



New York State Archives

**New York State Department of Health Bureau of
Communications Production Photography Unit Photographic
Prints and Negatives of Department Officials, Facilities, and
Activities 14655**

New York State Archives
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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	Records consist of photographs created by the Photography Unit that were used in Department of Health publications, exhibits, training aids, news releases, annual reports, and presentations. Topics covered by the photographs include department operations and public health activities in the state including clinics, other public health services, medical procedures and equipment, department laboratories and offices, facilities, special events, and "medical defense" (relating to medical procedures in the event of a nuclear attack).
Creator:	New York (State). Department of Health. Bureau of Communications Production. Photography Unit
Title:	Photographic prints and negatives of Department of Health officials, facilities, and activities
Quantity:	41.4 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	circa 1920-1983
Series:	14655

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Administrative History

The Department of Health (DOH) has utilized staff photographers since about 1915. The present Photo Unit's origin, however, was in the establishment in about 1948 of a photographic editorship for *Health News*, a weekly publication of DOH's Office of Public Health Education (OPHE). In 1949 *Health News* became a monthly publication for New York's physicians, with a secondary audience of interested laymen. The publication's photographic staff was expanded to three people who also provided photographic services to other units in the Department.

A "photo unit" is first mentioned in DOH's annual report in 1950. This unit was located in OPHE and had a staff of three or four photographers between 1950 and 1975. In 1975 OPHE was abolished and the Photo Unit became part of the Public Health Education Unit (PHEU). At about this same time the Photo Unit's staff was cut in half. The PHEU was replaced in 1977 with the Health Education and Promotion Services Group in the new Office of Public Health. In 1986 this group was abolished and all health promotion activities were consolidated in a Public Affairs Group (PAG) in the Department's Executive Division. The Bureau of Communications Production Services, in which the Photography Unit is now located, is part of PAG.

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Scope and Content Note

Records consist of photographs created by the Photography Unit that were used in Department publications, exhibits, training aids, news releases, annual reports, and presentations. They are arranged in several subsections.

Core negatives (1952-1977) are arranged chronologically, and cover the full range of DOH operations and public health activities in the state including clinics, other public health services, medical procedures and equipment, DOH laboratories and offices, facilities, and special events. Print books contain prints of the core negative series. Numerically arranged negatives (1945-1966) cover subjects similar to the core negatives. Alphabetically arranged negatives (1947-1960) are filed by subject designations such as "ambulances," "charts" and packets of negatives on special subjects such as a marijuana eradication project in the 1940s, agricultural labor camps, and health facilities.

"Medical Defense" related negatives (1958-1960) relate to the medical defense component of the National Civil defense program used for training publications in first aid and medical procedures in the event of a nuclear attack. Miscellaneous material (1950-1979) includes slides, transparencies, negatives, and motion picture production stills used for presentations at training programs on such topics as family planning and water quality. Miscellaneous prints and negatives (1916-1948) from the DOH Library appear to be from early DOH photo collections, before the Photography Unit's expansion.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

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

Alternate Formats Available

Items Online

A selection of images from this series have been digitized and are available in State Archives Digital Collections.

[Photographic prints and negatives of department officials, facilities, and activities, circa 1920-1983](#)

Access Terms

- Documenting public health
- Publicizing
- Health facilities--New York (State)
- Black-and-white photographs
- Civil defense
- New York (State)
- Public health administration--Officials and employees
- Public health--New York (State)
- Negatives (photographs)