Administrative History

The Indian Affairs Commission was created in 1965 by Chapter 331, Statutes of Nevada, for the purpose of studying matters affecting American Indians residing in Nevada, including issues of federal and state control, responsibility, policy, and operations affecting Indians. The Commission recommends necessary or appropriate action, policy, legislation or revision of legislation, and administrative regulations to the governor, legislature and to the public. (Section 10).

The name of the Commission was changed to the Nevada Indian Commission (NIC) by Chapter 240, Statutes of Nevada, 1973. Under NRS 233A.090, the purpose of the NIC is to study matters affecting the social and economic welfare and well-being of American Indian tribes and individuals residing in Nevada. Functions of the NIC are generally limited to study and recommendation. The Commission consists of an executive director and five commissioners appointed by the governor. Three commissioners are Indians and two members are representatives of the general public. The Commission is part of the Department of Human Resources for limited administrative purposes but is considered a "stand alone" entity not controlled by the Department (Attorney General Opinion 2000-35, 12-13-2000).

Photo credit: Elwood A. Mose (left), Executive Director of the Nevada Indian Commission, receiving his commission from Governor Robert List (center). Commission member Janet Allen looks on. August 10, 1979. Photo courtesy of Nevada State Archives, LIS-1552.

Records 1863-2002; bulk, 1960s-1990 42.5 c.f.
Records of the NIC consist of minutes of meetings, correspondence, reports created by NIC,

materials created by or sent to the governor, and reference and subject files. Minutes and correspondence files are chronological; reference and subject files are alphabetical according to general subject, author or title.

Topics represented within this collection which are of special interest to Nevada Indians include: alcohol and drug abuse; children (the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978); civil rights; compacts between tribes, states, and the United States; individual Nevada Indian tribes; reservations and allotments; economic development for Indians; education; gaming; health care; historic preservation; housing; hunting and fishing; juveniles; land; law and order; Indian courts and tribal jurisdiction; tobacco sales; nuclear waste; religious freedom for Indian prison inmates; retrocession; Stewart Indian School; taxes; water and water rights; Truckee River water negotiations; and Western Shoshone legal issues.

Correspondence 1975-1986; 1995-1999 3 c.f.
NIC correspondence is arranged chronologically and covers the general activities of the Commission. Included are budget, audit and status reports for 1975-1976 and 1980. Occasionally, correspondence is included in the subject files. INDIAN-0001, 001-043; INDIAN-0002, 001-045; INDIAN-0006, 016-029

Minutes 1965-2002 1.5 c.f.
NIC minutes document agendas and meetings. The Nevada State Library and Archives received minutes from the NIC in two parts. The largest consisted of binders (contents now in folders) of agendas and minutes, with few supplementary materials. The dates for these materials are September 21, 1965 to 2002. The second group of minutes was originally housed in folders and included backup materials as well as agendas and minutes. These minutes appear to be for special meetings held throughout Nevada from July 31, 1976 until July 11, 1981. Two additional folders are undated but appear to be from 1980 and/or 1981. INDIAN-0012, 010-043; INDIAN-0073 (1965-2002).

Subject and Reference Files 1863-1997 38 c.f.
The Nevada Indian Commission made a concerted effort to develop files which could serve as an information source for topics of interest and concern to the Nevada Indian community. These files were generally grouped by major topic, such as "water" or "compacts." Within each major topic the arrangement was alphabetical by title or author. The contents included reports, government publications (both State of Nevada and the U.S. governments), journal articles, scholarly essays on individual issues, newspaper clippings, environmental impact statements, and Nevada legislative minutes and backup materials. Additionally, the NIC collected printed findings of state and national law courts; constitutions, ordinances, and enrollment lists of Nevada Indian tribes and bands; educational materials from seminars and specialized post-graduate training courses; election materials for the issue of retrocession; copies of compacts between tribes and Nevada and the federal government; surveys to collect data on Nevada Indians; and land claim settlements.

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