



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

RELIEF BOARD

An Inventory of Its Records

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

Agency:	Minnesota. State Board of Relief.
Series Title:	Relief Board records,
Dates:	1916-1925.
Abstract:	Minutes, resolutions, and related documents pertaining to authorization of emergency appropriations for calamity or disaster relief.
Quantity:	2 v. and 1 folder in box.
Location:	108.I.14.8F-1 (ov)

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF THE STATE BOARD OF RELIEF

The State Board of Relief was created in 1919 to prevent disasters that threatened to destroy life or property and to grant relief or temporary assistance to communities stricken by disease, flood, storm, fire, or action of the elements (Ex. Sess. Laws 1919 c35). It was authorized to use, in any such emergency, any property or vehicle, or means of transportation, communication, or public service which it deemed necessary to save life or property. It was authorized to use state offices and facilities, the state militia, the state fire marshal, and any employees of the state when needed for relief or to prevent a disaster.

Prior to the establishment of the Relief Board, any state board or official of the state was required to obtain the consent of the governor, the state auditor, and the state treasurer to expend monies for calamity relief if such expenditures would cause the official or board to exceed its appropriated budget (Laws 1907 c272).

The board was composed of the governor, the state auditor, and the state treasurer. It was abolished in 1925 and its powers and duties were transferred to the Executive Council (Laws 1925 c426).

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE RECORDS

Record books of minutes, resolutions, and related documents pertaining to authorization of emergency appropriations for calamity or disaster relief, and for expenses for which there was no legislative appropriation. They include authorizations for cyclone, flood, and fire relief; for

construction or repair of state buildings; for timber management; and to mobilize the National Guard.

The record books of the Relief Board and its predecessor (a committee composed of the governor, state auditor, and state treasurer) document actions taken between June 1916 and May 1925 concerning calamity or disaster relief, and for expenses for which there was no legislative appropriation.

The first volume (39 pages) records resolutions and letters of the relief board from June 1916 through October 1918. Extra money was granted to pay for mobilization of the National Guard (per presidential order), to repair barns and silos damaged by fire at the University of Minnesota Agricultural Campus, to repair the state Capitol, and for appraisal of remaining timber in burnt-over areas. Other monies were granted to combat white pine blister rust, to construct quarantine buildings for diphtheria patients at Rochester State Hospital, and for victims of the Tyler cyclone (August 1918) and the Moose Lake-Cloquet fire (October 1918).

The second volume (30 pages) records the minutes of the State Board of Relief (established 1919) from September 1919 through May 1925. The Board apparently met as needed; in any event, no minutes for 1923 and the first half of 1924 are recorded. Money was granted for repairing burnt buildings at Mankato and Winona State Teachers Colleges, and for victims of the floods in northwest Minnesota (August 1919) and of the Tracy tornado (June 1924). Money also was granted for construction of fire service roads from Grand Marais to Gunflint Lake, Ely to Finland, and in the Isabella area.

There is a folder of loose resolutions and correspondence removed from the first volume. The bulk of these documents date from 1916-1918 and consist of the original signed resolutions (signed by all three members; the volumes often contain only two signatures) and correspondence received by the Board.

INDEX TERMS

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

- Disaster relief--Minnesota.
- Disasters--Minnesota--Prevention.
- Forest management--Minnesota--Finance.
- Minnesota--Appropriations and expenditures.
- Public buildings--Minnesota--Maintenance and repair--Finance.

Organizations:

- Minnesota. Executive Council.
- Minnesota. National Guard.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation:

[Indicate the cited volume and page or item and folder title here]. Minnesota State Board of Relief records. Minnesota Historical Society. State Archives.
See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below.

Location	Box	
108.I.14.8F-1	---	Record Book, Calamity Appropriations, Sec. 115, G.S. 1913, 1916-1918. 1 volume. This volume records actions of the executive council making emergency appropriations.
		Record Book, State Board of Relief, Chapter 35 Extra Session Laws 1919, 1919-1925. Contains minutes of the board, September 23, 1919 - May 22, 1925.
		Correspondence and Resolutions, 1916-1922. 1 folder. Contains originals of resolutions and correspondence, found loose in the first volume. Resolutions are signed by the governor, auditor, and treasurer. Many of the same resolutions in the volume are signed only by the governor and the auditor.