



CT State Library

Office of the State Librarian

**Testimony of Kendall Wiggin
State Librarian
Concerning Raised Bill 5499
"An Act Concerning the Preservation of Historical Records and Access to
Restricted Records in the State Archives"
Committee on Government Administration and Elections- Public Hearing
March 7, 2016**

Good afternoon, Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. My name is Kendall Wiggin and I am the State Librarian. I am here to speak in support of Raised Bill 5499.

Since 1855, the Connecticut State Library has acquired historical records from the three branches of State government. In 1909, the General Assembly designated the State Library as the official State Archives charging it with the preservation of permanent public records. Pursuant to CGS § 11-8a(c), the Public Records Administrator and the State Archivist determine whether or not a public record has historical value and should be retained permanently. The State Archives does not force agencies to transfer any records to it, but the Public Records Administrator and the State Archivist will refuse to approve disposal of any such record, thus requiring the agency to retain the record permanently. This bill would not change that process.

Today, the State Archives contains more than 43,000 cubic feet of records documenting the evolution of state public policy and its implementation, the rights and claims of citizens, the development of state laws and regulations, and the history of Connecticut and its people. The collections consists of a variety of records, including medical records and other sensitive or restricted records from various state institutions. A complete list describing these records is attached. While these records were created for a specific administrative, legal or fiscal reason, many have significant historical and research value beyond that original purpose. However, access to them raises privacy and confidentiality issues.

It is the policy of the State Library to make information, including historical materials, accessible to the public while respecting the privacy rights of living individuals and adhering to the confidential requirement set by statute. In acquiring them, the State Archives is guided by the assumption that most records judged to be confidential today may over time become open, public records.

The public requires access to records currently deemed inaccessible for the following reasons:

- Identification of signs of genetically based illness through medical genealogy.
- Reconstruction of family history through greater knowledge about little known or forgotten relatives who spent time in state hospitals, sanatoriums, reformatories and prisons. Discovering information about these persons is important in the formation and maturing of personal identity in a healthy, positive environment.
- Examination of historical records that document the care of the most vulnerable members of society placed in government institutions. The citizens of Connecticut have a right to access the records for care which they have paid for with their tax dollars.
- Reconstruction of local history which is important for community self identity and an understanding of the way in which national and international events have affected the lives of ordinary people. This perspective can lead to further examination of the reasons behind the formation and implementation of public policies and an understanding of the sacrifices required of citizens in wars and the struggle for civil rights.

As we approach the centennial of America's entry into WWI, consider the story of 2 soldiers from CT. Let's call them Jim and Tom. Both served in the Yankee Division and saw action in France. They both returned home to warm welcomes. Their local newspapers included reports of their service. Both veterans completed the questionnaires that the State Library sent to all servicemen and women shortly after their return from the war. Neither had suffered any serious injuries nor seemed to be visibly scarred.

Jim returned to the job that he had left a few years earlier; got married; bought a house; and had children. He later opened a business and died in 1972 of natural causes. This we know from various public records.

When Tom returned he found that his employer had hired someone to fill his position and the factory where he had worked prior to enlisting was laying workers off with the wind down of war production. He had a hard time finding work, but eventually he did. He also got married, and eventually bought a house, but he and his wife never had any children. Before long he was arrested for a minor crime. It happened again and again and eventually he was incarcerated. Things did not go well in prison and the prison had him committed to a state psychiatric hospital. He died in 1968 and his wife died in 1980. They had no children and no surviving relatives as both were only children. We know some of this through the public record (birth,

marriage, and death records; land recordings; newspaper accounts; and census records) but under current law we will never know his full story. Did his experiences in the war result in his criminal doings and his ultimate life in a state hospital?

History should not lose track of these men's story. Today, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder [PTSD], what was referred to as "Shell Shock" after World War I is openly talked about and acknowledged. Historians and social scientists are trying to understand the history of this disease and its impact on families and communities, but current restrictions on public records preclude us from knowing Tom's story and other veterans like him. Under this proposed legislation, any medical records we have in the state archives for Tom would be available to researchers in 2018, 50 years after his death and 100 years after coming home from the war to end all wars.

