Finding Aid to the San Francisco Office of the Controller Unemployment Relief Program Minutes and Reports 1932-1938

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2012
**Title:** San Francisco Office of the Controller Unemployment Relief Program Minutes and Reports

**Date (inclusive):** 1932-1938

**Collection Identifier:** SFH 67

**Creator:** San Francisco (Calif.) . Office of the Controller.

**Physical Description:** 2.0 boxes(1.0 cubic feet)

**Contributing Institution:** San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

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**Abstract:** City documents received and/or issued by the San Francisco Office of the Controller as fiscal accountant for unemployment relief services during the Great Depression. The collection consists of a report by the Director of Relief for fiscal year 1932-1933; minutes of the Citizens’ Emergency Relief Committee (originally named Citizens’ Advisory Relief Committee) for Sept. 3, 1932 - May 1937; Unemployment Relief Program Reports of the San Francisco Office of the Controller for fiscal years July 1, 1934 - June 30, 1937 (there is also a cover sheet for the report for July 1, 1932 - June 30, 1934, which is missing from the collection); and a report called “Suggested Relief Program 1933-1934,” also issued by the Office of the Controller.

**Physical Location:** The collection is stored onsite.

**Language of Materials:** Collection materials are in English.

**Access**
The collection is available for use during San Francisco History Center hours, with photographs available during Photo Desk hours. Collections that are stored offsite should be requested 48 hours in advance.

**Publication Rights**
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the City Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the San Francisco Public Library as the owner of the physical items.

**Preferred Citation**
[Identification of item], San Francisco Office of the Controller Unemployment Relief Minutes and Reports (SFH 67), San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

**Custodial History note**
Received in the City Archives from the San Francisco Public Library Documents Dept. at an unknown date. Items are stamped with SFPL Documents Dept. property stamp dated Dec. 27, 1976. The collection appears to have been previously held by the San Francisco Office of the Controller. Citizens’ Emergency Relief Committee Minutes are stamped “received” by the San Francisco Office of the Controller, Relief Division.

**Related Archival Collections**
Related collections at the San Francisco History Center include: Family Service Agency of San Francisco Records (SFH 50), Travelers Aid Society of San Francisco Records (SFH 18); and Widow’s Pension Records in the San Francisco Ephemera Collection.

**Biographical/Historical note**
The San Francisco Office of the Controller is responsible for managing the accounting, auditing, and other financial functions of the City. In its capacity as fiscal accountant for unemployment relief services during the Great Depression, the Office of the Controller received documents and reports from the newly-established Director of Relief and the Citizens’ Advisory Relief Committee (which later became the Citizens’ Emergency Relief Committee), as well as issuing its own reports and recommendations.

Until the Depression, local private charities administered the bulk of food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and cash assistance to San Franciscans who were unemployed. In 1931, existing charitable relief organizations were taken over by a public Director of Relief, who established family relief in the form of food relief.

In Aug. 1932, the State of California passed a bond issue, and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors subsequently passed a City ordinance, effective in Sept., that created the aforementioned Director of Relief and Citizens’ Emergency Relief Committee, appointed by the Mayor. Nine months later, the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 (approved May 12, 1933) created a Federal Emergency Relief Administration and authorized $500,000,000 for grants and administrative costs. Funds were proportionally one-third Federal Relief Act funds: one-third State bond issue funds; and one-third local Relief Bond
funds. FERA required immediate transfer of all emergency relief administration from private to public agencies, furthering the development of what later became the San Francisco Public Welfare Department.

Relief for a few categories of people was administered by other city and county departments as follows and is not represented in this collection:

"Indigent sick" by the Department of Public Health; "Aged, blind, and widow's pension" by the County Welfare Department, which was established in 1929; "dependent children" by the Juvenile Court; and "mentally deficient poor" by the Superior Court.

Scope and Contents

City documents received and/or issued by the San Francisco Office of the Controller as fiscal accountant for unemployment relief services during the Great Depression. The collection consists of a report by the Director of Relief for fiscal year 1932-1933; minutes of the Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee (originally named Citizens' Advisory Relief Committee) for Sept. 3, 1932 - May 1937; Unemployment Relief Program Reports of the San Francisco Office of the Controller for fiscal years July 1, 1932 - June 30, 1937; and a report called "Suggested Relief Program 1933-1934," also issued by the Office of the Controller.

