



City of Boston Archives and Records Management Division

Guide to the Boston Housing Authority records

Central Legislation files

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Historical note

The Boston Housing Authority (BHA) was established by order of the Boston City Council on October 1, 1935, pursuant to St. 1935, c. 449, s. 5 which empowered cities and towns of Massachusetts to establish housing authorities. Such a body is responsible for providing decent, safe and sanitary housing for families unable to afford housing without public subsidies and for clearing substandard, decadent or blighted open areas under the provisions of MGLA c. 121B. To carry out these responsibilities BHA develops and manages housing projects and leases housing when necessary. It also performed the functions of an urban redevelopment authority until such a body was established separately pursuant to St. 1957, c. 150.

The management and governance of the BHA has deviated from that of other housing authorities since 1975, when BHA was sued in Boston City Housing Court by a group of BHA tenants, represented by Greater Boston

Legal Services, over poor conditions in housing projects under the authority's control. As a result of the ruling in favor of the tenants, a court-appointed master prepared a report listing recommendations that provided the basis for a consent decree signed in 1977 by BHA, Greater Boston Legal Services and the Boston Public Housing Tenants Policy Council. The decree detailed a series of improvements that BHA was to make over the course of three years. The master, responsible for monitoring BHA's compliance with the consent decree, gave approval for all major decisions made by the BHA board and administrator. In 1979, the judge ruled that BHA had failed satisfactorily to fulfill the terms of the consent decree and BHA was placed in receivership, with its board of commissioners and administrator replaced by a court-appointed receiver. Since 1990, when the receivership ended, BHA has been directed by an administrator whose activities are reviewed by a nine-member monitoring committee appointed by the mayor of Boston.

Source: Massachusetts State Archives catalog record

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Scope and Contents note

The Central Legislation files include copies of legislation and correspondence relating to Public Housing in general and the Boston Housing Authority. This collection is divided into 3 series: Federal Legislation, State Legislation and internal legislation of the Boston Housing Authority. The original order and file names were retained. The files are generally chronological within each series.

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Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The records of the Boston Housing Authority were transferred from the Massachusetts State Archives to the City of Boston Archives on January 26, 2010.

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Series I: Federal Legislation

Box	Folder	
1	1	Legislation: Housing Act of 1937 (Only Copy)
1	2	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1937: Amendments: S591 & HR2888
1	3	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1937 As Amended, 1956, 1957, 1959
1	4	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1937 As Amended thru 1961, 1961
1	5	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1937 & Related Laws as Amended, 1968, 1973
1	6	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1949 Public Law 171 Chapter 338
1	7	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1957: Detailed Summary of [and one for 1958], 1957
1	8	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Housing Act of 1957 as Amended, 1964, 1966
1	9	Legislation: Federal: Acts: Servicemen's Dependents
1	10	Legislation: Federal: Bill S1592: Wagner-Ellender: Bill S1342

1	11	Legislation: Federal: Bills: Interior Department
1	12	Legislation: Federal: 1940s, 1940-1949
1	13	Legislation: Federal, 1949
1	14	Legislation: Federal, 1950-1955
1	15	Legislation: Federal, 1954-1959
1	16	Legislation: Federal: Senate Investigating Committee Joint: General Data, 1947
1	17	Legislation: Federal: Senate Investigating Committee Joint: General Data, 1949
1	18	Legislation: Federal: Senate Investigating Juvenile Delinquency Hearings in Boston January 28-29-30, 1954
1	19	Legislation: Report of Legislative Committee for 1960 Per S R J Suchecki
1	20	Legislation: Federal: Social Security Act
1	21	Legislation: Completion of the Housing & Urban Development Comm. Banking & Currency etc., 1968
1	22	Legislation: Federal: Construction Cost Limitations
1	23	Legislation: Anti-Poverty Legislation, 1964
1	24	Legislation: Public Law 91-152 To amend and extend laws relating to Housing & Urban Development & other purposes [empty folder], 1969
1	25	Legislation: Instructions for Contractors Affirmative Action under Ex. Order 11246 (Equal Employment etc.)

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Series II: State Legislation

Box	Folder	
2	1	Legislation: State: Photostatic copies
2	2	Legislation: State: 1930s
2	3	Legislation: State: 1940s
2	4	Legislation: State: 1940s
2	5	Legislation: State: 1950s
2	6	Legislation: State: 1950s
2	7	Legislation: State: 1960s
2	8	Legislation: State: 1970s
2	9	Legislation: State, 1957-1967
2	10	Legislation: State: 200 Legislation

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Series III: Boston Housing Authority

Box	Folder	
2	11	By Laws: Boston Housing Authority (Revised as of Dec. 3, 1969) (Revised June 16, 1971), 1949-1971
2	12	Legislation: Compensation to Members, 1946-1950
2	13	Legislation: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Resolution of BHA, 1965-1976