In recent years, additional exemptions to the Freedom of Information statutes have created new barriers and confusion over access to historical records in the State Archives. When these exemptions are created, little consideration is given to the records' future historical importance and to allowing access to the record after a reasonable amount of time. Establishing a uniform time period for accessing records, as is the case in many states and with the National Archives, increases transparency and improves agency efficiency.

The two major accessibility issues in Connecticut are (1) the lack of a date for the end of confidentiality and (2) the application of concepts developed and laws passed in the late twentieth century to records created in the early twentieth and nineteenth centuries. These two roadblocks create a maze of rules and requirements making additional work for agency staff and frustrating researchers. The State Archives has had to develop a variety of guidelines, statements and procedures for making confidential archival records available to bona fide scholars and family members. A selection of reference emails documenting some of these procedures is located at the end of this testimony.

In *Perkins v. Freedom of Information Commission*, 228 Conn. 158, 635 A.2d 783 (Conn. 1993), the court adopted a two part test for determining whether release of records would invade an individual's personal privacy. The court in *Perkins* concluded that "the invasion of personal privacy exception of [CGS] § 1-19(b)(2) precludes disclosure, therefore, [1] only when the information sought by a request does not pertain to legitimate matters of public concern and [2]

is highly offensive to a reasonable person.”¹ In the concurrence in *Freedom of Information Officer v. Freedom of Information Commission*, 2015, Justice McDonald and Justice Palmer using the two part test adopted in *Perkins* and the Reinstatement (Second) of Torts §652A-I argue that “Even assuming, arguendo, that death does not extinguish the decedent’s privacy rights, it certainly must diminish them.”²

The State Library asserts that the information in records created 75 years or more ago fit the above categories and therefore should be made accessible within the parameters of the Perkins Decision, and common sense. Raised Bill 5499 would address our concerns regarding access to government records by lifting any restrictions 75 years after the creation of the record. In addition, this bill would bring Connecticut in line with HIPPA which opens medical records 50 years after an individual's death.³

My office welcomes the opportunity to work with the GAE to craft legislation that enables the State Library to carry out its mission to preserve and make accessible Connecticut's history and heritage while protecting the privacy of its citizens.

¹ *Perkins v. Freedom of Information Commission*, supra 228 Conn. 175.

² *Freedom of Information Officer v. Freedom of Information Commission*, 2015, 15.

³ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, “Health Information of Deceased Individuals”, <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/guidance/health-information-of-deceased-individuals/index.html> (accessed March 3, 2016).

Appendix A

Sensitive Records in the State Archives

Bar Examination Records: includes bar examination application files, committee minutes, and correspondence of the treasurer regarding applicants. In November 1990, Administrative Director of the Connecticut Bar Examining Committee, David Stamm, signed an agreement with State Librarian Richard G. Akeroyd, Jr. The agreement stated that any record “at least 75 years old from the time of their creation are open, public records without restriction on access or duplication.” Access to records less than seventy five years is subject to the restrictions listed in the agreement.

Coroner’s Records: includes record books, hearings (also known as coroner’s findings), case files, and administrative files. The records date from the origin of the office in 1883 to 1980. In 1979, the Chief Court Administrator directed all coroners to send their non-administrative records to the State Library when the office closed. In a letter dated May 4, 1987, the Attorney General’s Office declared that records before July 1, 1970 are “public records” open to examination. The Chief Medical Examiner, must grant written approval for access to records from July 1, 1970 to 1980.

