

Under the Territorial laws of Nevada enacted in 1861 the Board of Prison Commissioners was comprised of the Governor, the Secretary of the Territory, and the Surveyor-General. The Board was empowered to "lease, purchase, or build, at the expense of the territory, a suitable building, for the use of the territory, as a territorial prison" and to report to the next session of the legislative assembly, what property it advised to purchase for a territorial prison. In 1864 the composition of the Prison Commissioners was changed to the Secretary of the Territory, the Territorial Auditor, and Treasurer.



In 1864 Nevada became a state, and its Constitutions created the Board of State Prison Commissioners to consist of the Governor, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General. A legislative act of 1873 stated that any two members constituted a quorum, with the full power to transact any required business. Subsequent legislation in 1877 and 1893 gave the Board supervision of all matters connected with the State Prison. The warden was to be chosen by a joint vote of the Legislature for a term of two years. In 1943 Nevada Statutes provided that the governor was to appoint a warden for the state prison. (Chap. 158, section 4.)

The warden made an annual report to the Board during the first year, which later became a biennial report to the legislature. From 1868 to 1872 the Lt. Governor was ex-officio warden. After those years there was no reference to the combining of two offices. Between 1925 and 1942 the Superintendent of the State Police was the ex-officio warden. From July 1942 to June 1956, the date of the last volume of the published report, the designation was simply warden.

In 1977 the Governor appointed a Director, who headed the Department of Prisons, and he in turn appointed a warden for each penal institution of the Department.

Inmate Case Files 1863-1991 1700 c.f.

The Inmate File is a compilation of criminal history information and records of correctional supervision concerning individual inmates. The State Archives has custody of the records of inmates twenty-five (25) years after release from the prison system. Some of the following information may be included in these records, though not every file contains all the documents: 1. Mug shot; 2. Fingerprint card; 3. Judgment of conviction; 4. Amended judgment and court orders; 5. District Attorney's Statement of Fact; 6. Inmate Classification Report; 7. Official certificates for: commutation of sentence, conditional pardon, discharge, pardon, parole, restoration of citizenship; 8. Parole and Probation Revocations; 9. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Previous Offenses.

Reports 1864-1977 5 c.f.

Warden's monthly, annual and biennial reports, Superintendent's report on Nevada State Prison and the State Prison Farms, prison contracts and claims, operational logs that record the movement of inmates and guard shifts that form the basis to the institutional reports, as well as specific investigation reports. Records are contained in three regular and two oversize archives boxes. One volume, 1881-1882, NSP-731, is missing from the collection.

Prison Commissioner's Minutes 1864-1947; 1974-1986 8 volumes, 1 box = 2.3 c.f.

Minutes of the State Prison Commissioners Meetings. The Governor, the Secretary of State and the Attorney General constitute the State Prison Commissioners, any two of whom constitute a quorum.

Department of Corrections

Prison Commission Records 1978-1993 1 c.f.

As de facto secretary of the Commission, the Secretary of State's file includes minutes, procedure, operations, and execution manuals, Department of Prison Information Bulletins, and administrative regulations. One item of special interest in this file is a translation of an article from the Italian periodical *Epoca*, on gambling in the Nevada penitentiary: "In This Prison You Can Become Rich."

Isolation Prison Logs 1973-1978 11 volumes = 1.2 cubic ft.

The logs identify two isolation centers: the medium security at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center, and the maximum security. The records are entered in chronological order; there are notations of any usual happening each day.

Medical Director's Files 1982-1995 12 c.f.

The Medical Director's Files are loosely arranged in alphabetical order i.e., according to names or topics. The files cover the broad scope of the activities of the prison department. Administrative records include budgets, minutes of the administration, as well as those of the various functional committees, consultation applications, correspondence, and schedules. The legal papers include lawsuits against prison officials and medical staff for medical negligence and malpractice. The medical referrals for cases brought before the Pardon and Parole Board are included in the files.

More information on Nevada Inmates

Biennial Reports of the Warden of the Nevada State Prison: These published reports for the years 1865-1917 enumerated all prisoners by name, age, nativity, occupation, crime, county received from, sentence, date of receipt, and date of discharge. These are available at the Nevada State Library and Archives in paper (Call #29-P93/1:year) or on microfilm (Call #29-L61A/8:91-6).

Pardons granted by the Board of Pardons Commissioners were listed in the Governors' messages to the Legislature from 1865 until 1959. These appear in volume one of each *Appendix to the Journals of the Nevada State Senate and Assembly*, available in paper or microfilm (Call #29-L61A/8:91-16) at the Nevada State Library.

The Wardens reports and Governors' messages are also available in paper or on microfilm at the libraries of the University of Nevada in both Reno and Las Vegas, as well as most county law libraries.

Criminal court cases are on file with the county clerk of the county where the crime was committed. The Nevada State Library has 19th century district court criminal case files for Douglas, Storey, and Washoe Counties in microfilm.

Cases referred to the Nevada Supreme Court are indexed in *Alphabetical List of Nevada Supreme Court Cases* in Volume IV of the Nevada Revised Statutes, reported in *Cases Determined by the Supreme Court of the State of Nevada* (Call #29-Su7/5:year). Supreme Court case files are available on microfilm at the Supreme Court Clerk's Office at the Supreme Court building, 100 N. Stewart Street, Carson City as well as the Nevada State Library (Call #29-Su7/12:year).