

Admission Registers of the Government Receiving Home [Walcott Street, Mt Lawley]

1894 – 1988

To access these records:

For access to records controlled by the Department of Communities and its predecessors, please contact the Department of Communities Freedom of Information Unit:

Postal Address: Freedom of Information, Department of Communities, Locked Bag 5000, Fremantle WA 6959

Phone: (08) 6414 3344

Email: foi@communities.wa.gov.au

Website : <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/department-of-communities-freedom-of-information-foi>

Records Location

These records are part of [Records of the Department of Child Protection and Family Support, and predecessors \(1894 - current\)](#)

Details

The Admission Registers of the Government Receiving Home [Walcott Street, Mt Lawley] are held by Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS). First known as Government Receiving Depot, the main purpose of this Home was to house (or 'receive') children for at least one or two nights before sending them to foster care or another children's Home. Over time, this centre has also been known as the Government Receiving Home, Child Welfare Receiving Home, Mount Lawley Receiving Home and the Walcott Centre. It was the practice to record each child's name when they were admitted to the Home, and the date when they left.

Unfortunately, the admission registers do not record all details for all children through all years of the Home's operation. However, they do give information about admissions for a very large number of children who came into 'care' in WA. Apart from a 20-year gap (1929-1949), there is an admission register for all years from 1894 to 1988.

Access Conditions

Access to these records is restricted and confidentiality is protected by CPFS. If you believe the Department may hold records about you, or about a family member, you are encouraged to apply. Access is governed by the Freedom of Information Act 1992 and CPFS has a form on their website which you must use to apply for records.

Records

In 2001, the Department took all the information from the admission registers and created an electronic index. Using the index, the Department has tried to match the children on the admission registers with other files held. This indexing work showed that some children's names appeared multiple times. The Department had to look carefully at the other information on the admission register to try and determine if that name belonged to one child. For example, if 'John Smith' was admitted 4 times in 1946, was it the same John Smith or were there two boys called John Smith? If the child's birthdate or parent's name was also recorded, that would help sort out who was who. But often, there was only a name with the date of admission.

In the early days of the Receiving Home, children were often admitted by their parents or relatives – particularly if a mother was ill or needed to go out to work and had no-one to care for the children. Country children also came to stay at the Home while they waited to see a doctor or went to the Children's Hospital in Perth. Many of those children's names are on the admission register, but sometimes they were not recorded.

After 1969, another reception Home, called Bridgewater, opened in Applecross. The Department's index also contains the names of people who came into 'care' via Bridgewater.

Nine volumes of admission registers have been electronically indexed, as follows:

- Vol. 1: 1894 – 1907
- Vol. 2: 1902 – 1916
- Vol. 3: 1916 – 1922
- Vol. 4: 1922 – 1926
- Vol. 5: 1926 – 1929
- Vol. 6: 1949 – 1959
- Vol. 7: 1959 – 1965
- Vol. 8: 1965 – 1976
- Vol. 9: 1976 – 1988
- Volumes covering the years from 1929 to 1949 are missing

The admission registers had columns for quite a lot of information to be recorded about each child. That information could be passed along to the foster carer or Children's Home so that they had some background information about why the child had come into care. But sadly, the importance of recording this information wasn't foreseen and in many cases the register contains only a child's name and the date of admission. However, the admission registers are very valuable for the times when they *may* record the following details:

- Name of the child
- Age
- Birthplace
- Religion
- Where the child was sent/referred from and by whom
- Reason for admission
- Health on admission
- Names of parents
- Parents' occupation and address
- Date of discharge
- Remarks
- After care (where the child went to afterwards)

More info

Organisations in these records

Related Organisations

- [Government Industrial School \(1893 - 1907\)](#)
Date: 1894 - 1907

- [Government Receiving Depot \(1907 - 1935\)](#)
- [Government Receiving Home \(1935 - 1952\)](#)
- [Child Welfare Reception Home \(1953 - 1972\)](#)
- [Mt Lawley Reception Home \(1973 - 1980\)](#)
- [Walcott Centre \(1980 - 1984\)](#)

Resources

- [*Searching for your family history*](#), Department of Communities website, 2021

You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/admission-registers-of-the-government-receiving-home-walcott-street-mt-lawley/>