City of Norwich Council Investigation Transcripts: In 1963-64, a subcommittee of the City Council of Norwich carried out a private investigation of the city’s police department. Subpoenaed city employees were told that if they refused to cooperate, they would be dismissed. All witnesses who appeared before the Council members were assured that the transcripts would remain sealed and confidential. In 1973, the city clerk asked the State Library for permission to destroy the transcripts. The State Library would not approve the destruction stating that the transcripts documented a unique action by a Connecticut municipality and therefore, had historical value. Under the authority of CGS § 4-34, which allowed the State Library to take custody of public records, the City of Norwich and the State Library signed an agreement to keep the transcripts sealed for fifty years. In 1992 the New London *Day* sought access to the transcripts, but the State Library refused citing its agreement with the city. The case went before the FOI Commission and ultimately the Superior Court, Appellate Court and

Supreme Court. Attorneys for the State argued that abrogating the agreement would be a violation of contract law. In 1997, the State Supreme Court ruled in favor of the State Library.⁴

Prison Inmate Files: Access to inmate files after 1950 may be restricted by erasure and medical record access laws. Inmates and law enforcement organizations request copies through the Department of Corrections [DOC] Records Management Liaison Officer [RMLO] who forwards the request to State Archives staff.

Wethersfield Inmate Files, 1903-51. Automated index. State Archives handles all queries.

Inmate files for all prisons, 1952-74. Arranged alphabetically.

Tumor Registry [Department of Public Health]: The registry is the oldest data resource in the world on cancer cases. Information on patients is continuously updated by physicians and utilized by research groups at institutions such as Yale. In 1991, the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Health Services signed an agreement with the State Library outlining specific procedures for DOHS staff to retrieve files from the off-site archival storage area. State Archives personnel do not retrieve or re-file the medical files. Implementation of electronic records keeping systems has reduced the use of the paper files.

Insurance Department: Examination files that document compliance reviews of insurance companies, healthcare centers, fraternal benefit societies and medical utilization review companies are closed to public examination by CGS §§ 38a(69a) and 38a(137). State Archives staff retrieve files upon request of the Department of Insurance.

Patient Case Files, Mental Health: CGS § 1-210(b2) closes medical files that “the disclosure of which would constitute an invasion of personal privacy.” CGS § 1-210(b10) exempts from disclosure “Records, tax returns, reports and statements exempted by federal law or the general statutes or communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship, marital relationship, clergy-penitent relationship, doctor-patient relationship, therapist-patient relationship or any other privilege established by the common law or the general statutes, including any such records, tax returns, reports or communications that were created or made prior to the establishment of the applicable privilege under the common law or the general statutes;” CGS § 52-146d et seq (1961) stipulates that all communications between a psychiatrist and patient are

⁴ *State Library v. Freedom of Information Commission, et al.* 240 Conn 824

privileged. Former patients and next of kin are allowed access to the resident files following the procedures established by the State Archives staff.

Connecticut Valley Hospital [formerly Connecticut Hospital for the Insane], includes patient files, 1962-1965, for individuals who were discharge or died at the institution]; commitment papers, 1874-1916; admission and discharge registers, 1868-1984; case history books, 1873-1915; patients within draft age, 1940-1946. Administrative records are also restricted because they contain patient names.

Fairfield Hills Hospital, includes admission and discharge registers, 1933-95 including Berkshire Woods Treatment Center, 1987-1995.

Norwich State Hospital, consists of admission registers, 1918-1995; patient leaves and separations, 1984-1996. Patient file, 1904-66, consist of a representative sampling of the files.

Case Files, Tuberculosis Sanatoria: Former patients are allowed access to the resident files following the procedures establish by the State Archives staff.

Cedarcrest, Patient *Registers*, 1910-57.

Seaside Sanatorium [see below].

Uncas on Thames, Children from Seaside were transferred to Uncas, which became a long term care facility. Patient files and school records from Seaside. Administrative records & patient files, ca. 1913-1990. Includes a detailed patient register, 1913-1927.

Industrial Schools/Reformatories⁵: The Meriden School for Boys opened in 1854 and Long Lane in 1869. In 1972, Meriden residents were transferred to Long Lane. In 2003, Long Lane ceased operating. Surname indexes were created by both institutions. Restrictions set by the Federal Education Records Protection Act [FERPA] apply to any education related records.

Meriden School for Boys Includes Board of Trustee minutes, 1854-1912, minutes and correspondence of the Committee on Parole and Discharge, 1899-1922, Executive Committee minutes, 1894-1918, Daily Registers and History Books, 1854-1967.

