

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Ontario County

Department of Social Services

Workforce Development

Youth Bureau

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONAL CHART BY FUNCTION

Temporary Assistance

- Family Assistance/Safety Net
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Child/Day Care
- Fraud, Resource and Recovery

Medicaid

Services

- Child Protective
- Preventive
- Adoption
- Foster Care
- Adult Services
 - Adult Protective and Preventive
 - Home Care/Health Related

Child Support Enforcement and Collection

Administrative Support

- Administration
- Accounting
- Staff Development

Youth Bureau

Workforce Development

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Administration	<i>Eileen Tiberio</i> Commissioner	(585) 396-4015
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Staff Development	<i>Mariah Ernhout-Fegley</i> Staff Development Coordinator	(585) 396-4181
Youth Bureau	<i>Marsha Foote</i> Youth Bureau Director	(585) 396-4035

A message from the Commissioner

I'm pleased to present the Ontario County Department of Social Services Annual Report for 2021. The Department provides assistance and services to the most vulnerable Ontario County residents in keeping with federal, state, and local mandates.

The Covid-19 pandemic created continual challenges for our clientele and our staff. Homelessness increased as friends and families were less inclined to let others stay with them. New funding streams erupted, replete with varying eligibility requirements. New regulations were promulgated, well-intentioned, but that made meeting the needs of our most vulnerable residents even more challenging. Our offices remained open for the duration of the emergency, answering the calls and meeting the needs.

Quick Facts about DSS

- 2021 Budget: \$52,638,921
- Estimated County cost: \$29,110,146
- 150 Full time staff
- Offices in Canandaigua and Geneva
- 100+ contracts with service providers

2021 Accomplishments At a Glance

Medicaid

- Implemented the new NYSCAP program, which replaced NYSNIP and required revision of all cases for SSI-SNAP beneficiaries.
- Recouped over \$270,000 from estate settlements, real estate sales and court orders.

Services

- Implemented remote work option for most staff.
- Implemented the new Qualified Individual (QI) assessment process and finalized contracts for completion of the required assessments.

Youth Bureau

- With our partners, helped 44 youth find their way out of sexual exploitation.
- Presented the annual awards to 24 youth for their achievements despite challenges. Three adults received the Honorable Craig Doran award for their powerful positive relationships with youth and 14 adults were recognized as School Employee of the Year for their positive influence on youth.

Temporary Assistance

- Met with an average of 380 County residents each week, including 90 in need of emergency shelter.
- Implemented a variety of programs developed by state agencies related to COVID-19.

Workforce Development

- Provided 57 Ontario County youth with job opportunities through our programs resulting in over \$84,000 in wages being brought into local families and the community.
- Partnered with Canandaigua's Wood Library to bring live, online classes to the community on resume writing, job seeking, interviewing techniques and the online training platform Skill Up.

Child Support Enforcement

- Discovering, verifying, and refunding over \$77,168 in fraudulent unemployment payments to Department of Labor.
- Average annual collections from 2020-2021 were the highest since 2015.

