

# Colonial Secretary

1 Jan 1821 – 1 April 1959

- Other Names:**
- Principal Secretary to the Government
  - Colonial Secretary's Department
  - Colonial Secretary and Registrar of the Records of New South Wales
  - Chief Secretary to the Government

## Details

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The Colonial Secretary was an essential position in the New South Wales Government. During the Colonial era (1821 to 1856) the Colonial Secretary supported the NSW Governor and was responsible for advising and receiving instructions from the British Government. After NSW achieved self-governance in 1856 the Colonial Secretary, was responsible for a range of essential functions, including charities, prisons, police, the Aborigines Protection Board, neglected children, the insane, hospitals and industrial schools. The Colonial Secretary became the Chief Secretary in 1959.

The Colonial Secretary and his Department has always been at the centre of decisions made by the New South Wales Government. Many government departments were, in their early years, controlled by the Colonial Secretary. The State Children's Relief Department is one example, and the early Industrial Schools and Reformatory Acts were administered directly by the Chief Secretary.

When New South Wales formed its own government in 1856 ('responsible government'), the Colonial Secretary became a political position and was most often taken by the Premier. By 1859 the role was often called Chief Secretary or Principal Secretary to the Government.

A separate Premier's Department was established in 1907 but the role of Colonial Secretary continued until 1959 when it became known as the Chief Secretary.

## More info

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### Chronology

- Secretary to the Governor (26 Jan 1788 - 1 Jan 1821)
  - **Colonial Secretary (1 Jan 1821 – 1 April 1959)**

### Related Entries

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- [Sobraon Training Ship \(1892 - 1911\)](#)
- [Liverpool Asylum \(1851 - 1862\)](#)
- [Nautical School Ship \*Vernon\* \(1867 - 1892\)](#)
- [Female Orphan School \(1801 - 1850\)](#)

- [Protestant Orphan School \(1850 - 1886\)](#)  
Date: 1850 - 1886
- [Waterfall Sanatorium \(14 April 1909 - 31 December 1958\)](#)
- [Male Orphan School \(1819 - 1850\)](#)
- [Native Institution \(1814 - 1833\)](#)
- [Carters' Barracks, Boys Dormitory \(1820 - c. 1848\)](#)  
Date: 1821 - 1835

#### **Related Organisations**

- [State Children's Relief Board \(1881 - 1923\)](#)  
Date: 1881 - 1888
  - [State Children's Relief Department \(1881 - 1923\)](#)  
The State Children's Relief Department was part of the Chief Secretary's Department
  - [Office of the Director-General of Public Health \(1913 - 1938\)](#)
  - [Inspector of Public Charities \(1866 - 1888\)](#)
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