Long Lane School Includes case history books, 1869-1973, Superintendent's Journal,

⁵ Over the years, both institutions changed names a number of times. For the sake of brevity, these have not been listed.

1874-1917, minutes of annual meetings of the Board of Directors, 1868-1929, 1956-1960, school records, 1874-1956, financial records, 1869-1970, placing out files, case files, 1921-1960.

Governor's Records: Access issues pertain to commitment papers, 1828-1948, and constituent correspondence beginning with Governor Lowell Weicker's administration. State Archives staff review the records for any confidential materials prior to providing the files to the researcher.

Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities: consists of case files dating from 1954 to 1989, with the bulk from 1954-1984 which document human rights and opportunities during a significant period of democratic activity and legislation expanding CHRO into new areas. They are closed until the files are processed and a finding aid or container list is created. To date, CHRO has not provided guidance requested by the State Archives on access to the records.

Department of Children and Families: consists of child welfare bureau files dating from 1916 to 1976 that contain information on adoption and foster care and residence at reform schools, temporary homes and other hospitals. Staff works with DCF in making these files accessible. Procedure includes filing out a loan agreement form, physically transporting the file(s) to the DCF Central Office, and follow up by the Government Records Archivist when the loan time is close to expiring. To date, DCF has not provided guidance requested by the State Archives on access to the records.

Department of Developmental Services (formerly Department of Mental Retardation)

Mansfield Training School: consists of administrative records, a rough sampling of patient files, 1920-59; financial records, 1915-61, card file indexes, 1919-1960; patient registers and admittance records, 1862-1945, daily attendance records, 1914-1961, personnel records, 1913-58, farm operation records, 1916-1961, patient registers, predecessor hospital, CT School for Imbeciles, 1863-1915. Access is restricted to former residents, next of kin and bona fide scholars.

CARC v. Thorne, 1978-1994, Case files for the lawsuit which led to the closure of the Mansfield Training School. Access is restricted by statute.

Probate Records: consist primarily of record books and estate papers which includes wills, bonds, inventories, and reports of estate administrators. The State Archives is currently taking in probate files up to 1976 which may contain documents that are classified as confidential by

Probate Court Administration. Before 2010, some probate districts deposited probate files up to 1976 with the State Archives which may contain confidential documents. Probate files deposited in the State Archives after 2010 require the probate courts to remove confidential documents prior to deposit. A procedure is in place to review files from 1921 to 1976 for confidential tax documents prior to being made available to researchers. A separate list has been created of confidential tax documents.

Select Committee of Inquiry, 2004: consists of administrative files that contain subpoenas which are restricted because they may contain personal information such as social security numbers and financial account information. Redacted copies of these documents are available for access on a hard drive.

Student Records: consists of student files, 1940-1954, from William H. Hall High School, West Hartford and school registers from various towns dating from nineteenth to early twentieth century. Student records from a functioning school are restricted under FERPA and can be opened only for the student pursuant to a letter dated May 11, 2008 from Leroy S. Rooker, Director of Family Compliance, U. S. Department of Education, to Mark Jones, former State Archivist.

Personnel Files: consists of personnel files from the Department of Environmental Protection, 1934-1946, seasonal history cards, 1944-1969, and employee history cards, 1969-1975.

Military Orders, Connecticut National Guard, 1938-2006: These records contain social security numbers.

Workmen's Compensation Commission: consists of approved and rejected cases: Hartford/First District, 1914-1939; Waterbury/Fifth District, Awards and Stipulations, 1914-1939, Voluntary Agreements, 1914-1950, Findings and Awards, 1937-1950. There are also Workmen's Compensation Files, 1936-1961, in Attorney General records in the State Archives.

State Police Investigation Files: consists of Connecticut State Police investigation files and arrest logs are closed per CGS § 54-142a. Hartford Circus investigation files are open to the public. Also see the Chief State's Attorney report on *Dissemination and Maintenance of Criminal Records*, March 2012. Requests for case investigation records are referred to the State Police.

