

Seattle Police Department Annual Reports, 1894-[ongoing]

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Seattle (Wash.). City Clerk
Title	Seattle Police Department Annual Reports
Dates	1894-[ongoing] (inclusive) 1894 9999
Quantity	1.6 cubic ft., ((4 boxes))
Collection Number	1802-H8
Summary	Annual reports of Seattle Police Department from 1894 to 2000; reports will continue to be added to the series. Reports include information on arrest statistics, jail conditions, crime rates, and traffic statistics.
Repository	Seattle Municipal Archives Seattle Municipal Archives Office of the City Clerk City of Seattle PO Box 94728 98124-4728 Seattle, WA Telephone: 206-233-7807 Fax: 206-386-9025 archives@seattle.gov
Access Restrictions	Records are open to the public.
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

The position of Marshall was created by the 1869 City Charter, a position with traditional policing duties. The first time the word “police” was used in legislative language may be Ordinance 66 (“In relation to Police powers”), passed between November 13th, 1874 and January 22nd, 1875. The 1875 amendments to the City Charter gave the city power “to establish and maintain a day and night police” and provided that the city could elect or appoint as many police officers as deemed necessary. Concurrently, however, the language about a City Marshall was maintained. Ordinance 97 (“An ordinance concerning offenses and disorderly conduct”), passed March 3rd, 1876, still referred to a City Marshall and a Deputy Marshall. The City Charter Amendments of 1883 included a house cleaning section, stating that any reference in the Charter to the Marshall should be construed to mean Chief of Police, who had the authority to hire police officers. This amendment was the first time the term Chief of Police appeared in the Charter:

“The Chief of Police shall be the peace officer of the city, and must execute all process issued by the police justice [...]. He shall execute vigilant control over the peace and quiet of the city; shall be the

keeper of the city prison, [...]. Wherever the word marshal occurs in said act the same shall be taken to mean Chief of Police [...].”

Until 1890, the Chief of Police was elected by voters of the City for a one-year term. The Freeholders City Charter of 1890 created a five-member Board of Police Commissioners to oversee and administer the operations of the Police Department. The Commission, chaired by the Mayor, had the authority to appoint the Chief of Police and appoint officers:

“The Police Department shall be under the management of a Police Commission, to consist of the mayor, who shall be chairman of the commission, and four (4) police commissioners [... who] shall hold the office for four (4) years.”

Following allegations of corruption, the Board of Police Commissioners was abolished by the new Freeholders City Charter of 1896. The Chief of Police, appointed by the mayor, served as administrator of the Department: “There shall be a police department, which shall consist of a Chief of Police and as many subordinate officers, detective officers, and regular and special policemen as the city council shall from time to time by ordinance prescribe. [...] The mayor shall appoint the Chief of Police [...] and may remove him in his discretion [...]. The mayor shall prescribe rules and regulations [...] for the government and control of the police department.”

A City Charter Amendment in 1936 provided for the Chief of Police to be appointed for a five year term of office. A new Freeholders City Charter was adopted March 12, 1946. Under its provisions, the term of the Chief of Police was not specified.

In 1962, the Department assumed authority for policing the harborfront, formerly a function of the Harbor Department.

Content Description

The annual reports of the Seattle Police Department date from 1894 to 2000; annual reports will continue to be added to the series. Reports include information on arrest statistics, jail conditions, crime rates, and traffic statistics; photographs are included in some reports. Police Pension reports, Police Court reports, Police Telephone and Telegraph System reports, and Woman's Protective Division reports are included.

Some early reports include recommendations by the Board of Police Commissioners as well as the report by the Chief of Police. Reports consist of a variety of statistics including cause of arrests and the occupations, nativity, and age of persons arrested. Suggestions for improvements are also included in reports. The 1900 report notes the condition of the jail: “bad sewerage, mould, rot, dampness, poor ventilation, coupled with the fact that from its inception it was never intended as a receiving jail, makes it totally unfit for occupancy.” Police Court reports, where they exist, are included in this series as well. Police Telephone and Telegraph System reports are included with some Police annual reports. Reports on the Woman's Protective Division are included in this series; in some years, they are part of the Police Department report, and in other years, they are separate reports. The 1904 report of the Humane Officer is also included in this series.

By 1945 the reports include geographical statistics on crime rates and traffic division statistics by precinct; in 1955 the reports begin to include this information by census tract. The 1947 report is quite lengthy and includes descriptions of departmental activities for the year, plans, and comparative statistics for Seattle and other cities. It also includes photographs, as do subsequent reports. The 1948 report includes a description of the Rehabilitation Camp, later called the Police Department Rehabilitation Project, which started operating that year. The camp was intended to offer “men suffering

from chronic alcoholism or periodic heavy drinkers to build themselves up physically and to better prepare them to accept a useful position in society" (p. 16a). Capacity was increased from 50 in 1948 to 100 in 1953. The project ended in 1961 for budget reasons.

From the mid-1950s to 1970, reports consist almost entirely of statistics and there is very little narrative. For the 1970s, there are two reports. One is almost entirely narrative, focusing on public relations and containing very few statistics. The second is a statistical report with no narrative. Both reports do not exist in this series for every year. Beginning in 1980, both the narrative and statistical reports are included in one.

