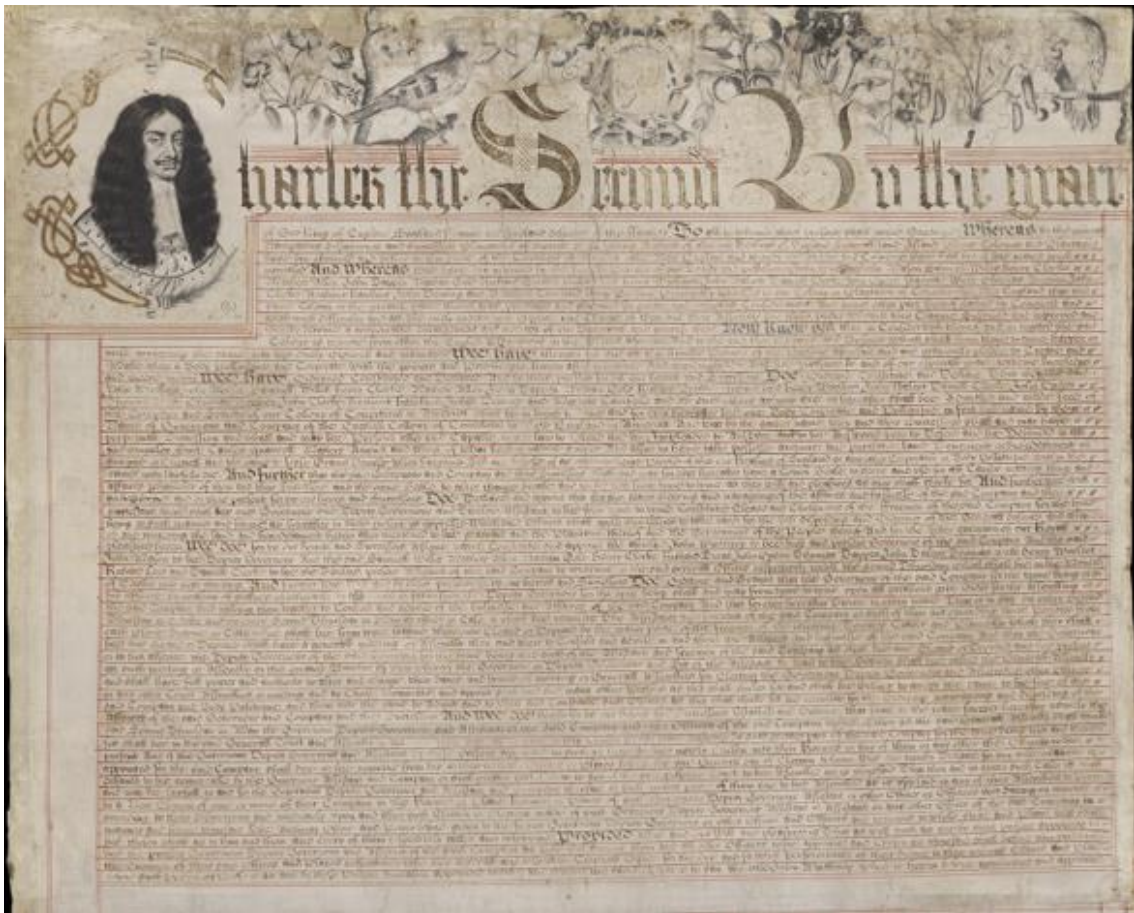


# HISTORIC DOCUMENTS PRESERVATION PROGRAM

## PRESERVING THE PAST, PROTECTING THE FUTURE

### Annual Report on the Preservation Activities of the Connecticut State Library

FY 2025



Connecticut State Library  
Hartford, Connecticut  
September 1, 2025

# CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY

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## Front Cover

The Charter of the Colony of Connecticut, 1662, Connecticut State Library, State Archives, RG 001. View the entire digitized version of the Royal Charter in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA):

<https://hdl.handle.net/11134/3877882>.

*Issued in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 11-8k(c)2*

**Annual Report to the Government Administration and Elections Committee  
On the Preservation Activities of the Connecticut State Library with  
Allocated Funds in the Historic Documents Preservation Account**

**I. Historic Documents Preservation Program**

The Historic Documents Preservation Program supports the preservation and management of government records throughout Connecticut. This program was established under Public Act No. 00-146, *An Act Concerning Real Estate Filings and the Preservation of Historic Documents* and codified in Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) §11-8i through §11-8n, effective July 1, 2000.

The program is funded through a fee on land recordings pursuant to CGS §7-34a. As originally established, municipalities collected a \$3 land recording fee for records preservation and management, retaining \$1 for the town clerk fund and remitting \$2 for deposit to the program account.