Veterans Records: consists of veterans' records from the Office of the Treasurer, Veterans' Bonus Division (WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam bonuses); Department of Veterans Affairs

(accession 2015-006) which contains DD-214 and DD-215 discharge certificates and Wartime Service Medal Applications and Certificate of Discharge; Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund; Department of Labor unemployment compensation claims DD-214; and veterans' records from various towns. Connecticut General Statutes §1-219 restricts veteran's military records including but not limited to a DD 214 form for 75 years.



Appendix B

Samples of Requests for Access to Restricted Records

Example 1

Request:

From: *[redacted email address]*
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2015
To: Ramsey, Allen
Cc: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: Research ----- records

Good Afternoon, Mr. Ramsey-

I am trying to find a way to verify when my father, *[redacted name of father]* was admitted to Norwich State Hospital. He was an in patient [sic] for Tuberculosis. I was told it was in the year 1956, but now have been told it may have been 1954. He lived in Guilford, CT at the time.

I am not sure what other information you may need, but I was told you may be able to help me verify this information.

Anything you can provide would be greatly appreciated!

Thank you and Happy Thanksgiving,
[redacted name of requester]

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2015
To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: Research ----- records

Dear *[redacted name of requester]*,

State Archives staff have located a patient file for your father *[redacted name of father]* from Uncas on Thames Hospital records held by the State Archives in the Connecticut State Library. According to the file your father was there from *[redacted month day]*

1951 to [redacted month day] 1953. Uncas was located in Norwich, Connecticut. Archives staff also searched Norwich State Hospital admission register records from 1954 to 1958 but no record was located for your father.

Unfortunately, Connecticut General Statute 1-210 (b) (10) exempts from the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) disclosure of “Records, tax returns, reports and statements exempted by federal law or the general statutes or communications privileged by the attorney-client relationship, marital relationship, clergy-penitent relationship, doctor-patient relationship, therapist-patient relationship or any other privilege established by the common law or the general statutes, including any such records, tax returns, reports or communications that were created or made prior to the establishment of the applicable privilege under the common law or the general statutes;”, http://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_014.htm#sec_1-210.

Uncas on Thames Hospital was a state tuberculosis sanatorium created or administered under the State Tuberculosis Commission which was under the Connecticut Department of Public Health. I would suggest if you want access to your father’s Uncas on Thames records that you contact the Department of Public Health. Freedom of Information Requests for documents from the Connecticut Department of Public Health under the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act may be directed to:

William Gerrish, Director
Office of Communications
Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Avenue, MS #13CMN
Hartford, Connecticut 06134

Please email requests to dph.communications@ct.gov.

You may also want to contact the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission to see if they can be of any assistance. You will find there contact information here: <http://www.ct.gov/foi/cwp/view.asp?a=3171&q=488274>.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 2*Request:*

From: *[redacted email address]*
Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2014
To: Ramsey, Allen
Subject: Norwich State Hospital

Dear Allen Ramsey,

I am inquiring about medical records from the Norwich State Hospital. My great uncle, *[redacted name of great uncle]*, was a tuberculosis patient there in *[redacted month]* of 1918. I believe that he died there, but I have not been able to find any death records for him.

I am hoping that I could get his medical records, or at least some information from them.

Besides writing a family history about him, I am also working on getting a military gravestone for him.

I appreciate any information you can provide.

Sincerely,

[redacted name of requester]

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2014
To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: Norwich State Hospital

Dear *[redacted name of requester]*,

Unfortunately we were unable to locate any records of your great uncle *[redacted name of great uncle]* in the Norwich State Hospital records. Archives staff searched the

admission register which starts on July 30, 1918 up to 1919 and the discharge records from 1909-1940. I know you were in search of a death date for your great uncle if you should happen to find a date we can always search again and expand the search past 1940.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 3

Request:

From: *[redacted email address]*
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014
To: Ramsey, Allen
Subject: Record Request

Dear Mr. Ramsey,

I am contacting you as instructed on the CT state archives website in order to request a patient's record from Norwich State Hospital. I have been putting together our family's history and I know very little about my great grandmother, *[redacted name of great grandmother]*. She was hospitalized at Norwich when my grandfather was a small child and stayed there, I believe, till her death. I would like a chance to look at her records to understand a little more about her and why she was hospitalized.