The collection documents the relationships between national, state, county, and municipal government bodies in providing relief monies and services to San Franciscans during a time of transition from privately-administered charities to public welfare.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in four series: Series 1: Report of the Director of Relief; Series 2: Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee Minutes; Series 3: "Suggested Relief Program 1933-1934"; and Series 4: Unemployment Relief Program Reports.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

San Francisco (Calif.). Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee.
Public welfare--California--San Francisco--Statistics
San Francisco (Calif.)--Social policy
Social Service--California--San Francisco--Statistics
Unemployed--California--San Francisco

Box 1, Folder 1 Series 1 Report of the Director of Relief for fiscal year 1932-1933, July 26, 1933

Creator: San Francisco ( Calif. ). Dept. of Public Health. Director of Relief.

Scope and Contents

Monthly and total expenditures and caseloads for families and for single men, women, and children on relief in San Francisco. Family relief figures are listed under names of charitable relief organizations whose administrations were taken over by the Director of Relief beginning in 1931. These organizations are: Citizens' Agency for Social Welfare (previously named Associated Charities); Eureka Benevolent Association, and Italian Board of Relief. The report also includes total figures for Non-Family Relief, as well as monthly and total figures for Single Men and Women's Division.

The cover letter outlines the relief program developed by the Director of Relief and the Citizens' Advisory Committee, immediately following their inception in Sept. 1932. The program includes the following divisions, bureaus, and departments: Family Relief, Single Men (mostly transient), Single Women, Bachelor Men (housed), Clothing, Lunch Dept., Medical Bureau, and Non-Resident Families. Until April 1933, non-resident families were handled by Citizens Agency for Social Welfare (formerly known as Associated Charities), at which time that aspect of the program was transferred to Travelers Aid.

The report includes rules of eligibility for family relief developed by the Citizens' Advisory Relief Committee.

Existence and Location of Copies note

Includes six copies.
Series 2 Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee Minutes, 1932-1937

Creator: San Francisco (Calif.). Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee.

Scope and Contents
Minutes of what began as the Citizens' Advisory Relief Committee and then became the Citizens' Emergency Relief Committee; it was also sometimes known as the San Francisco Emergency Relief Committee. Includes weekly status reports of program divisions, caseload statistics, financial figures, memos, and some correspondence. Stamped "received" by the Office of the Controller's Relief Division. With index.

Arrangement
Arranged in reverse chronological order as received by the Library.

Box 1, Folder 2 Index of Minutes, 1932-1937
Box 1, Folder 3 Sept. 17, 1934 - May 19, 1937
Box 1, Folder 4 Apr. - Aug. 1934
Box 1, Folder 5 Sept. 1933 - Mar. 1934
Box 1, Folder 6 Sept. 1932 - Aug. 1933
Box 2, Folder 1 Series 3 "Suggested Relief Program 1933-1934" Aug. 15, 1933

Creator: San Francisco (Calif.). Office of the Controller.

Scope and Contents
The Controller's Office "Suggested Relief Program 1933-1934" comes a year after the creation of the Citizens Advisory Relief Committee. In response to a request from the Director of Relief for the Controller's Office to take over accounting functions for the new relief program, the Office makes recommendations based on the need to accommodate new Federal and State, as well as existing local, requirements. The document reviews federal, state, and local statutes to determine available state and federal funds and recommends changes to San Francisco's local relief program in order for the City to qualify for those funds.

Series 4 Unemployment Relief Program Reports 1932-1938

Creator: San Francisco (Calif.). Office of the Controller.

Scope and Contents
Reports on relief activities, financing, cost, administration, and standards, with supporting documents. Each report includes a chronology of relief data.

Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by fiscal year.

Box 2, Folder 2 Period 1932-1934, Oct. 1, 1934
Box 2, Folder 3 Fiscal year 1934-1935, Aug. 27, 1935
Box 2, Folder 4 Fiscal year 1935-1936, Mar. 31, 1937
Box 2, Folder 5 Fiscal year 1936-1937, May 14, 1938