
Finding aid for the Community Chest and Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area records 0461

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Title: Community Chest and Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area records

Collection number: 0461

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Abstract: The Community Chest and Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area records contains reports (both annual and research), minutes, by-laws, and other administrative materials that document the higher level functions of these non-profit organizations during formative phases of their history, the late 1920s through the early 1960s.

creator: Community Chest of Los Angeles Area.

creator: Los Angeles Community Chest.

creator: Los Angeles Community Welfare Federation.

creator: Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area.

Conditions Governing Access

Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Historical note

The Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area, sometimes referred to as the Los Angeles Community Federation, was incorporated on March 12, 1924, to serve "as a central bureau through which all funds for charity, relief, and welfare work may be solicited, collected, held and disbursed." Shortly thereafter, on May 29th, 1924, the Los Angeles Community Chest was incorporated, with the backing of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, after two years of conflict among leaders of private social service agencies, many of whom feared that the future of welfare services in the region was likely to be controlled, through the Chest, by Los Angeles' business community. The first 27 volunteer directors of the board of the Welfare Federation were philanthropic leading citizens, with some experience in the administration of charitable institutions, who stepped forward at a critical moment when other leadership had failed. On January 2nd, 1925, with an encouraging fund of \$2.5 million raised in the Chest's first campaign, the Welfare Federation began operations.

Membership in the Federation was open to all agencies licensed by the Social Services Commission to solicit funds for charitable purposes in Los Angeles. The Federation was anxious to have representation from as many agencies as possible so as to achieve some consensus of opinion on topics of general concern to the social work community. In the first year after its incorporation the Federation's research department discovered over one hundred privately supported charities in Los Angeles whose existence had previously been unknown to any official body. These small agencies were, in effect, answerable to no one so long as they refrained from public fund-raising. Only those agencies who agreed to forego their own individual fund-raising efforts, and to open their operations to Federation inspection and direction, were eligible to share in the money raised in Community Chest campaigns. Many large agencies, and particularly those with national and international connections, such as the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the Y.M.C.A. were unwilling to become Chest agencies on such terms and continued with their own year-round charitable appeals. The Federation attempted to reach agreement with fund-raising agencies so that their activities did not coincide with the Chest's annual campaigns. Although it was highly influential, the Federation had no legal authority to prevent individual fund-raisers from operating in a manner likely to detract from the effectiveness of the Community Chest.

Scope and Content

The Community Chest and Welfare Federation of Los Angeles Area records contains reports (both annual and research), minutes, by-laws, and other administrative materials that document the higher level functions of these non-profit organizations during formative phases of their history, the late 1920s through the early 1960s. The records provide a wide overview of the activities of the board of governors, some of the executive committees (including the Cooperative Committee and the Public Relations committee), and administrative staff.

Included in the collection are early statistical analyses and annual reports reflecting the development of the Federation's budgeting and allocation procedures, documentation of chest campaigns, and interpretive materials produced during the Depression, when Angelenos frequently expected the Federation to provide more emergency relief than was afforded by the often meager proceeds from Chest campaigns in those years. The collection also contains much material on personnel

practices, job and service classifications, and pay plans for the Federation's member agencies. Among problems that troubled the Federation from its beginnings was the fact that many working Angelenos contributed to Chest campaigns in metropolitan areas of the city but lived in outlying suburbs where no Chest agencies provided services. The Federation therefore gave early consideration to questions of expansion or decentralization, and the collection records the beginning of joint budgeting with neighboring community chests. Minutes of some of the Federation's committees are to be found in the collection, including those of the Chest-Agency Co-Operation Committee which worked to reorganize the Federation during the population influx of the 1950's.

Also present are materials reflecting the work of the Federation's research department as it produced maps, bibliographies, and reading lists for inquiring citizens, began a research library, and made studies of unmet service needs in the region. Of particular interest is a 1925 report on "Social Work With Families in Los Angeles", made by Carl de Schweinitz and Ruth Hill for the Welfare Federation under the direction of the American Association for Family Social Work. Also noteworthy is the candid 1951 report from a Citizens' Study Committee on recommended changes in the management and functions of the Federation. Of curiosity interest are some long lists of harmless-sounding groups and associations supplied to Los Angeles social welfare agencies in 1955 by the House Un-American Activities Committee, with a stern warning that these groups be scrupulously avoided as "subversive".

Preferred Citation

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

Community Chest of Los Angeles Area. -- Archives
Los Angeles Community Welfare Federation. -- Archives
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Annual reports
Bylaws (administrative records)
Correspondence
Los Angeles (Calif.)--Social conditions--Archival resources
Minutes
Nonprofit organizations--California--Los Angeles--History--Archival resources
Reports
Social service--California--Los Angeles--History--Archival resources

Box 1, Folder 1	Social Work with Families in Los Angeles, California, by Karl deSchewinitz and Ruth Hill 1925
Box 1, Folder 2	Statistical Analysis, Community Welfare Federation, Los Angeles, California, Research Division 1926-1927
Box 1, Folder 3	Los Angeles Community Welfare Federation resources for minorities 1926-1927
Box 1, Folder 4	Community Welfare Federation annual report 1927
Box 1, Folder 5	Annual Report of the Community Welfare Federation operating the Los Angeles Community Chest 1928
Box 1, Folder 6	Speech of Executive Director of New York Association of Community Chests to Los Angeles Welfare Federation 1929
Box 1, Folder 7	Community Chest brochures 1932, 1938
Box 1, Folder 8	Community Chest public relations 1935-1936
Box 1, Folder 9	"Social Service as Administered by Public and Private Agencies" 1935
Box 1, Folder 10	Administrative policy questions, budget matters 1941-1942
Box 1, Folder 11	Job classification and pay plan 1946
Box 1, Folder 12	Pay plans--Administration 1949-1963
Box 1, Folder 13	Summary of major program findings and conclusions, Welfare Federation 1951
Box 1, Folder 14	Budgeting process 1951-1952
Box 1, Folder 15	Citizen's Study Committee, budget procedures, executive classification 1951-1957
Box 2, Folder 1	Welfare Federation minutes, reports, correspondence, by-laws, budget 1952-1960
Box 2, Folder 2	"Code of the Chest and Council Movement" 1953

Box 2, Folder 3	Instructions to member agencies, policies and procedures--budget admission (n.b. subversive groups) 1954-1962
Box 2, Folder 4	Chest-Agency Cooperation Committee, Advisory Committee of Agency Executives 1954-1955
Box 2, Folder 5	Chest-Agency Cooperation Committee, Advisory Committee of Agency Executives 1955
Box 2, Folder 6	Community Chest campaigns, Agency Participation meetings, other agency committee meetings 1956-1959
Box 2, Folder 7	"Better Management Better Service" 1959
Box 2, Folder 8	Community Chest of LA classification of services 1962
Box 2, Folder 9	Board of Governors, Agency executives 1962
Box 2, Folder 10	"Budget Manual for Member Agencies" 1962-1963
Box 2, Folder 11	"Appendix C for Attitudes and Opinions of Selected Groups Toward Giving to Organized Charities" undated