Full name: *[redacted name of family member]*

Hospitalized (approximately): 1930-1945

At the time of her hospitalization she lived in Hartford but was born in Ireland around 1890

My name: *[redacted requesters name]*

Phone number: *[redacted phone number]*

Please let me know if you have any questions or require more information.

Thanks,

[redacted requester name]

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2014
To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: Record Request

Dear *[redacted name of requester]*,

State Archives staff found records for *[redacted name of family member]* in both Connecticut Valley Hospital and Norwich State Hospital.

Connecticut Valley Hospital Records:

Up until about 1915 the Connecticut Hospital for the Insane (now Connecticut Valley Hospital) recorded patient information in case history books. The State Archives in the Connecticut State Library holds about half of these case history books. There is also an index volume to the case history books. The Archives also holds some patient admission and discharge volumes. These volumes are essentially log books with one patient entered per line in sequence of their admission or discharge/death.

Commitment papers (total of 4 pages if copied)

Case history book (1 page, only 1 patient to a page)

Admissions and Discharges are transcribed as follows:

[redacted admission and discharge register record transcriptions]

Norwich State Hospital Records:

The State Archives holds Norwich State Hospital admission registers from July 30, 1918-June 30, 1942 and from July 1, 1949-December 31, 1995; volume(s) covering 1942 July 1 - 1949 June 30 were not transferred to the State Archives. These registers are essentially log books with one patient entered per line in sequence of their admission or discharge/death. The archives also holds a sampling of patient discharge files from 1904-1944, 1961, 1963, and 1965-1966. Being *–[redacted name of family member]* died

in 1945 we do not have discharge files for that year.

Admissions are transcribed as follows:

[redacted admission register record transcriptions]

If you would like to have a photocopy of the Connecticut Valley Hospital commitment papers and case history book page made and sent to you then you will need to provide proof of relationship to *[redacted name of patient who is a relative]*. You can do this through birth, marriage, or death certificates, census records, and published obituaries. You will also need to include a photo id such as a drivers license or state issued identification card.

The charge for photocopies is .25 cents per page + \$3.00 handling + postage. An unofficial count of pages is 4 pages for the commitment papers and 1 page for the case history book so an estimated charge would be \$4.25 + postage. An invoice would be sent with the photocopies. Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 4

Request:

From: *[redacted email address]*

Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2014

To: Ramsey, Allen

Subject: Patient records Fairfield hospital

My wife *[redacted name]* then patient *[redacted maiden name]* was a patient at Fairfield hospital sometime from 1968 to 1970 and would like access to her medical records

Thank you

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen

Sent: Friday, May 23, 2014

To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: Patient records Fairfield hospital

Dear *[redacted name of requester]*,

Archives staff located admission and discharge records for *[redacted name of patient]*. The State Archives does not have patient files for Fairfield Hills Hospital. The admission and discharge records are transcribed below:

You may also want to contact Wayne Fournier (e-mail: wayne.fournier@ct.gov phone: 860-262-6342) at Connecticut Valley Hospital to see if he can be of further assistance.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 5

Request:

Subject: Contact the Connecticut State Library form

Submitted on *[redacted month day]*, 2014 – *[redacted time]* Submitted by anonymous user: *[redacted IP Address]*

Topic: Records Retention question

Preferred contact method: Email

Your email: *[redacted email address]*

Phone number: *[redacted phone number]*

Your question:

My question involves records for Ct. Valley Hospital. I'm looking back to the yr. 1900 when it was called Ct. Hospital for the Insane. My grandfather, *[redacted name of grandfather]*, had a sister, *[redacted name of sister]*, who was admitted there in 1900. She was 18. I have the census record showing she was a patient there. I also have her obituary which was printed in the *[redacted local newspaper title in Connecticut]*.

Is there any way I could get info on her while she was a patient there? Like the building she was in, her everyday life, her condition? She past [sic] away 1904. and is buried in [redacted town] Ct. Any information would be much appreciated, Thank you, [redacted name of requester], Ct. -----.

