# New Jersey State Archives Collection Guide

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## Institutional History

The Public Library Commission of New Jersey was created in the year 1900 by "An Act to promote the establishment and efficiency of free public libraries," passed by the state legislature on March 20th of that year (*Laws of 1900*, chap. 62). The five-member commission was given the responsibility of advising interested persons on the establishment, maintenance, and administration of free public libraries, and on the selection and cataloging of books. The commission was also authorized to make donations to free public libraries for the purpose of book purchases.

New Jersey's Public Library Commission existed as an independent body until March 1945, at which time it became the advisory board of the newly created Division of the State Library, Archives and History, within the New Jersey Department of Education (*Laws of 1945*, chap. 50).

## Content Note

This series consists of a near-complete set of typed (carbon duplicate or mimeographed) annual reports of the Public Library Commission submitted to Governors Silzer, Moore, Larson, Hoffman, Edison, and Edge during the period 1923-1944. Two reports were missing at the time of accession: 1923-1924 and 1935-1936. The reports contain information on commission programs and appropriations, and on the establishment of public libraries in New Jersey.

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