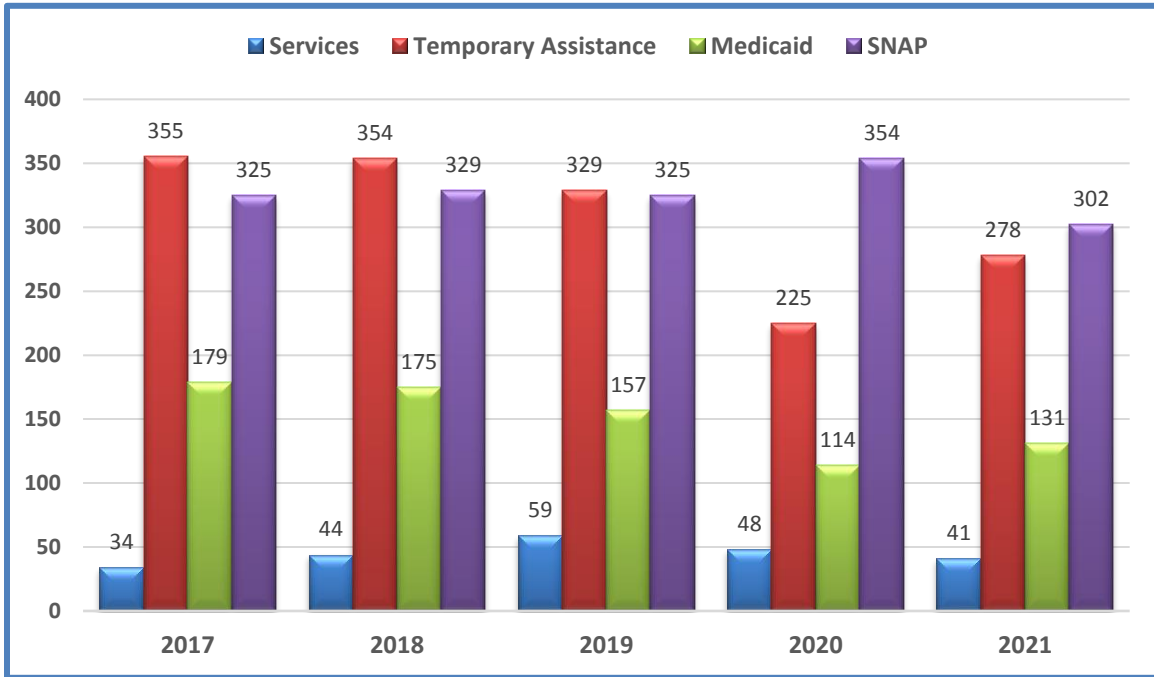
Temporary Assistance

The Temporary Assistance (TA) team is housed in both our Canandaigua and Geneva offices, and manages a variety of programs that provide support to the lowest income families and individuals. While each county's process may look different, the eligibility criteria and benefit amounts are established by OTDA. TA staff issued \$4,879,272 in cash assistance benefits in 2021, a 20.3% reduction over 2020. We believe this is due to the variety of other types of pandemic relief available to households. The SNAP program saw an 82% increase in benefits issued to households. This increase was due in part to the state pushing out additional "across the board" benefits to offset families' loss of access to free and reduced lunches while schools operated remotely.

Two programs make up the cash assistance portion of the TA work. *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)* is a federally funded cash assistance program for families. The federal program has a 60-month lifetime limit for adults. Approximately 75% of TANF recipients are children.

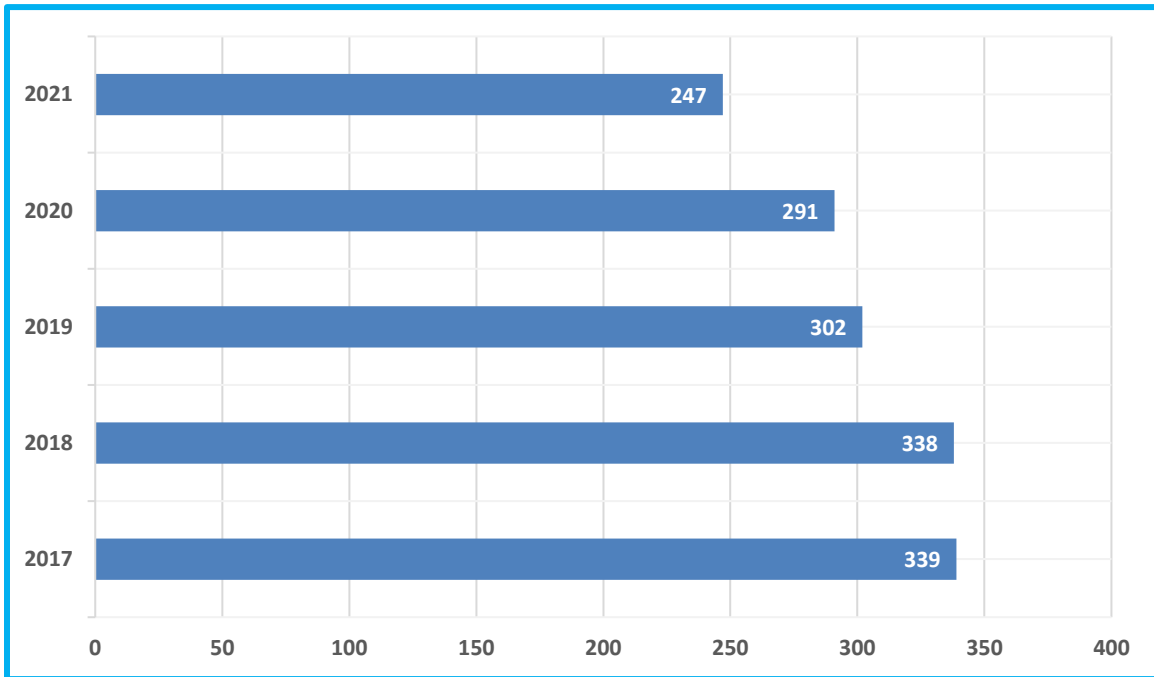
Sixty percent of the TANF cases are deemed "child-only" cases. In these cases, an adult receives benefits on behalf of the children while not receiving assistance themselves. There are many situations which may lead to a child-only case: the parent receives a different federal benefit and therefore cannot also receive TANF, a relative is caring for the children on behalf of the parent, or the parent may be ineligible for benefits due to non-compliance with a required activity.