The results of this submission may be viewed at: [redacted hyperlink]

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2014
To: [redacted email address]
Subject: RE: Contact the Connecticut State Library form

Dear [redacted name of requester],

State Archives staff have located some records for [redacted name of patient] that the Archives holds from Connecticut Valley Hospital. The admission register entry is transcribed below:

Admission Register
Commitment papers - 6 pages

We were not able to locate a discharge record or a case history book page for [redacted name of patient]. Discharges 1904-1909 November and case history book volume 33 were not transferred to the State Archives. There should be a case history book page for [redacted name of patient] in volume 33, [redacted page number]. You may want to contact Wayne Fournier (e-mail: wayne.fournier@ct.gov phone: 860-262-6342) at Connecticut Valley Hospital with the above information to see if he can be of further assistance.

If you would like to have photocopies of the commitment papers made and sent to you then you will need to provide proof of relationship to [redacted name of patient]. You can do this through birth, marriage, or death certificates, census records, and published obituaries. You will also need to include a photo id such as a drivers license or state issued identification card.

The charge for photocopies is .25 cents per page + \$3.00 handling + postage. An unofficial count of pages is 6 pages for the commitment papers so an estimated charge would be \$4.50 + postage. An invoice would be sent with the photocopies. Please let me know how you would like to proceed.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 6

Request:

From: csl.webmaster@ct.gov [mailto:csl.webmaster@ct.gov] On Behalf Of Connecticut

Sent: Sunday, August 10, 2014

To: CSL ISREF

Subject: Contact the Connecticut State Library form

Submitted on Sunday, August 10, 2014 Submitted by anonymous user: *[redacted IP Address]* Submitted values are:

Topic: Ask a librarian

Preferred contact method: Email

Your email: *[redacted email address]*

Phone number: *[redacted phone number]*

Your question:

Hello,

My son, *[redacted name of son]*, has a great-grandmother who lived and died at Norwich Hospital in CT. Her name was *[redacted name of great-grandmother]*. Family history says that she had a major mental illness. My son, *[redacted name of son]*, does so as well. He is currently *[redacted age]* years old.

I am wondering if you can help me acquire records re: her diagnosis and treatment for the purposes of helping us understand if *[redacted name of son]* has the same kind of

symptoms of his great grandmother.

Thank you so much for your help, and guiding me into next steps.

Sincerely,

[redacted name of requester]

The results of this submission may be viewed at: *[redacted hyperlink]*

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen

Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014

To: *[redacted email address]*

Subject: RE: Contact the Connecticut State Library form-Norwich State Hospital

Dear *[redacted name of requester]*,

We were unable to locate a patient file for *[redacted name of relative]*. The State Archives does not have any of the patient files that are organized by discharge or death date for 1949. We also have a gap of admission register records from July 1, 1942 to June 30 1949. If you know when *[redacted name of great-grandmother]* was admitted we could search for the admission register record.

You may also want to contact Wayne Fournier (e-mail: wayne.fournier@ct.gov phone: 860-262-6342) at Connecticut Valley Hospital to see if he can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Allen

Example 7

Request:

From: *[redacted email address]*

Sent: Tuesday, July 07, 2015

To: Ramsey, Allen
Subject: information

Mr. Ramsey,

My name is *[redacted name of requester]*, I am working on my family tree. I have two members that you can possibly help me with. I do not want anything personal on them only info that you can give me. I went on ancestry.com and I am at a standstill with these two gentlemen.

1st one is *[redacted name of family member]* he was born about 1925 in New Haven, Ct. parents are *[redacted name of parents]* of Ct. between 1935 and 1940 he went to Ct School for boys in Meriden Ct. I cannot find anything else on him. I would appreciate any information you can supply me with.

[redacted name of family member] he was born about 1899 in New Haven, Ct parents are *[redacted name of parents]* of Ct I find him on the 1910 census between the 1910 and 1920 he went to the Mansfield Training and Hospital School in Mansfield Ct. I would appreciate any information on him.

