

Charities Board of Victoria

1923 – 1948

Details

The Charities Board of Victoria came into being in 1923 under the terms of the Hospitals and Charities Act 1922 (no.3260). The Board was responsible for benevolent societies and institutions which were supported in whole or in part by voluntary contributions and which had as one of their objects the provision of 'charitable relief to diseased, infirm, incurable, poor or destitute persons (including children and convalescent patients)'. In 1948, the Charities Board's powers to regulate charitable institutions passed to the new Hospitals and Charities Commission.

The 1922 Hospitals and Charities Act provided for the appointment of an Inspector of Charities.

From the commencement of the Act no institution or benevolent society could be established without the prior consent of the Board and all existing institutions and societies were to apply to be registered with the Board. Unregistered institutions and societies were not eligible to receive funds from the Hospitals and Charities Fund, consolidated revenue or municipalities and were prevented from making appeals for voluntary contributions. The Board was empowered to refuse or cancel the registration of an institution.

At a conference in 1926, the Board put forward its vision for a system where children could 'pass' from Home to Home:

The Board aims at having a system or series of systems whereunder ex-nuptial mothers will be cared for in their antenatal and immediate postnatal condition. At the end of the first month mother and babe are transferred to a Foundling Home. If, at the end of two years, the baby is still at this institution, it should be transferred to a 'toddlers' home, at five or six it should go to a Children's Home and later to an Institution for boys or girls where careful attention should be given and the future of the child assured in such walk of life as is deemed most suitable.

This system is similar to the vision of a 'chain of Mission homes' of the Mission of St James and St John.

In 1941, following the introduction of the Commonwealth child endowment scheme, there was controversy when it emerged that the Charities Board had significantly reduced its grants to a number of religious and charitable institutions in Victoria, on the basis that they were now receiving extra revenue from the Commonwealth child endowment scheme. Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne Daniel Mannix said in November 1941 that he was 'completely astonished' by the Charities Board's actions and that if it did not alter its attitude, it 'should be renamed the Uncharitable Charities Board' (The Advocate, 27 November 1941).

More info

Chronology

- Inspector of Public Charities (c. 1880 - 1923)
 - **Charities Board of Victoria (1923 – 1948)**
 - Hospitals and Charities Commission (1948 - 1978)

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [St Barnabas' Boys' Home \(1934 - 1939\)](#)

The Charities Board requested that the Mission of St James and St John take over the management of St Barnabas' Boys' Home in 1934.

Related Legislation

- [Hospitals and Charities Act 1922, Victoria \(1923 - 1928\)](#)
- [Hospitals and Charities Act 1928, Victoria \(1929 - 1948\)](#)

Records

Records held by other organisations

- ['Closed' Agency and General Correspondence Files \[Charities Board of Victoria\] \(1923 - 1983\)](#)

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