

Digitization and Democratization of the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records

The following outlines National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)'s plan to digitize and make available online NARA's entire collection of records concerning President Kennedy's assassination in accordance with President Biden's [Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on the Temporary Certification Regarding Disclosure of Information in Certain Records Related to the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy](#).

Background and Overview

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) will digitize and make available all publicly released Government records relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy that were collected by NARA pursuant to the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 ("the Act") and which were maintained by NARA as the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection ("the Collection").

The Collection includes all assassination records that were provided to NARA by Federal agencies and all Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB) records as required by the Act. The Collection also includes the following materials not covered in the Act: records of the Warren Commission, records of Congressional committees (Church Committee, Eastland Committee, McClellan Committee, Pike Committee), and papers donated to the ARRB. NARA intends to make all publicly available materials in the Collection, approximately 6 million pages, available online.

As part of the effort to democratize access to the Collection, NARA will add digitized materials to the National Archives Catalog, develop a dynamic Next Generation Finding Aid using the NARA API, refresh existing webpages about the Collection, and provide quarterly updates regarding project status and online availability of the Collection.

Digitization is anticipated to take between 2-3 years to complete with webpage enhancements occurring concurrently. The detailed plan and estimated timeline for this effort is outlined below.

Part 1: Materials in the Collection

As part of this initiative, NARA plans to digitize all materials in the Collection as listed below:

U.S. Government Records Submitted to the ARRB

- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (RG 263)
- Defense Intelligence Agency (RG 373)
- Department of State (RG 59)
- Department of Treasury (RG 56)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (RG 65)
- House Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights (RG 233)

- House Select Committee on Intelligence (RG 233)
- Immigration and Naturalization Service (RG 85)
- Internal Revenue Service (RG 58)
- Library of Congress (RG 297)
- National Security Agency (RG 457)
- National Security Council (RG 273)
- United States Secret Service (RG 87)
- Securities and Exchange Commission (RG 266)
- Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Church Committee (RG 46)
- Social Security Administration (RG 47)
- United States Air Force (RG 342)
- United States Information Agency (RG 306)
- United States Marine Corps (RG 127)
- United States Postal Service (RG 28)
- White House Communications Agency (RG 130)
- Office of Naval Intelligence (RG 526)
- Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (RG 52)
- John F. Kennedy Library
- Lyndon B. Johnson Library
- Gerald R. Ford Library
- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (RG 64)
- House Select Committee on Assassinations (RG 233)
- Jimmy Carter Presidential Library
- Department of Justice - Civil Division (RG 60)
- Department of Justice - Criminal Division (RG 60)
- Department of Justice - Executive Office US Attorney (RG 118)
- Department of Justice - Civil Rights Division (RG 60)
- NARA Legal Services Staff, General Counsel (RG 64)
- United States Army Staff, ACSI G2 (RG 319)
- Selected Documents from the Donated Papers of Robert McNamara
- United States Customs Service (RG 36)
- Army Corps of Engineers, Army Staff, - (RG 319) and HQ Files-Pentagon Telecommunications Center (RG 338)
- Office of the Secretary of the Army - (Califano Papers) (RG 335)
- Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (RG 436)
- Joint Chiefs of Staff (RG 218)
- Senate Internal Security Subcommittee - Eastland (RG 46)
- Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (RG 355) 208Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation - McClellan (RG 46)

Warren Commission Records (RG 272)

ARRB Records (RG 541)

Donated Papers

- Donated Papers from Richard Barnes
- Papers of Gerald S. Blaine
- Papers of Hale Boggs
- Papers of Allen Dulles
- Donated Papers from Janet DesRosiers Fontaine
- Donated Papers from J.W. Fritz, Dallas Police Captain
- Donated Papers from Jack Gordon
- Papers of Russell Holmes
- Donated Papers from James Hosty
- Donated Papers from Richard M. Mosk
- Donated Papers from J. Lee Rankin
- Donated Papers from Richard Russell
- Donated Papers from Clay Shaw
- Donated Papers from Richard Sprague
- Donated Papers from Edward F. Wegmann
- Donated Papers from Howard P. Willens
- Dallas Police Department Collection Concerning the Assassination of JFK
- Records of the New Orleans Metropolitan Crime Commission
- Donated Material from the Sixth Floor Museum

Part 2: Proposed Timeline

Phase 1: January-May 2022

- Complete an in-depth assessment of the records in the Collection including those that have been fully open since the Act was signed in 1992, Warren Commission records, records of Congressional committees (Church Committee, Eastland Committee, McClellan Committee, Pike Committee), and donated papers
 - Identify all records that were listed as “Open in Full” in the JFK Assassination Collection Reference System for the period of 1992 to 2017
 - Assess physical condition and format of records condition to determine prep needs and appropriate digitization equipment
 - Review records for potential privacy concerns or deed of gift restrictions
 - Review existing metadata and make updates as needed
- Based on assessment, identify digitization priorities
- Develop a quality assurance (QA) plan
- Develop a strategy to continue interfiling materials that were originally withheld or redacted
- Collaborate with NARA staff and executive agencies to determine the appropriate document(s) to scan that continue to have information redacted

- Develop a communication plan with the Research Services Communication Coordinator and the Digital Engagement Director to provide regular updates on the digitization of the Collection
- Begin discussions on development of a Next Generation Finding Aid for the JFK Assassination Records Collection

Phase 2: June-December 2022

- Begin scanning fully open records based on prioritization list
- Start updates to existing series descriptions in the National Archives Catalog (if needed)
- Continue the physical interfiling of all documents released in 2017 and 2018 by the FBI, CIA, State Department, and other executive branch agencies
 - Includes the fully opened materials as well as materials that continue to have redactions, if known
- Continue the refresh of the JFK Assassination Records Collection webpages.
- Refine requirements for development of Next Generation Finding Aid and issue request for proposals for development and design support

Phase 3: January-April 2023 (tentative)

- Begin scanning additional records that were withheld or redacted from 1993 to present
- Continue to refresh and/or describe Collection in the Catalog
- Upload on a recurring schedule the digitized materials into the Catalog
- Ensure that the QC process for the upload of images in the Catalog is being executed
- Provide regular updates regarding digital availability of the Collection
- Complete the update to the JFK Assassination Records Collection webpages
- Develop a design and initial version for the Next Generation Finding Aid

Phase 4: May-August 2023 (tentative)

- Complete the digitization of records in the Collection
- Ensure that all digitized content is available in the National Archives Catalog for records released either in full or in part
- Launch the Next Generation Finding Aid
- Launch a Citizen Archivist mission related to the Collection

Ongoing

- Update materials as additional releases are made