Police Pension reports for 1964 to 1965 are included at the end of this series.

Use of the Collection

Preferred Citation

[Item and date], Seattle Police Department Annual Reports, Record Series 1802-H8. Box [number], Folder [number]. Seattle Municipal Archives.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

Reports are arranged chronologically by year.

Custodial History

Records were originally filed with the City Clerk in the Comptroller/Clerk's Files (CFs) and were removed to create this record series.

Future Additions

Annual reports will continue to be added to the series.

Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Seattle Police Department Annual Reports, 1894-[ongoing]

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1	Police Department Annual Report	1894

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/2	Police Department Annual Report	1895
1/2	Police Department Annual Report	1896
1/3	Police Department Annual Report	1900
1/3	Police Court Annual Report	1903-1904
1/3	Police Department Annual Report	1904
1/3	Police Department Annual Report	1905
1/3	Police Court Annual Report	1905
1/4	Humane Officer Annual Report	1904
1/5	Police Department Annual Report	1908
1/5	Police Department Annual Report	1909
1/5	Police Department Annual Report	1909-1910
1/5	Police Department Annual Report	1913
1/6	Police Department Annual Report	1914
1/6	Supplement to Police Department Annual Report	1914
1/6	Police Department Annual Report	1915
1/6	Police Department, Women's Protective Division Annual Report	1916
1/6	Police Department Annual Report	1918
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1920
1/7	Police Department, Women's Protective Division Annual Report	1920
1/7	Police Department, Juvenile and Humane Division Annual Report	1920
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1922

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1923
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1924
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1925
1/7	Police Department Annual Report	1925
1/7	Police Department, Women's Division Annual Report	1925
1/8	Police Department Annual Report	1926
1/8	Police Department Annual Report	1930
2/1	Police Department Annual Report	1931
2/1	Police Department Annual Report	1935
2/2	Police Department Annual Report	1937
2/2	Police Department Annual Report	1938
2/3	Police Department Annual Report	1940
2/3	Police Department Annual Report	1941
2/3	Police Department Annual Report	1942
2/3	Police Department Annual Report	1943
2/4	Police Department Annual Report	1944
2/4	Police Department Annual Report	1945
2/4	Police Department Annual Report	1946
2/4	Police Department (Juvenile Crime Prevention) Annual Report	1946
2/5	Police Department Annual Report	1947
2/6	Police Department Annual Report	1948

Container(s)	Description	Dates
2/6	Police Department Annual Report	1949
2/7	Police Department Annual Report	1950
2/7	Police Department Annual Report	1951
2/8	Police Department Annual Report	1952
2/8	Police Department Annual Report	1953
3/1	Police Department Annual Report	1954
3/1	Police Department Annual Report	1955
3/2	Police Department Annual Report	1956
3/2	Police Department Annual Report	1957
3/3	Police Department Annual Report	1958
3/3	Police Department Annual Report	1959
3/4	Police Department Annual Report	1960
3/4	Police Department Annual Report	1961
3/4	Police Department Annual Report	1962
3/5	Police Department Annual Report	1963
3/5	Police Department Annual Report	1964
3/6	Police Department Annual Report	1965
3/6	Police Department Annual Report	1966
3/6	Police Department Annual Report	1967
3/7	Police Department Annual Report	1968
3/7	Police Department Annual Report	1969

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/7	Police Department Annual Report	1970
3/7	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1970
4/1	Police Department Annual Report	1971
4/2	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1971
4/2	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1972
4/2	Police Department Annual Report, Reserve Unit	1973
4/2	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1973
4/3	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1974
4/3	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1975
4/4	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1976
4/4	Police Department (Statistical Report)	1977
4/4	Police Department Annual Report (Statistical Report)	1978
4/4	Police Department Annual Report	1979
4/5	Police Department Annual Report	1980
4/5	Police Department Annual Report	1984
4/5	Police Department Annual Report	1985
4/6	Police Pension Annual Report	1964
4/6	Police Pension Annual Report	1965
4/7	Police Department Annual Report	1986
4/7	Police Department Annual Report	1987
4/7	Police Department Annual Report	1988

Container(s)	Description	Dates
4/8	Police Department Annual Report	1989
4/8	Police Department Annual Report	1997
4/8	Police Department Annual Report	1998
4/8	Police Department Annual Report	2000
4/8	Police Relief and Pension Fund Annual Report	2001

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Arrest--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Criminal justice, administration of--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Criminal statistics--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Police--Pensions--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Police--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Traffic regulations--Washington (State)--Seattle

Corporate Names :

Seattle (Wash.). Police Dept. Rehabilitation Camp
 Seattle (Wash.). Police Dept. Rehabilitation Project

Geographical Names :

Seattle (Wash.)--Politics and government

Form or Genre Terms :

Annual reports

Other Creators :

Corporate Names :

Seattle (Wash.) Police Dept.
 (creator)
 Seattle (Wash.). Humane Officer
 (creator)
 Seattle (Wash.). Police Dept. Women's Division
 (creator)

Finding aid prepared by Anne Frantilla
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