



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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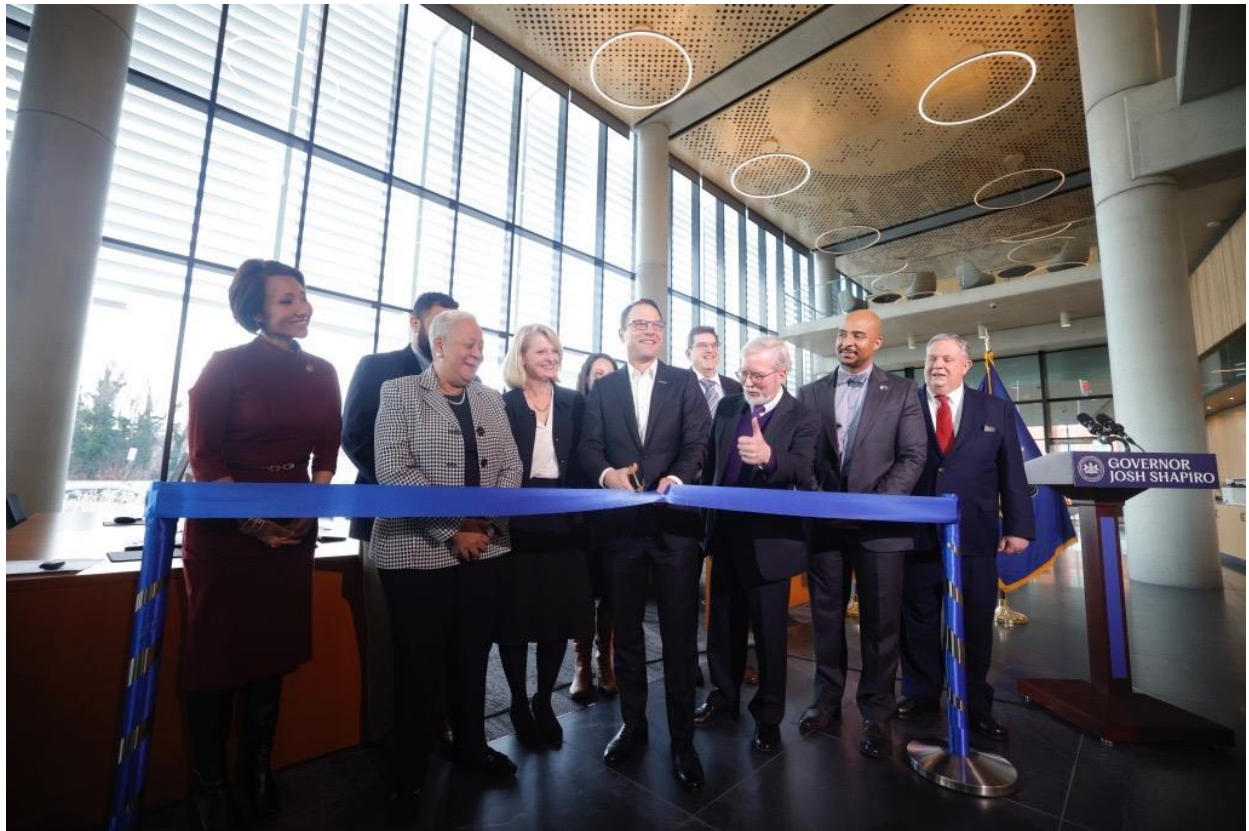
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Governor Shapiro, DGS Secretary McNeil, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission Host Grand Opening of New State-of-the-Art Pennsylvania State Archives Building

The new state archives building houses more than 250 million documents in the Commonwealth's archival collections and replaces the former building, which was built in 1965, and will open on December 13, 2023.





Harrisburg, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** joined **Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission** (PHMC) officials and Department of General Services **Secretary Reggie McNeil** for the grand opening of the new Pennsylvania State Archives building at 1681 N. Sixth Street in Harrisburg. The building will open officially to the general public at 9:00 am on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, returning to its regular hours

“Our state archivists work hard to preserve timeless treasures that tell the story of Pennsylvania. I’m proud to join the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission in celebrating the grand opening of a space that gives them the tools they need to preserve and maintain our archives,” said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. “Understanding our history is key to determining the path forward – and I want Pennsylvanians for generations to come to be able to rediscover our history and learn from it. We’re committed to reminding Pennsylvanians that these archives aren’t just here to protect our Commonwealth’s treasures – they’re here for them to use.”

The Pennsylvania State Archives, which is part of PHMC, collects, preserves, and makes available for study the permanently valuable public records of the Commonwealth, with particular attention given to the records of state government. The State Archives also collects papers of private citizens and organizations relevant to Pennsylvania history.

Visitors to the new Pennsylvania State Archives building can use the public computers to research their own family history – with free access to Ancestry.com. They'll be able to view digital records that the Archives has put on the internet and many images that are not yet available online. They can interact with Digital Gateway touch screens to see selected documents and videos from the Archives or browse the library of books related to Pennsylvania history. Visitors can research the history of their family, town, or county or explore maps of the area where they live or access records, maps, and photographs about the development of Pennsylvania's canals, railroads, and industries.

"The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission is honored to welcome Pennsylvanians to this new state-of-the-art facility – a fitting home for the treasures entrusted to us for current and future generations," said **PHMC Executive Director Andrea Lowery**.

The Archives preserves such historic documents as the original 1681 Charter granted by King Charles II to William Penn and the 1780 Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery to more recent records, including the papers of the Pennsylvania Commission on Three Mile Island and State Police Col. Paul Evanko's field notes of the 9/11 terrorist attacks related to the Flight 93 crash.

"The Pennsylvania State Archives preserves any record the state government must keep forever," said **State Archivist David Carmicheal**. "Just like the important records that individuals and families preserve, the Archives preserves documents that protect Pennsylvanians legally – like all the acts of the State Legislature – and those that tell their history, such as photographs and letters and diaries."

The new building houses the Commonwealth's archival collections – more than 250 million documents that are kept in perpetuity by PHMC for all Pennsylvanians. These collections were transferred to the new building throughout late summer and early fall of 2023 – a process equivalent to moving a typical three-bedroom house 78 times.

Construction began in May 2020 and was completed this past summer at a cost of \$75 million. The new 145,000-square-foot structure replaces the familiar tower at Third and Forster streets, adjacent to the State Museum of Pennsylvania. The Archives had outgrown the space, which was built in 1965 and lacked adequate fire suppression and environmental systems to protect the Commonwealth's most valuable documents.

"Ensuring the preservation of the Commonwealth's history is crucial for our future. The enhancements provided by the new State Archives building in safeguarding our records are invaluable," said **DGS Secretary McNeil**. "I commend the DGS team for their work on this state-of-the-art facility and express gratitude to PHMC and the Governor's Office for their partnership and support."

The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission is the official history agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Learn more by visiting [PHMC online](#) or following us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

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