



New York State Archives

**New York State Department of Financial Services
Superintendent's Subject Files 14394**

New York State Archives
222 Madison Avenue
Albany, NY 12230
archref@nysed.gov
URL: <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>

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Overview of the Records

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| Repository: | New York State Archives |
| Summary: | The series provides an overview of the major activities of the Insurance Department and the superintendent relating to the regulation of insurance companies. Files mostly contain correspondence and memoranda, with some reports, news releases, and speeches. In addition to documents addressed to or written by the superintendent, there are many copies of correspondence or memoranda referred to the superintendent from deputy superintendents or bureau chiefs. |
| Creator: | New York (State). Department of Financial Services |
| Title: | Superintendent's subject files |
| Quantity: | 240 cubic feet |
| Inclusive Date: | 1935-1976, 1978, 1981, 1988, 2005-2012, undated |
| Series: | 14394 |

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Arrangement

Files are usually alphabetical by subject, with documents filed in reverse chronological order.

Copies of each superintendent's speeches or articles and NAIC materials are usually placed at the end of the alphabetical sequence.

14394-08: Uncertain arrangement.

14394-12, 14394-12A, 14394-15: Alphabetical by subject.

14394-12B: Arranged by superintendent, then roughly alphabetical by subject.

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Administrative History

Chapter 366 of the Laws of 1859 established the Insurance Department. Under the direction of a Superintendent of Insurance, it assumed all duties relating to regulation of insurance companies exercised since 1849 by the secretary of state and state comptroller. Originally the governor appointed the superintendent, with advice and consent of the senate, for a term of three years. After 1927 the superintendent's term was changed to run until the end of the term of the appointing governor.

As head of the department, the superintendent of insurance supervises deputy assistants, line bureaus in Albany and New York City, and other section heads. The superintendent reviews all policy or program issues of importance. All major policy decisions regarding insurance regulations go through the superintendent or a deputy.

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Scope and Content Note

The series provides an overview of the major activities of the department and the superintendent. Files mostly contain correspondence and memoranda, with some reports, news releases, and speeches. In addition to documents addressed to or written by the superintendent, there are many copies of correspondence or memoranda referred to the superintendent from deputy superintendents or bureau chiefs.

Headings in the records range from general subjects (e.g., "administration", "budget", or "legislation") to names of particular bureaus, insurance companies, and organizations, or types of insurance (e.g., fire, life, automobile, surety, casualty, marine) or insurance company activities (e.g., "antitrust acquisitions", workmen's compensation, multiple live underwriting, malpractice insurance).

Files may include correspondence concerning efforts of insurance companies to acquire other companies (these actions must be approved by the department); copies of circular letters announcing department policy and legal opinions to insurers; files concerning the rehabilitation of insolvent companies by the department (including data on departmental examination of the company and negotiations to effect a takeover by a solvent firm); and special reports to the governor on specific topics (e.g., the problem of obtaining fire insurance in urban ghetto areas).

Also included are frequently extensive files on the superintendent's activity in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), an organization that supports cooperation between states and promotes federal legislation. Of special note is information on how the introduction of electronic data processing equipment into insurance company operations (early 1960s) will affect the department's ability to conduct examinations of companies.

14394-83: This accretion consists of the files of Superintendent Julius S. Wikler and Leffert Holz.

14394-99: This accretion contains the files of superintendents Benjamin R. Schenck (1968-1972) and Thomas A. Harnett (1976). The two men served consecutively: Schenck from 1971 to 1975; Harnett from 1975 to 1977.

14394-08: This accretion consists of the files of Superintendent Howard Mills III. Superintendent Mills was appointed by Governor George Pataki and served from 2005 to 2007.

14394-12: This accretion consists of files created during the tenure of James J. Wrynn, Superintendent of Insurance (2009-2011) and Deputy Superintendent of Financial Services (2011-2012). In 2011, the New York State Banking and Insurance Departments were abolished, and their functions transferred to the newly created Department of Financial Services.

14394-12A: This accretion consists of files created during the tenure of Eric Dinallo, Superintendent of Insurance (2007-2009). The records also contain correspondence dating from May 2007-March 2010.

14394-12B: This accretion consists of the files of former Superintendents Albert B. Lewis and James P. Corcoran. The records contain both message books and correspondence files regarding various issues, including health care, economic development, and traffic safety.

14394-15: This accretion consists of the files of former Superintendents Thomas Harnett (1978), Albert B. Lewis (1981) and James P. Corcoran (1988). Thomas Harnett served 1975-1978, Albert Lewis served 1978-1983, and James Corcoran served 1983-1990. Deputy Superintendent James Rudolph's records are interfiled with the records of James Corcoran. James Rudolph served 1981-1988.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

14394-99, 14394-12B, 14394-15: Container list is available at the repository.

14394-08: Folder list is available at the repository.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Evidence from a related transfer suggests the intent to destroy all pre-1935 files. Post-1935 files may constitute all that exists of Insurance Department administrative files.

Acquisition Information

14394-12B: This accretion includes records from transfer lists 11-91 and 95-23.

14394-15: This accretion includes records from transfer lists 860008, 910008, and 910013.

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Access Terms

- Supervising
- Insurance companies--New York (State)
- Insurance--State supervision
- New York (State)
- Risk (Insurance)
- Regulating insurance
- Discrimination in insurance
- Administering
- Wrynn, James J.
- Harnett, Thomas A.
- Dinallo, Eric.
- Mills, Howard D.
- New York (State). Insurance Department
- Schenck, Benjamin R.