AVERAGE MONTHLY APPLICATIONS REGISTERED



Source: Application/Registry Processing Report

TANF (FA) AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



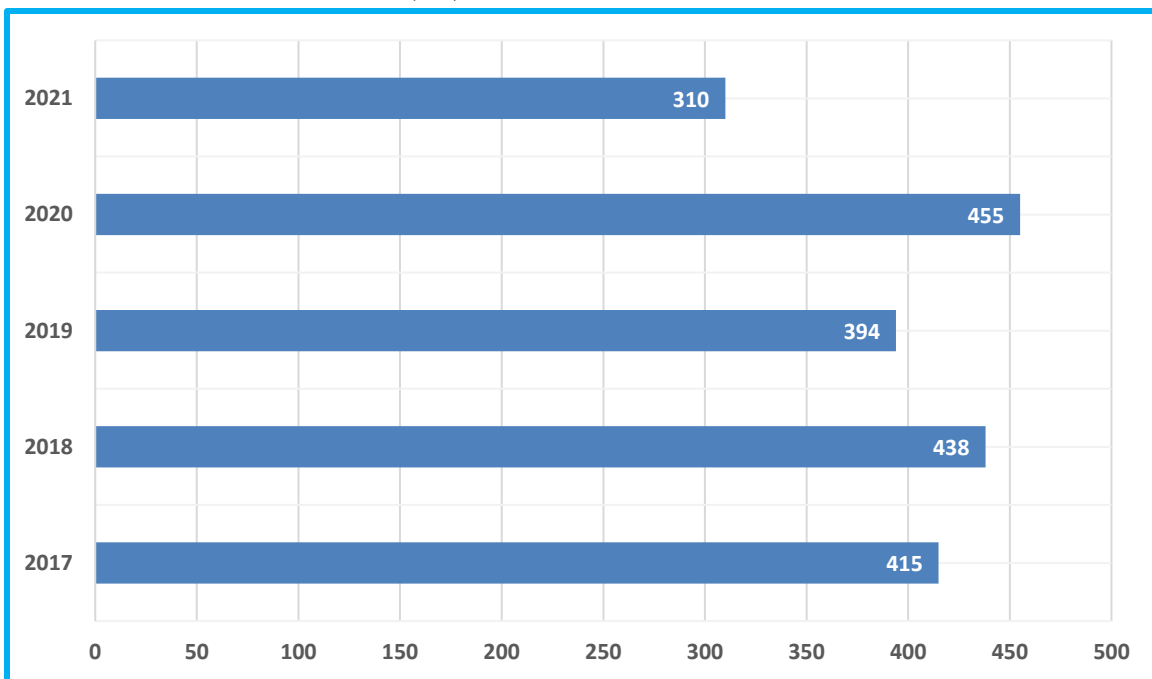
Source: BICS Caseload Distribution Summary Report

Safety Net Assistance (SNA) is a state and locally funded cash assistance program for single adults, childless couples and families who have exhausted their TANF 60-month lifetime limit.

