the closure asking that the departmental decision be reviewed. However, the Employment Service for Recreation and Welfare had ceased to exist by late October, 1953.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS. 1940-1953. (F3806:1-3)

Physical Description: 3ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Letters received, copies of letters sent; memoranda, announcements, notes, membership lists, a narrative history of the SWPS.

Details the beginnings of the Social Workers Placement Service, appointments to the Advisory Committee, comments as to the need for such a service; the addition of an employment service for recreation and which community groups aided the SWPS, and the abolishment of SWPS.

2. RECORDS OF MEETINGS. 1941-1953. (F3806:4-10)

Physical Description: 7ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Memoranda, agendas, minutes, copies of letters sent, letters received, literature.

Topics discussed in the minutes include defining terms and qualifications for social workers, establishing a format for assessing applicants, publicizing the SWPS and enlisting the support of potential employers and other employment agencies, the publication of the *Guides*, budget and staff cutbacks, the service to recreation employment and the abolition of the SWPS in 1953.

3. BYLAWS. 1942-1951. (F3806:11)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Contains bylaws, 1941. Report of the Subcommittee on bylaws, 1942, revision of bylaws, 1944, amended bylaws, July 16, 1947.

4. REPORTS. 1941-1947. (F3806:12-15)

Physical Description: 4ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Included are the report of the Advisory Committee, January 1942, the First Annual Report; A Description of the Social Workers Placement Service, Aug. 1943; A Report of the Social Workers Placement Service, Dec. 10, 1946.

5. COOPERATING COMMITTEES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES, LOS ANGELES. 1942-1944. (F3806:16)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Memoranda, letters received and sent, lists of names. Documents discuss the establishment of a Los Angeles branch. Other cooperating committees were set up in Portland, Seattle, Salt Lake City, and Denver.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE'S REPORTS. 1945-1953. (F3806:17-20)

Physical Description: 4ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arranged alphabetically by name of subcommittee and chronologically thereunder.

Memoranda, letters received, copies of letters sent, notes, minutes, lists of names, articles, blank forms.

Subcommittee reports include Subcommittee on Employment Service for Recreation, 1953, dealing with the addition of recreation personnel to the SWPS; Subcommittee on National Relationships, 1946, which include a draft by Gudrun Schaefer, Towards a Wide Open Labor Market for the Field of Social Welfare; Subcommittee on Professional Relationship, 1945, which contains a report with related correspondence; Subcommittee on Referral Procedures which contains the preliminary and final reports, 1945, and follow-ups, 1945-1950.

7. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS. 1948-1950. (F3806:21-23)

Physical Description: 3ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by special committee names and chronologically thereunder.

Memoranda, letters received, copies of letters sent, notes, outlines, programs.

Special committees of the SWPS Advisory Committee include Special Committee on Budget, 1948; Special Committee on Definition Reactivated for Recreation, 1950, which worked on defining descriptive terms for adequately describing recreation workers and the Special Committee on Employer Relations, 1950.

8. SUBJECT FILES. 1941-1953. (F3806:24-33)

Physical Description: 10ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by file heading and chronologically thereunder.

Memoranda, letters received and copies of letters sent, blank forms, notes, programs, minutes, articles.

Topics covered include the classification of applicants and jobs with blank forms included, questionnaire on social workers programs in western graduate schools, the Columbia Foundation grant for preparing the *Guides*, questionnaire to the national agencies, articles published in professional journals including those describing the California SWPS which appeared in *Social Service Review*, 1941, *Survey*, 1942, the *Compass*, 1945, and *Social Work Journal*, 1950. The expansion of the SWPS to include recreation was covered by questionnaires and articles which developed the criteria used to define the qualification for recreation workers.

9. CORRESPONDENCE WITH PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. 1941-1953. (F3806:34-41)

Physical Description: 8ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by name of organization and chronologically thereunder.

Memoranda, letters received, copies of letters sent, notes, pamphlets, telegrams, telephone notes.

Included in this grouping are the correspondence and articles received from various organizations connected with social welfare. The groups represented include the American Association of Social Workers, American Association of Schools of Social Work, California Association for Social Welfare, California Recreation Society, Inc., the New York State Employment Service, the New York Vocational Bureau and the University of Southern California School of Social Work. Matters discussed in these files include conferences, the organizing of the SWPS, the questionnaire worked on jointly by the American Association of Social Work and the SWPS, the article, *Toward a Progressive Vocational Service for Social Work*, employment standards for social workers, services which can be and should be provided by employment agencies, and how these aims can be fulfilled.

10. CORRESPONDENCE WITH LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS. 1941-1953. (F3806:42)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Memoranda, notes, drafts, letters received, copies of letters sent.

Materials document the interaction between the Advisory Committee on SWPS and various federal agencies which contributed ideas to the program's origins and operations, personnel problems, and range of interests which should be supported.

11. CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS. 1943-1953. (F3806:43-45)

Physical Description: 3ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by title and chronologically thereunder.

Letters received and sent, plans, notes, telephone notes.

Included are the materials on the Cleveland, Ohio, conference, May 30-June 5, 1953; San Francisco conference, April 1947, and general notes on other meetings, 1943-1952. At these conferences Nello Shelton (who headed the SWPS) spoke to other Social Welfare workers on the feasibility of setting up a National Social Workers Placement Service and setting up a pilot program which titleasised uniformity in standards, registration and communications.

12. Unpublished Article. 1951-1952. (F3806:46)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Copy of article, notes, related correspondence, telegram. This article, sponsored by the SWPS Advisory Committee was to appear in *Employment Security Review*. The article was never published since this would have indicated acceptance of a nationwide one-profession employment agency and this proposal met with disapproval on the local, state and federal levels.

