

# Welfare Branch, Northern Territory Administration, Australian Government

1955 – 1970

## Details

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The Welfare Branch replaced the Native Affairs Branch in 1953. This occurred as a result of the passing of the Welfare Ordinance 1953 which created the position of Director of Welfare. Under the Welfare Ordinance, the Director of the Welfare Branch became the legal guardian of all 'wards', a term used in that legislation to refer to Aboriginal people. After the passing of the Child Welfare Ordinance 1958, the Director of Welfare was also appointed as the Director of Child Welfare and in that role became the guardian of every State child. Prior to the establishment of the Welfare Branch, the State Children's Council was responsible for the welfare of non-Aboriginal children. In 1970 the Northern Territory Administration was re-organised and the Welfare Branch was upgraded to become the Welfare Division.

An office of the Welfare Branch was also located in Adelaide from 1963. This branch was responsible for children from the Northern Territory who were moved interstate into foster or institutional care. This office comprised two welfare officers who reported to the Head Office of the Welfare Branch in Darwin. This branch was sometimes referred to as the Welfare Section or Welfare Office.

Under the Welfare Ordinance which led to the creation of Welfare Branch, the Director of Welfare had specific duties towards all wards. In his role he was expected to take steps

*to promote their social, economic and political advancement for the purpose of assisting them and their descendants to take their place as members of the Community of the Commonwealth.*

When read in relation to Aboriginal people, this duty reflects the move 'from protection' towards 'assimilation'.

The Welfare Branch through the Director was also responsible for supervising and regulating 'the use and management of institutions'.

## More info

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### Chronology

- State Children's Council, Northern Territory, Australian Government (1930 - 1959)
- Native Affairs Branch, Australian Government (1939 - 1955)
- **Welfare Branch, Northern Territory Administration, Australian Government (1955 – 1970)**
  - Welfare Division, Northern Territory Administration, Australian Government (1970 - 1972)
  - Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Northern Territory Division, Australian Government (1972 - 1990)

- Community Welfare Section, Department of the Northern Territory, Australian Government (1974 - 1977)
- Department of Community Services, Northern Territory Government (1977)
  - Department of Community and Social Development, Northern Territory Government (1977 - 1978)

## Related Entries

### Ran

- [Areyonga Native Settlement \(1920s - 1990\)](#)
- [Receiving Home, Alice Springs \(1959 - 1966\)](#)  
Date: 1959 - 1966
- [Essington House \(1963 - 1974\)](#)  
Date: 1963 - 1970
- [Palmerston House \(1963 - 1975\)](#)  
Date: 1963 - 1970
- [Dundas House \(1961 - 1979?\)](#)  
Date: 1961 - 1970
- [Bradshaw House \(1966 - 1976\)](#)  
Date: 1964 - 1970
- [Adolescent Receiving Home \(1961 - 1963\)](#)
- [Tambling House \(1970? - 1975\)](#)  
Date: 1970 -
- [Chinnery Family Home \(1968 - current\)](#)  
Date: 1968 - 1970
- [Haasts Bluff Native Settlement \(1940s - 1959\)](#)
- [Hamilton Family Home \(1968 - current\)](#)  
Date: 1968 - 1970
- [Harney Family Home \(1968 - 1985\)](#)  
Date: 1968 - 1970
- [Bagot Aboriginal Reserve \(1938 - 1978?\)](#)
- [Papunya Native Settlement \(1958 - 1978\)](#)
- [Yuendumu Native Settlement \(1946 - 1976\)](#)
- [Phillip Creek Native Settlement \(1945 - 1956\)](#)
- [Warrabri \(1954 - 1978\)](#)
- [Fannie Bay Receiving Home \(1956 - 1957\)](#)  
Date: 1956 - 1957
- [Receiving Home, Darwin \(1957 - 1961\)](#)  
Date: 1957 - 1961

### Related Organisations

- [Garden Point Mission \(1940 - 1969\)](#)  
The Welfare Branch, Northern Territory Administration often sent State children to the Garden Point Mission

### Related Legislation

- [Welfare Ordinance 1953, Northern Territory \(1957 - 1964\)](#)
- [Child Welfare Ordinance 1958, Northern Territory \(1959 - 1984\)](#)

## Records

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### Records

- [Palmerston House - Receiving Home for Adolescent Girls, Darwin \(1960 - 1976\)](#)
- [Department of Aboriginal Affairs - Regional Office - Alice Springs - Monthly and Annual Reports - FWOs \(1960 - 1961\)](#)

- [Fostering files with 'F' prefix, Northern Territory Welfare Branch and successors \(1950 - 1999\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files, Welfare Branch, Northern Territory Administration \(1959 - 1978\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files relating to the alleviation of distress with "A" prefix, Northern Territory Welfare Branch and successors \(1939 - 1966\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files relating to children with "C" prefix, Northern Territory Welfare Branch and successors \(1958 - 1982\)](#)
  - [Correspondence files relating to State Children with "SC" prefix, Northern Territory Welfare Branch and successors \(1958 - 1980\)](#)
  - [Children's Registers \(1951 - 1999\)](#)
  - [Life of Sister Eileen Heath \(1994 - 1996\)](#)
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