All applicants for cash assistance are assessed for emergencies such as immediate homelessness and lack of food, as well as possible substance use and domestic violence issues. Emergency services are available for qualified applicants. Any applicant who is deemed in need of treatment for a substance use disorder is required to participate in the recommended treatment as a condition of eligibility.

Employment is the most effective road to self-sufficiency for most adults. Under normal circumstances, adult applicants are required to participate in a variety of activities to assist them in obtaining employment. Recipients are required to work or be engaged in other work-preparation activities up to 30 hours per week to maintain their eligibility for assistance. Individuals who can provide documentation of their inability to work may be exempt from these activities. The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) suspended those requirements from March 2020 through October 2021. We have restarted our employment activities on a limited basis as of February 1, 2022.

SAFETY NET (SN) AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



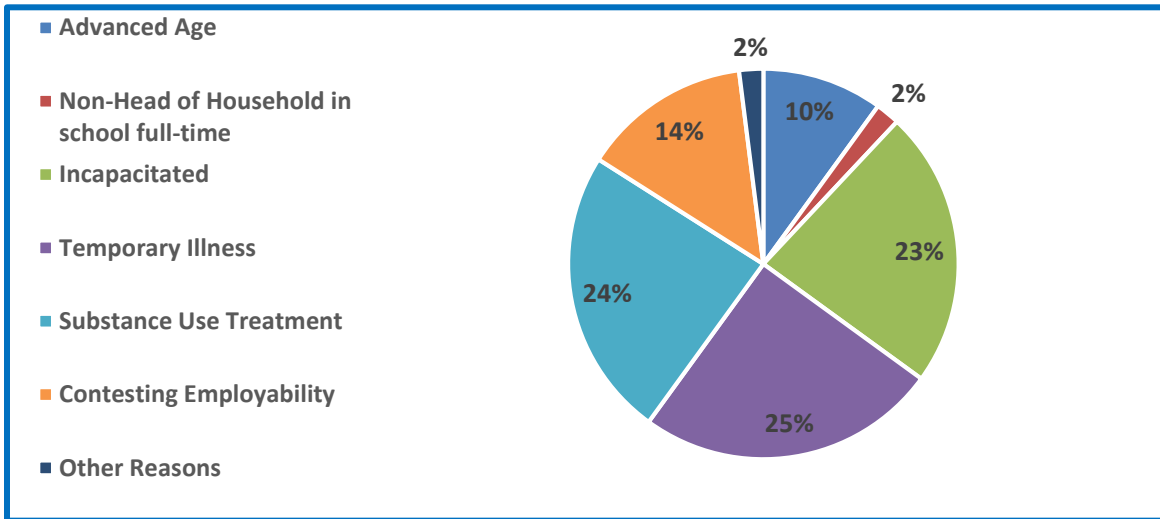
Source: BICS Caseload Distribution Summary Report

When we suspect an individual in receipt of assistance may have a disability, regulations require that s/he apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a federal benefit that would provide a more stable source of income. The SSI process is complex, and many individuals need assistance to navigate it. We contract with Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes to provide assistance and tracking for these individuals. Success in obtaining these benefits provides more substantial benefit for the individual and may result in DSS being