If you need any other info you can contact me at *[redacted phone number]* or email *[redacted email address]*

Thank you very much

[redacted name of requester]

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2015
To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: information

Hi *[redacted name of requester]*,

I was able to locate an admissions index card and case history book page from the Connecticut School for Boys in Meriden records for *[redacted name of family member]*. If *[redacted name of family member]* is still living per state and federal confidentiality and privacy laws we can only release the records to him or his permission in writing to

release the records to you. If he is deceased and you would like to have copies of the index card and case history book made and sent to you then you will need to provide proof of relationship to *[redacted name of family member]*. You can do this through birth, marriage, or death certificates, census records, and published obituaries. You will also need to include a photo id such as a current drivers license or state issued identification card.

I was not able to locate any records for *[redacted name of family member]* in the Mansfield Training School records.

Sincerely,

Allen

Response 2:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015
To: *[redacted email address]*
Subject: RE: information

Hi *[redacted name of requester]*,

State Archives staff have located a file from the DCF Child Welfare files held by the State Archives. The file is for *[redacted name of family member]* and *[redacted name of family member]*, 1931, case number *[redacted case number]*.

For access to the child welfare file you will need to submit a request in writing to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) with the above information that the State Archives in the State Library has the file. You should contact Mildred Melendez for further assistance:

Mildred Melendez
Paralegal Specialist
Closed Records Supervisor
DCF Legal Division
505 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Office: 860-560-5043

Facsimile: 860-920-3013
Mildred.melendez@ct.gov

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Allen

Follow Up with DCF:

From: Ramsey, Allen
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2015
To: MELENDEZ, MILDRED
Subject: *[redacted name of requester]* request for child welfare file

Hi Mildred,

[redacted name of requester] called me inquiring if you had received her request letter for access to a child welfare file about her family members and asked if I would follow up. The file is for *[redacted name of family member]* and *[redacted name of family member]*, 1931, case number *[redacted case number]*.

Let me know when we can send you the file.

Thank you,

Allen

Response from DCF:

From: MELENDEZ, MILDRED
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2015 10:57 AM
To: Ramsey, Allen
Subject: RE: *[redacted name of requester]* request for child welfare file

I can only comply with request if she was part of the file or if she is the executrix of the estate. These records are confidential and cannot be released without proper releases [sic].

Mildred Melendez

Example 8*Request:*

From: Connecticut State Library [mailto:CSL.ISREF@ct.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016

To: CSL ISREF

Subject: Contact Form Question

On: Feb 17, 2016

IP: [redacted IP Address]

- Topic: Ask a Librarian
- Preferred Contact Method: Email
- Your Email: [redacted email address]
- Phone Number: [redacted phone number]
- Address:
- Your Question: Greetings, I am a [redacted name of position] who is working with a staff member at our hospital on an historical project regarding Civil War soldiers who were treated in CT, esp. at CVH (then Connecticut General Hospital for the Insane). Is it possible to look at the old hospital records to see if certain individuals (we have about [redacted number] names) who were seen at [redacted name of hospital] were admitted to CVH after discharge from [redacted name of hospital]? We would be amenable to providing a list of the [redacted number] individuals and having someone verify or would use the information with names redacted. It is really a look at the way traumatic brain injury (military-related) has been treated over the years. As these are historical records, I am hoping that access to them is available. None of the individuals would still be living and there is no interest in publishing names. Thank you in advance.

Response:

From: Ramsey, Allen

Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016

To: [redacted email address]

Subject: RE: Contact Form Question-CVH records

Connecticut Valley Hospital records are restricted under Connecticut General Statutes 1-210(b) (10) which exempts from the Freedom of Information Act any records created as a result of a doctor-patient or a therapist-patient relationship which applies to patient records held by the Connecticut State Library. The patient records of Connecticut Valley Hospital are only made available upon request to the patient or the next of kin of a deceased patient per Section 52-146c of the Connecticut General Statutes. The records are closed to other parties.

I would encourage you to contact the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) with your request for access to these historical patient records. DMHAS can be contacted by phone at their main number (860) 418-7000 or by mail at State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, 410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 341431, Hartford, CT 06134.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Allen

