

Extent

44 folders, approximately 2,714 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records from the White House Visitor's Office relating to White House tours. The Visitors Office is where the public can obtain information about the White House including its architecture, furnishings, first families, and social events. The files contain correspondence, memoranda, reports, individual and group tour statistics, calendars, and handbooks.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2009-0516-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. The White House Visitors Office is responsible for public tours of the White House. The Visitors Office is where the public can obtain information about the White House including its architecture, furnishings, first families, social events such as the White House Easter Egg Roll, Holiday Open Houses, Spring and Fall Garden tours, State Arrival Ceremonies and other special events, and relations with the press and world leaders. At the Visitor Center, you can see a 30-minute video, entitled "Where History Lives", explore six historical exhibits and purchase souvenirs at the gift shop run by the White House Historical Association. Historically, the White House has offered tours to the general public. During the Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin D. Roosevelt administrations, the general public could see the ground floor hallways and the East Room. If you contacted your congressional representatives and got special tickets you could also tour the three state parlors on the first floor — Green Room, Blue Room, Red Room — as well as the State Dining Room. The White House Tours were closed during World War II; they were resumed in November of 1946 and then closed again in 1948 for a major renovation of the entire structure. Tours were restarted in April 1952 and at that time the Chief Usher of the White

House was in charge of them. Tours were suspended following the November 22, 1963 assassination of John F. Kennedy, but were resumed seven days later at the request of Jacqueline Kennedy. Long waits in line and a whole morning spent were commonplace due to large numbers of people wanting to visit the White House, and a color-coded ticket distribution system was put in place. The system was put in place for good beginning in May 1977. White House tours were often in high demand. By 1981 a Director of the White House Visitor Center was in charge of the operation. During the early 1980s, as many as 6,000 visitors were accommodated each day, with just as many turned away. White House Visitors Office personnel are constantly caught between trying to satisfy demands and expectations for tours and events, and preserving the dignity of the presidential office and setting. In April 1995 the current White House Visitor Center facility was opened in the Herbert C. Hoover Building, two blocks from the White House. The daily tour ticket distribution place was moved there. The yearly count for visitors was at 1.25 million. By 1997, ticket scalping was a persistent problem, with scalpers getting from \$5 to \$50 a ticket. Tours were suspended due to terrorism concerns in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks. In September 2003 they were resumed on a limited basis for groups making prior arrangements through their congressional representatives. The White House tours as of March 2013 have been suspended by Pres. Obama's White House administration citing Secret Service costs as the reason. Presently, a tour of the White House must be arranged through a member of Congress. Reservations may be made a maximum of six months ahead of time, and the White House encourages tours be submitted as close to six months in advance as possible as tours are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. FOIA request 2009-0516-F contains correspondence, memos, reports, handwritten notes, congressional, individual and group tour statistics, calendars, and handbooks all relating to White House tours. Most of the responsive material was found in the White House Visitor's Office files. The correspondence contains materials on how tours are conducted in the White House, the ticket systems that were used, Congressional requests for tickets, and letters from Congressional members commenting on a new ticket system. Memos discuss access to the tours, tour requests, and more material on the ticket systems. The reports, calendars, and handwritten notes contain daily and yearly tour statistics and information relating to visitation of the White House. The handbooks are Congressional Tour Coordinator's Handbooks and Administrative Contact Tour Coordinator's Handbooks. The handbooks outline the tour policies and procedures.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in one collection area – Clinton Presidential Records: Staff and Office Files. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton's presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archives Specialist, December 2013. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2016-07-12

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2009-0516-F:

Box 1

Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files

Counsel' Office

Popp, Karen

Outreach Efforts - Visitor's Office - Tours of White House and Arrival Ceremonies - (Including Tour Statistics, Calendars, Congressional Tour Handbook, and Visitor Requests) Relevant Material [1] [OA/ID 12932]

Outreach Efforts - Visitor's Office - Tours of White House and Arrival Ceremonies - (Including Tour Statistics, Calendars, Congressional Tour Handbook, and Visitor Requests) Relevant Material [2] [OA/ID 12932]

Outreach Efforts - Visitor's Office - Tours of White House and Arrival Ceremonies - (Including Tour Statistics, Calendars, Congressional Tour Handbook, and Visitor Requests) Relevant Material [3] [OA/ID 12932]

Outreach Efforts - Visitor's Office - Tours of White House and Arrival Ceremonies - (Including Tour Statistics, Calendars, Congressional Tour Handbook, and Visitor Requests) Relevant Material [4] [OA/ID 12932]

Outreach Efforts - Visitor's Office - Tours of White House and Arrival Ceremonies - (Including Tour Statistics, Calendars, Congressional Tour Handbook, and Visitor Requests) Relevant Material: Visitor's Office - Melinda Bates - DNC Tours [OA/ID 12932]

Visitors Office

Jones, Elizabeth

Administrative Contact Tour Coordinator's Handbook [OA/ID 19928]

Congressional Tour Coordinator's Handbook [OA/ID 24474]

[Elizabeth Cheek Jones Staff Assistant Visitor's Office] [OA/ID 19524]

Events [Congressional Tour Coordinator's Handbook] [Binder] [OA/ID 19524]

Box 2

New Tour System Information [Binder] [1] [OA/ID 18092]

New Tour System Information [Binder] [2] [OA/ID 18092]

Special Requests Form [January 3, 2001] [1] [OA/ID 24479]

Special Requests Form [January 3, 2001] [2] [OA/ID 24479]

Tours at a Glance [OA/ID 24474]

Maddox, Joshua; Nolan Shannon

Public Tour Ticket System 1997-1998 [OA/ID 19919]

Powell, Jared

[Tour Schedules] [OA/ID 24480]

Thoden, Holly

Completed Group Tour Worksheets [OA/ID 19924]

Handbooks [Visitors Office] [OA/ID 24476]

National Park Service [1] [OA/ID 19925]

Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files (continued)

Box 3

National Park Service [2] [OA/ID 19925]

National Park Service Statistics 1996 [OA/ID 19925]

National Park Service Statistics 1997 [OA/ID 19925]

National Park Service Ticket Systems File [OA/ID 19922]

New Ticket Proposals 1997 [1] [OA/ID 19922]

New Ticket Proposals 1997 [2] [OA/ID 19922]

New Ticket Proposals 1997 [3] [OA/ID 19922]

Staff Tours of West Wing [OA/ID 19923]

Sponsor Tally - Group Tours [OA/ID 19923]

Box 4

Tour Coordinator Handbook [OA/ID 19923]

Tour Statistics 1994 [OA/ID 24476]

Tour Statistics 1995 [OA/ID 24476]

Tour Statistics 1996 [OA/ID 24476]

Tour Statistics 1997 [OA/ID 24476]

Tour Statistics 1998 [OA/ID 24476]

Tour Statistics 1999 [OA/ID 24476]
Tour Statistics 2000 [OA/ID 24476]
Tour Statistics Summaries [OA/ID 24476]
Tour Statistics Summary 1993-1999 [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1993 [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1994 [1] [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1994 [2] [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1995 [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1996 [OA/ID 19923]
Visitation Statistics 1997 [OA/ID 19923]