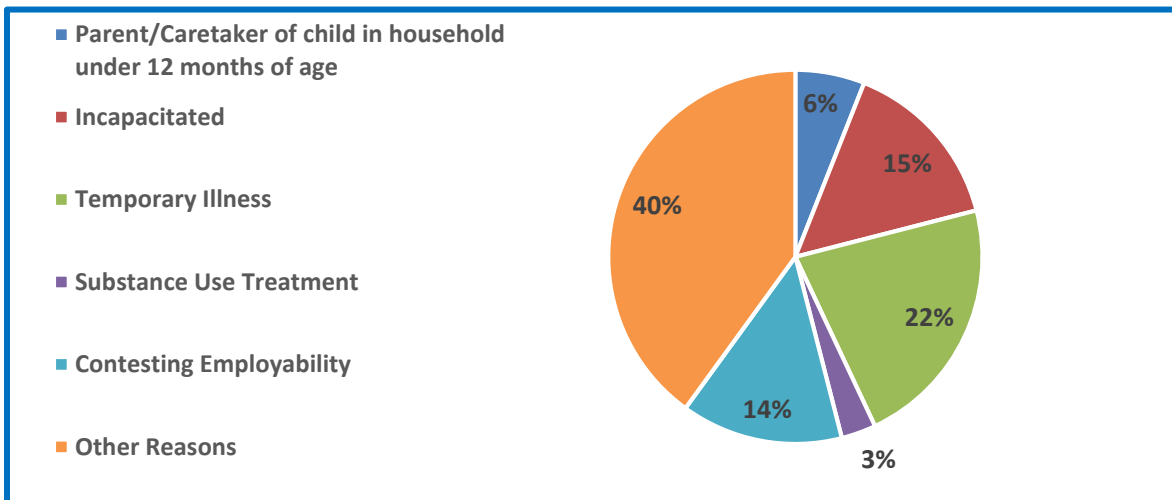
reimbursed for the assistance provided to the client while their SSI application was pending. The program shows great promise as more individuals are being approved for SSD or SSI and are more likely to obtain permanent housing.

Ontario County received \$367,968 in SSI Interim Assistance of the \$435,778 requested.

SAFETY NET (SN) REASONS FOR ADULT EXEMPTION FROM WORK REQUIREMENTS



FAMILY ASSISTANCE (FA) REASONS FOR ADULT EXEMPTION FROM WORK REQUIREMENTS



Housing presents a challenge to residents living near or below the poverty level and homelessness is never far away. Staff provide resources to individuals who present as homeless to assist them in locating housing within the limits of their anticipated benefit level.

When an eligible individual or family who is homeless is unable to find housing appropriate to their grant level, we are required to house them on an emergency basis. Local hotels and motels provide short-term housing in these situations. We contract with Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes to provide intensive case management for our homeless population. A case manager meets with the individual to identify possible housing alternatives. She may develop an Independent Living Plan (ILP) to map out the steps necessary to obtain permanent housing. If we house the individual in a local hotel or motel, the individual will also be required to sign a behavior agreement, violations of which may result in their being ineligible for temporary housing for a period of time. On any given night, Ontario County houses 50 – 60 individuals and 8 – 12 families who have nowhere else to lay their heads.

We also contract with a retired New York State Police investigator to conduct after-hours visits to individuals deemed high-risk for problematic behavior. The visits are intended to identify violations of the behavior agreements: drugs or alcohol, guests, destructive behavior, etc. Any of these may result in the loss of housing for a prescribed time. A secondary goal is to support the Department's relationship with the owners of the hotels and motels by reducing the likelihood of trouble.

According to HUD, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Ontario County is \$1039, while a typical cash assistance grant for a family of 3 may be approximately \$800. Similarly, the fair market rent for a studio apartment is \$727 while the typical grant for a single individual is approximately \$400. We offer a shelter subsidy for some single adults and childless couples. This supplement provides up to an additional \$350 per month for homeless individuals to secure permanent housing. The supplement is for two years and is limited to those individuals who are likely to become self-sufficient within that time.