During the 2017 session, however, the legislature approved a significant increase in funding for the program, doubling the land recordings fee that generates revenues for the account (Public Act No. 17-2). Effective December 1, 2017, municipalities began collecting a \$6 fee for records preservation and management and an additional \$4 fee for deposit to the state's General Fund. From the \$6 fee, municipalities retain \$2 for the town clerk fund and remit \$4 for deposit to the program account.

As the program is funded through a land recording fee, revenues are directly impacted by changes in the real estate market. In FY 2025, revenues decreased by 6% from the previous year; comparing the past two years, revenues declined 15%. Some factors that may have contributed to the decrease include a low housing inventory, steep home prices, high mortgage rates, and inflation. Real estate predictions indicate that the remainder of 2025 and into 2026 will be challenging for buyers, as low housing inventory, increased home prices, and high mortgage rates continue, but it is possible that both the number of houses for sale will increase in some areas and growth of home prices could level in 2025-2026.

The Historic Document Preservation account continues to be impacted by the legislative change to recording fees for Documents with Nominees. Effective July 15, 2013, a new distribution model was set for the land recording fee on Documents with Nominees, excluding this fee from distribution to the program account and significantly reducing

revenues (Public Act No. 13-184) now codified in CGS 49-10(h). In the 2014 and 2015 legislative sessions, the State Library requested that the program's portion of the recording fee on Documents with Nominees be credited to the account to keep the fund whole. The proposals did not move forward. Our program continues to be impacted by this legislative change, losing almost 18% over the last fiscal year and an average of just over 18% each year since 2013.

Since the establishment of the grant program in 2000, the Connecticut State Library has distributed over \$22 million in grants to municipalities. The preservation and management of public records is an essential function of municipal government. Public records, including land records, maps, minutes and vital records, serve to protect and document the ongoing rights and interests of individuals and entities throughout the State of Connecticut.

The grant program supports towns in preserving these records while also increasing efficiencies, reducing costs, and improving their public services, including online access to public records. The program continues to provide significant benefits to the citizens of Connecticut by providing support and funding for municipalities' records management and preservation programs.

The State Library has maintained a fiscally conservative approach in its management of the account. During this period, the State Library awarded municipal grants; accessioned and preserved archival records; supported the New Haven Court Records project and other significant records projects; provided records training and outreach; and supported professional development in archives and records management.

Pursuant to statute, seventy percent of the funding is allocated for municipal grant awards "to enhance or improve the preservation and management of historic documents" [CGS §11-8l(d)]. A separate annual report is submitted each year to describe the municipal grant awards and provide a summary of the State Library's activities and its recommendations concerning the grant program [CGS §11-8m(b)].

Thirty percent is allocated for "(1) the preservation and management of historic documents maintained by the State Library, and (2) the expenses of administering the historic documents preservation grant program" [CGS §11-8k(c)]. This annual report describes the activities carried out by the State Library with these allocated funds [CGS §11-8k(c)].

#### A. *Grant Program Administration*

The Historic Documents Preservation Grant Program is administered through the Office of the Public Records Administrator. In FY 2025, 147 municipalities were awarded targeted grants totaling \$916,500. Grants were awarded in the amounts of \$5,500, \$7,500, or \$10,500, for small, medium, and large towns, respectively. These grants supported significant improvements in the preservation and management of local government records across the state.

#### B. *Government Records Preservation*

The State Archives contains over 55,000 cubic feet of records documenting the evolution and implementation of state public policy, the rights and claims of citizens, and the history of Connecticut and its people.

In FY 2025, the Archives acquired 29 accessions totaling 299 cubic feet. Accessions included:

- **State Government Records:** Connecticut State Police 90th Anniversary Commemorative History; Connecticut State Police 100 Year History; and State Police graduation November 1958 photograph, 1958-2003, 0.5 cubic feet (RG 161:001). Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, State Police (RG 161:001). Investigation files, 2003, 68 cubic feet. The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 and federal Criminal Justice Information (CJI) policy. Office of the Governor extradition files and waivers of extradition, 2019, 1 cubic foot (RG 005). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner toxicology records, 1977-2024, 30 cubic feet (RG 194). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 and CGS 19a-411. First Company Governor's Foot Guard, First Company Governor's Horse Guard, Second Company Governor's Foot Guard, and the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard inactive militia personnel and tax records, circa 1918-2023, 20.25 cubic feet (RG 013). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210. Litchfield County Coroner transcripts of hearings, 1933-1937, 1.5 cubic feet (RG 003). Litchfield County Supreme Court of Errors files, 1929-1940, 2.5 cubic feet (RG 003). Connecticut State Library recruitment files and work study program files, 1967-1990, 9 cubic feet (RG 012). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210. Connecticut State Library, Fiscal Services records, 1948-1991, 5 cubic feet (RG 012). Connecticut State Library, State Archives records,

2009-2012, 0.5 cubic feet; disaster and emergency preparedness and response subject files, 1967-2018, 2 cubic feet; transfer case files, 1908-2019, 1 cubic foot (RG 012). Connecticut State Library, Office of the Public Records Administrator records, 1979-2019, 8.5 cubic feet; municipal records disposal authorizations, 2017-2020, 4 cubic feet (RG 012). Connecticut Commission on the Arts personnel files, 1957-1995, 6 cubic feet (RG 097). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210.

