

Charity Organisation Society of Melbourne

1887 – 1947

Details

The Charity Organisation Society (COS) of Melbourne was established in 1887 to help co-ordinate Melbourne's charitable organisations and to foster the ideal of 'self-help' in the poor. The Society played a role in the development of the social work profession in Victoria. In 1947, the Society moved to new premises in Drummond Street, Carlton and became known as the Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria.

In the 1920s, the COS moved to new premises at Morris House, at which other Victorian charitable organisations were collocated. This heralded a time of co-operation between charities and the standardising of social work practices by the promotion of social case work.

The Society increasingly became involved in child welfare issues. One organisation also located at Morris House was the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which benefited from access to the Central Register of help given by all relieving agencies maintained by the COS.

In the post-Depression years, the Society expanded its casework and social work services to foster care placements.

A collection of records at the State Library of Victoria relating to the Melbourne Orphanage contains case files and reports prepared by the Charity Organisation Society.

The Society moved to premises at 197 Drummond St Carlton in 1947, when it changed its name to the Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria.

More info

Chronology

- **Charity Organisation Society of Melbourne (1887 – 1947)**
 - Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria (1947 - 1996)
 - drummond street services (1996 - current)

Related Entries

Related Organisations

- [Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(1896 - 1971\)](#)

In 1923, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children moved into the offices of the Charity Organisation Society.

Resources

- Cage, R. A., *Poverty abounding, charity aplenty: the charity network in colonial Victoria*, 1992
- [*Wards of the State. An astonishing number. How are they dealt with?*](#), The Argus, 13 January 1911
- Anderson, Paul, *The Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria 1887-1987: a short history*, 1987

Records

Records

- [Melbourne Orphan Asylum Records \(1845 - 1986\)](#)
 - [Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria Records \(1887 - 1968\)](#)
 - [Client Records, Citizens Welfare Service of Victoria/ Charity Organisation Society of Melbourne](#)
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