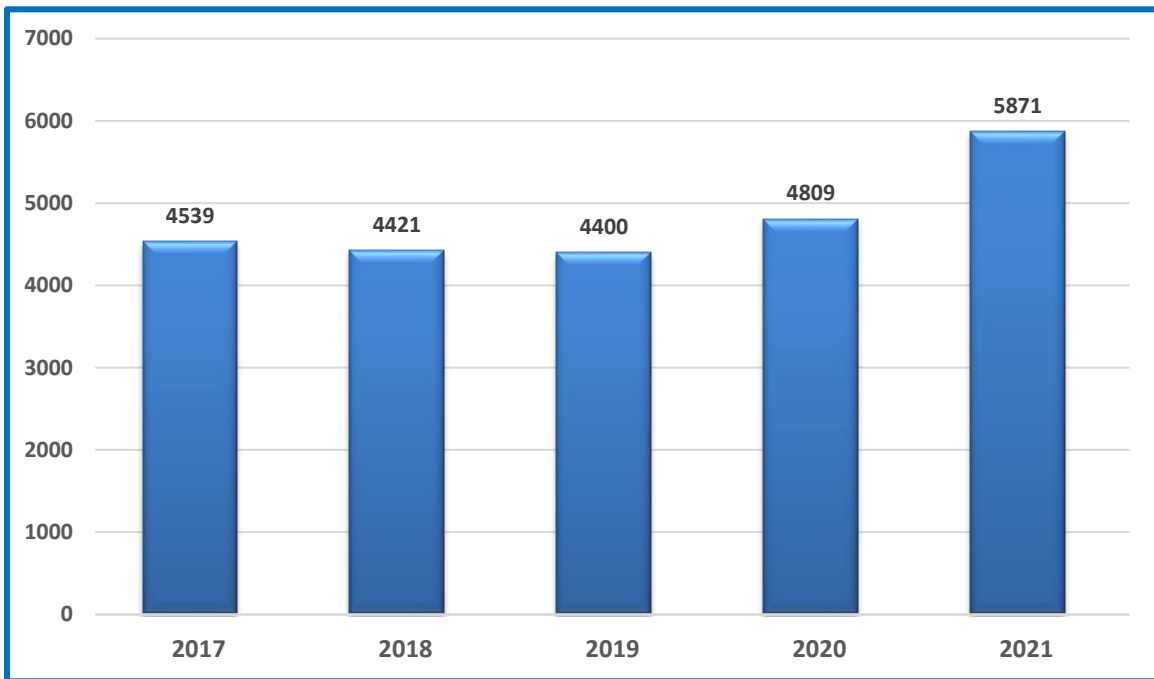
Homelessness among TA applicants and recipients presents a complex problem that has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Many individuals cycle in and out of emergency housing due to multiple barriers to stable employment and the lack of housing for individuals who are extremely low-income. DSS is required to report to OTDA quarterly a point-in-time count of all individuals for whom we are providing emergency housing. During the pandemic, we were required to report homeless numbers weekly. Homelessness grew during 2021 from 90 to 118 individuals.

Regulations require DSS to house homeless individuals without regard to eligibility for ongoing services whenever the wind chill drops below 32°. These regulations, known as "Code Blue" require DSS to coordinate with local law enforcement and not-for-profit agencies to identify and house homeless individuals. In Ontario County, emergency housing assistance is available at both office locations during business hours. After hours, anyone in need of emergency housing assistance can call 911 and be connected with a DSS employee who can facilitate temporary shelter. DSS provided 273 nights of shelter to 48 individuals during the 2020-2021 Code Blue season.

Regulations also require that DSS conduct semi-annual unannounced inspections of all hotels and motels used to house clients experiencing homelessness. Ontario County contracts with the Geneva Housing Authority to conduct those inspections as well as to follow up on any complaints received apart from the routine inspections. Every room that houses a DSS client on the day of the inspection is visited and inspected, using a checklist created by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. Any room that fails inspection cannot be used to house a DSS client until the issues are remedied and the room passes inspection.

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** provides food support to low-income families and individuals. This federally funded program is available as a stand-alone benefit or as a supplement to families on cash assistance. To address food insecurity during the pandemic, the federal government provided enhanced SNAP benefits to all SNAP households as well as households with children who received free or reduced lunches at school. In 2021, staff issued \$25,131,567 in SNAP benefits, an 82% increase over 2020.