13. HISTORY. 1942-1950. (F3806:47)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Memoranda, bulletins, notes on meetings, letters received, copies of letters sent, official statements.

The documents detail the scope of the Social Workers Placement Service, limiting job registration to openings in California as of October, 1948, and establishing the contents of the manual.

14. CO-ORDINATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS PLACEMENT SERVICE WITH LOS ANGELES AND OTHER LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OFFICES. 1941-1953. (F3806:48)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, reviews, notes, notes on telephone conversations, job listings.

The documents in this file cover the extension of the SWPS, the listing of social work jobs in the state, and especially the Los Angeles area. Much of the correspondence is from Margaret Murray, the Personnel Representative for the Girl Scouts who assisted in co-ordinating the efforts of the Social Workers Placement Service with local public employment office and to arrange for national group work agencies to draw upon the SWPS when social workers were needed.

15. DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SWPS. 1941-1953. (F3806:49)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, circular letters, memoranda, outlines, statements, notes, comments, printed materials by the SWPS.

This file contains a sampling of documents which tell what the Social Workers Placement Service did, the kinds of services provided, statistics on who used the service and the premise it was based on.

16. EVALUATIONS. 1941-1953. (F3806:50)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically, chronologically thereunder.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, questionnaires (sampled), lists of names.

Included in this file are samples of the praise and condemnation received from users of the *Guides* and the SWPS, both applicants and employers. These are arranged in order of commendation, complaints, *Evaluation of Employment Service by the Guides* and *Evaluation of the Guide to Personnel*. Comments include remarks as to efficient service, jobs received, candidates who applied, how the *Guide* could be more useful, and how the candidate had been helped.

17. GUIDE TO EMPLOYMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS. 1943, 1947-53. (F3806:51-69)

Physical Description: 19ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

In 1943, the Social Workers Placement Service initiated a *Bulletin* which listed job opportunities in social work. From 1944-1947, applicants were notified by letter of jobs available. Beginning in 1947, the *Guide to Employment for Applicants* or the *Guide to Employment in California for Social Workers* began being printed monthly and sent to all new or reactivated applicants. The Guides listed specifications on jobs available which had been verified by the employer. A continuous run of the *Guides to Employment in California for Social Workers* is included in this file. Missing are December, 1947, January, 1948, November, 1948, August, 1948, and February, 1949.

18. GUIDE TO PERSONNEL FOR EMPLOYERS. 1945, 1949-1953. (F3806:70-88)

Physical Description: 19ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

In 1945, the *Bulletin* was printed as a sample guide. Beginning in 1949, these *Guides* were published monthly listing SWPS members who were available for hiring. The guides described the educational background, job experience, preferences in location, age, competency in foreign languages, and other information. These guides were circulated among potential employers who were recruited by the SWPS.

19. RECORDS OF THE APPLICATION UNIT. 1941-1953. (F3806:89-93)

Physical Description: 5ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by file title and chronologically thereunder.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, blank forms, lists, questionnaires, statistics, definitions. These files contain information regarding the workings of the Application Unit which defined who could apply, maintained records of active and inactive files, recruited through schools, employment agencies, and other offices. Recruitment was done by letter and advertising. A file of blank forms used in signing up applicants during the duration of the SWPS is included. A monthly report chronicled the number of applicants who were eligible and ineligible, the numbers who were placed that month, and whether they are male or female.

20. RECORDS OF THE EMPLOYER RELATIONS UNIT. 1943-1953. (F3806:94-95)

Physical Description: 2ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Memoranda, letters received, copies of letters sent, policy papers, outlines, definitions, statistics, questionnaires.

This unit recruited potential employers of applicants to use the service by describing the quality of applicants in mailings, pamphlets, lists of active candidates, and where candidates had been placed.

21. MONTHLY REPORTS AND STUDIES OF SOCIAL WORKERS PLACEMENT SERVICE. 1941-1953. (F3806:96-101)

Physical Description: 6ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Reports, statistics, letters received, copies of letters sent.

Beginning in 1941, the SWPS was required by the Department of Employment to make a monthly report of local office activities and a monthly report of placements. The registers of applications were used in compiling the monthly statistical tables which are arranged in these files. SWPS was classified as a *local* employment office for administrative purposes but operated independently. No monthly reports were filed in 1944, 1945, or 1946. In 1945, a Study of Job Openings was made and a statistical study reported. A list of applicants active at the close of business in November 1945, April 1949 through December 1952, is contained in one file.

22. PERSONNEL OF SOCIAL WORKERS PLACEMENT SERVICE, 1941-1953. (F3806:102-103)

Physical Description: 2ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, memoranda, cards, charts.

One file contains organizational charts of the Social Welfare Placement Service office which provide information on the number of employees and the various duties each section carried out. These also show the struggle to maintain adequate staffing. The correspondence file contains a record of personnel difficulties, postal cards used for recruiting, and follows a candidate through all the steps from being notified to being hired.

23. ABOLITION OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICE FOR WELFARE AND RECREATION. 1953.
(F3806:104)

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Letters received, copies of letters sent, departmental notices, memoranda.

The Social Workers Placement Service was renamed The Employment Service for Welfare and Recreation on February 28, 1953. When Governor Earl Warren was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, [UNK] Governor Goodwin J. Knight became Governor. Knight appointed William [UNK]. Burkett to succeed James G. Bryant as Director of the Department of Employment. On October 15, 1953, the ESWR was abolished and the next week the Department of Employment was reorganized. This file contains reactions received from other social agencies and former Service users regarding this abolishment.