

Patients Case Files, Mental Deficiency Board

1922 – 1964

URL: <http://search.archives.tas.gov.au/default.aspx?detail=1&type=S&id=AA4>

To access these records:

Please contact the Right to Information Officer, Department of Justice:

Postal Address: GPO Box 825, Hobart, TAS, 7001

Email: rti@justice.tas.gov.au

Reference Number

Website : https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/about/right_to_information

Quote this number to access your records: Tasmanian Archives Series Number, AA4

Records Location

These records are held by [Tasmanian Archives \(2011 - current\)](#)

Details

The Patients' Case Files were produced by the Mental Deficiency Board. There is a separate one for every individual that came under its supervision making a total of 1468. Since the Mental Deficiency Board worked closely with successive child welfare departments, some of these files will belong to children who were also wards of state. Children raised in various institutions may also have files.

Access Conditions

Closed D75 years

D75 means these records are closed to the general public for 75 years from the date of the last entry in them. People wishing to access these records should contact the Right to Information Unit of the Department of Justice. Staff at the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office may be able to assist you in finding other relevant records.

Records

The files contain documents such as certificates of examination by the State Psychological Clinic and police reports as well as letters and memos to and from parents, guardians, managers of institutions and other government departments or agencies. There are also various completed forms, including transfer forms, notices of escape or recapture, and discharge forms.

Children diagnosed with intellectual disabilities may not have had them as it is understood today. Challenging behaviour, inadequately managed physical disabilities such as deafness, educational disadvantage, an institutional upbringing, and poverty, neglect or abuse could all lead to a diagnosis of 'mental deficiency' and supervision by the Mental Deficiency Board.

The language used in the files is disturbing. At the time they were written, eugenics had a considerable influence. Its acceptance as a science made it all right to use this language. In 2014, we would consider it demeaning and insulting.

More info

Organisations in these records

Related Organisations

- [Mental Deficiency Board \(1922 - 1964\)](#)
- [State Psychological Clinic \(1922 - 1964\)](#)
- [Department of Justice, State of Tasmania \(c. 2004 - current\)](#)

Related Legislation

- [Mental Deficiency Act, Tasmania \(1920 - 1963\)](#)

Related Archival Series

- [Cards of Patients Examined by the State Psychological Clinic \(1920 - 1960\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/patients-case-files/>