- **Local Government Records:** Housatonic Valley Regional High School (HVRHS) education records, 1936-1973, 31 cubic feet (RG 062:021). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Town of Bethel school registers, 1918-1956, 10 cubic feet (RG 062:009). The records are not open to the public per CGS 1-210 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Town of Brookfield election records, 1899-2001, 3 cubic feet (RG 062:018). Town of Cornwall rate books, 1910-1975, 4 cubic feet (RG 062:031). Town of Harwinton grantor and grantee indexes, 1737-1931, 1.5 cubic feet (RG 062:066). Town of Preston records, 1965-1985, 1.5 cubic feet (RG 062:114). The records in box 1 are not open to the public per CGS 1-210. Town of Sharon grand lists, 1926-1944 and minutes, 1889-1980, 3 cubic feet (RG 062:125). Redding Probate Court record books, 1925-1972, 20 volumes (RG 004:117). Stamford Probate Court records, 1966-1969, 50 cubic feet (RG 004:135).
- **Manuscript Collections:** Armories in Norwich Collection, 1862-1866, 30 documents (RG 069:201). Colt Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Company Collection, gun designs and marketing materials, circa 1836-1984, 17 drawers (RG 103). Emma A. Peck Collection, 1869-2011, 0.25 cubic feet (RG 069:198). Michael E. Shay Papers, 1859-1931, 23 cubic feet (RG 069:200).

In FY 2025, the Archives ingested 26 digital collections into CTDA, totaling approximately 1.43 TB of data. Ingests to the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) were on hold through the first half of FY2025 due to the system migration to a new platform and the hiring of a new Digital Records Archivist, Brittney Rankins, in October 2024. Digital collections included:

- **Described and Uploaded Collections:** The Charter of the Colony of Connecticut, 1662 (RG 001); Governor Dannel P. Malloy Photographs (RG 005:041); James Naleski Photographs (RG 005:042); Trumbull Papers (RG 000); and Moheagan Indians vs. Colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island (RG 000).

- **ContentDM to CTDA Migration:** 1965 Keystone Aerial Survey Photographs (RG 089:11c); Account books, Diaries, and Journals (RG 000); Chauncey Hosford War of 1812 Papers (RG 069:162); Founding Documents (RG 001); General Assembly Portraits (PG 540); 1934 Aerial Photographs (RG 089:011a); New London Superior Court Files (RG 003); New London County Court, Papers by Subject (RG003\_NLCC\_PBS); New London County Court Files (RG003\_NLCC\_Files); Wethersfield State Prison, Warrants of Commitment, 1856-1860 (RG 017); Tolland County Superior Court Files (RG 003); Litchfield County Court Minorities Collection (RG 003); Good Hope Log (RG000 - 387fL828); Military Service Questionnaires (RG 012); Map of the Farmington Canal (RG 000 - 912.74 C72); Brady Collection of Civil War Photographs (PG 85); Civil War Collection, Photographs of Civil War Flags (PG 80); Floods and Hurricanes in Connecticut, Series 3. Flood of 1955 (PG 160); Samuel Wyllys Papers (RG000 - 974.6fW97); Colt's Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Company Collection (PG 460); and WPA Architectural Survey (RG 033).
- **Format Conversion and Upload:** A copy of the following digital video disc (DVD) was converted to MP4 and uploaded to CTDA: *Resolved to be Free* (E263.C5.R48.2012). This film was produced during the American Revolution Bicentennial by former West Hartford Mayor Ellsworth Grant, who owned Fenwick Productions. The film is narrated by his sister-in-law and Connecticut Native actress Katharine Hepburn.

### C. *New Haven Court Records*

The State Archives completed additional work on a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to enhance access to judicial records held in the State Archives from the New Haven County, County and Superior Courts, 1666-1855. The “Uncovering New Haven” project continues earlier grant-funded work to identify records related to historically marginalized communities, especially enslaved persons, free persons of color, and Indigenous persons.

From July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, project staff processed 92.75 cubic feet (215.5 boxes) of the New Haven County and Superior Court records. Records completed include County Court files 1819, Superior Court files 1780-1798, Superior Court judgments (civil case files) 1798-1855, Superior Court criminal files 1797-1855, Superior Court no appearance files 1805-1855, and Superior Court papers by subject (executions). Project staff have rehoused cases according to best archival practices, identified and entered approximately 105 cases

involving African-descended, African American, Black, Indigenous, Spanish, and multiracial persons or groups into a database spreadsheet to be published online.

