



New York State Archives

**New York State Department of Law Records of Attorney
General Louis J. Lefkowitz 18574**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series includes administrative files, legal opinions, reports, litigation and investigation files, and requests for legal opinions from Governor Hugh Carey and Comptroller Arthur Levitt. The series also documents legal cases involving labor unions and the New York State Retirement System; the Moreland Act Commission Investigation of nursing homes (Hynes Commission); the Organized Crime Task Force investigation of the state's harness racing industry; and development of civil rights legislation. Two training films entitled, "The Fine Art of the Fraud" and "Caveat Emptor," are also included. Records are restricted.
Title:	Department of Law records of Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz
Quantity:	8 cubic feet
Quantity:	2 motion picture films
Inclusive Date:	1973-1978
Series:	18574

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Arrangement

Roughly chronological and/or by subject.

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Administrative History

Louis J. Lefkowitz was the 59th attorney general of New York State. He was appointed by the legislature on January 1, 1957 and elected for his first term in November 1958. He served as attorney general until 1978 when he was succeeded by Robert A. Abrams.

Lefkowitz served as an assemblyman in the state legislature (from the 6th Assembly District in New York County) from 1928-1930, and served on the Judiciary Committee. While in the assembly he authored laws extending benefits to public employees, providing greater relief to mothers under the Child Welfare Law, strengthening the Election Law, and prohibiting issuance of injunctions without a hearing in major disputes. He was also a pioneer of civil rights legislation in the state. In the 1940s and 1950s he held a variety of appointed positions at the municipal and state levels, including time as a justice of New York City Municipal Court and Deputy State Tax Commissioner.

As attorney general Lefkowitz favored programs to protect consumers, investors, and businessmen. He created a Civil Rights Bureau, a Bureau of Consumer Frauds and Protection, a Bureau of Charity Frauds, a Bureau for Syndicates and Cooperatives, and a Charitable Foundations Division in the Department of Law.

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Scope and Content Note

The series consists of correspondence, memoranda, copies of legal opinions, reports and litigation, investigation files and other subject files produced and maintained by the Department of Law during the tenure of Louis J. Lefkowitz as attorney general of New York State. Also included are two "training films" apparently produced at the direction of Attorney General Lefkowitz to help educate consumers. Significant reports found in the series document work of the Temporary State Commission on Living Costs and the Economy on state nursing homes, and the subsequent Moreland Commission investigation (initiated by Governor Carey) into residential health care facilities.

The records pertain to special legislative sessions and a wide variety of issues, including: the attorney general's participation in state fiscal matters (sale of bonds, spring borrowing, conditions of banks, etc.); correspondence and legal opinions requested by Governor Hugh Carey and Comptroller Arthur Levitt; legal cases involving the New York State Retirement System and public employee unions; the Moreland Commission investigation of the state's nursing homes (Hynes Commission); and the purpose of the state's Organized Crime Task Force, and work with Maxwell B. Spoot, its acting deputy attorney general, investigating the state's harness racing industry.

The two motion picture films in the series were apparently produced by Bertram A. Weinert, director of consumer education in the attorney general's office. They are: "The Fine Art of Fraud," one 10.5" reel of 16 mm color film; and "Caveat Emptor," one 12" reel of 16 mm black and white film. The films are undated, brittle, and broken (mended with tape) in some places.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Container list and rough folder list available at the repository.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

Restricted: Records may contain information that is exempt from disclosure pursuant to state or federal statute, or common law.

Access Terms

- Harness racing--State supervision
- Legal files
- New York (State)
- Nursing homes--New York (State)--Administration
- Managing lawyers
- Motion pictures (visual works)
- Attorneys general--New York (State)
- Fraud investigation--New York (State)
- Reports
- Law enforcing
- Consumer education
- Memorandums
- Civil rights
- New York (State). Employees' Retirement System
- New York (State). Moreland Act Commission on Nursing Homes and Residential Facilities
- Lefkowitz, Louis J.
- New York State Organized Crime Task Force
- New York (State). Attorney General's Office