To date, State Library staff have scanned 1,440 cases (5,439 pages) for ingest into the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) at <http://hdl.handle.net/11134/30002:RG003>. Scanning halted when the previous Digital Records Archivist retired in March 2024 and the CTDA went offline for a massive upgrade. Scanning should resume in the next few months.

In order to enhance public awareness of these research resources, this project has been publicized on the Connecticut State Library website, as well as several other venues. From July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, project staff published 13 blog posts and 7 Instagram posts, presented at one webinar, and submitted 2 articles to third-party publications.

The projected completion date for this project is October 31, 2025. By this date, all court records except County Court files 1820-1855 will be processed (83 boxes). Finding aids for the New Haven County and Superior Court records will also be published on the State Library's website.

*A. Planning to Preserve Connecticut's Digital Government History Project*

The State Archives received a Congressionally Directed Spending Funding Request of \$948,000 through the offices of Senators Richard Blumenthal and Christopher Murphy. The project is a collaboration of the Connecticut State Library (CSL) and the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) through the University of Connecticut, and the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Bureau of Information Technology Solutions (BITS).

The project supports expanding and improving the automatic digital connection required to transfer essential long-term and historically significant archival digital records from state agencies to the custody of the State Archives. Outcomes will include workflows for automating redaction of sensitive and confidential information within publicly accessible documents housed in the CTDA and recommendations and cost estimates for a secure digital preservation repository meeting digital preservation standards for confidential and restricted records. The State Library's cost share on this project falls under our preservation activities.

During FY2025, State Archivist Lizette Pelletier and Assistant State Archivist Allen Ramsey presented the session "Automating Redaction to Improve Access to Records" at the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) annual meeting in St. Louis on September 19, 2024. Information

Management Consultant Mark Conrad and the working group drafted and issued a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) for a secured digital preservation repository. Ten vendors responded to the RFI with information about their offerings. Mark analyzed the responses and information gathered during his research into a draft report with recommendations. The working group reviewed a draft of the report several times and provided feedback. The [report with recommendations](#) was released on June 3, 2025.

#### D. *Records Management Training and Outreach*

Public Records staff continues working closely with state and local government officials to address records preservation and management issues, including records retention and disposition, disaster recovery, electronic records management, and vault storage.

In FY 2025, the department presented municipal records management training at the Tax Collectors Association Conference, and as a webinar for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. Additionally, staff developed and conducted webinar training for Town Clerks on the Historic Documents Preservation Program. Staff also attended the fall and spring conferences of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association, presenting Public Records program updates in the fall and staffing an information table to discuss the grant program and other records management topics with clerks and vendors at both conferences.

The department presented in person state records management training at the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Connecticut State Community College Compliance Institute, and the Office of Policy and Management Open Data Day. In addition, staff continued to organize and present a state agency records management training program targeted towards Records Management Liaison Officers and other state agency staff, consisting of a series of seven webinars with presentations by Public Records staff, State Archives staff, and State Library Reference Services staff.

#### E. *Professional Development in Records Management and Archives*

The State Library maintains an annual membership in the Council of State Archivists (CoSA), which provides leadership that strengthens and supports state, territorial, and District of Columbia archives in their work to preserve and provide access to government records. CoSA offers a variety of educational opportunities and forums for both professional and technical staff. This includes advocacy for archival programs, technical shop talks, spotlights on individual state and territorial archives, case studies and best practices, and unconferences on electronic and digital records.

Public Records and Archives staff attended a variety of conferences and webinars on records management and preservation topics, including artificial intelligence; managing digital records; continuity of operations planning; disaster response and recovery; digitization standards and best practices; cloud computing; and the National Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators' (NAGARA) online forums.

**II. Historic Documents Preservation Account Expenditures – FY 2025**

|                                 |    |                  |
|---------------------------------|----|------------------|
| <i>Personnel Costs</i>          | \$ | 529,169          |
| <i>Other Expenses</i>           |    |                  |
| Consultant Services             | \$ | 51,013           |
| Data Services                   | \$ | 12,971           |
| Subscription – Archives         | \$ | 6,820            |
| Premises – Archives             | \$ | 5,931            |
| Van Lease – Archives            | \$ | 5,063            |
| Out of State Travel             | \$ | 1,816            |
| Account Correction              | \$ | (2,700)          |
|                                 | \$ | <b>610,083</b>   |
| <i>Grant Awarded</i>            |    |                  |
| 147 Targeted Grants             | \$ | <b>916,500</b>   |
| Unexpended Grant Funds Returned | \$ | <b>(10,069)</b>  |
|                                 |    | <hr/> <hr/>      |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>       | \$ | <b>1,516,514</b> |