SNAP AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



Source: BICS Caseload Distribution Summary Report

We have seen an increase in the number of individuals receiving SNAP benefits since 2016. This is due in part to the state’s loss of a federal waiver. SNAP benefits for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) are limited to three months of benefits in any 36-month period unless they meet specific work requirements. Lack of documentation of work requirements results in the loss of benefits.

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** provides support for heat and utility payments for low-income County residents. All benefits are one-time-only payments, unlike other DSS programs that provide recurring monthly benefits. The program runs from October through September and has a variety of components:

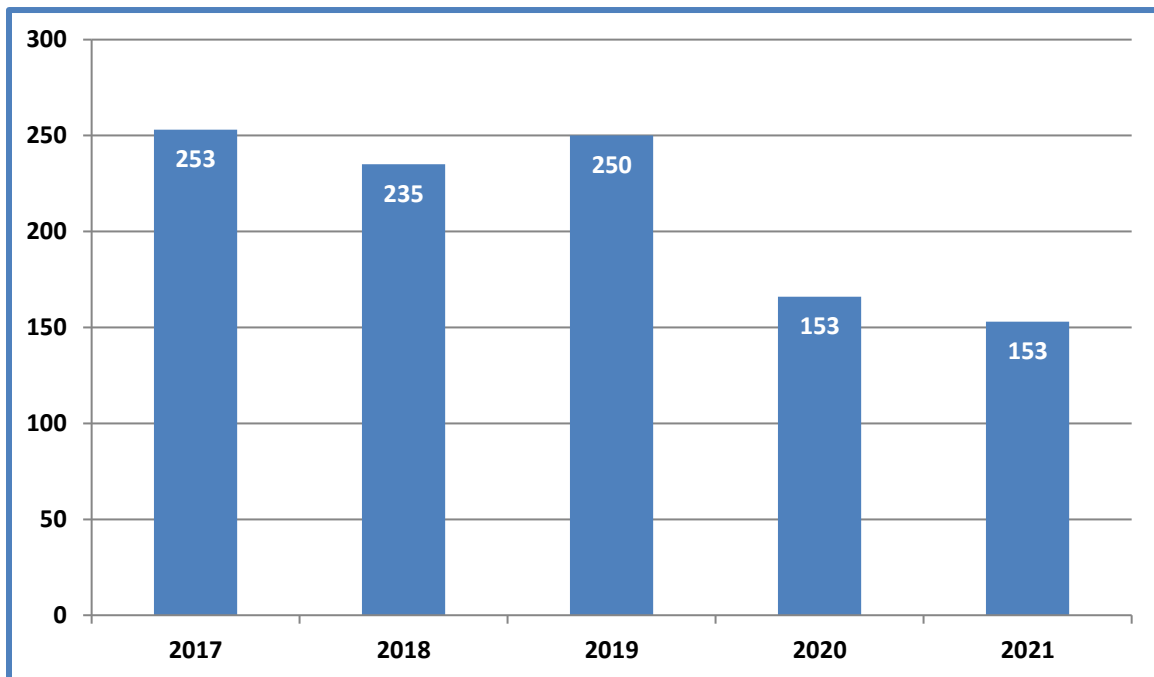
- The regular component provides a subsidy for routine energy costs. Households open on TA automatically receive a benefit. Other households must apply.
- The emergency component provides a subsidy for residents who are experiencing a shutoff due to unpaid utilities.
- The furnace repair and replacement component provides a subsidy for homeowners whose furnace has failed.

- The clean and tune component provides a subsidy for routine maintenance.
- The cooling component provides a subsidy for a room-sized air conditioner for residents whose compromised health makes it dangerous for them to be exposed to the heat of summer.

Eligibility is income-based, and emergency components require documentation of the need. The program normally opens to applications in November and runs until the state funds are exhausted. Payments in the 2020-21 heating season totaled \$2,484,632.

Any working parent with young children knows the high costs associated with child care. The rate for child care can range from \$120 to \$259 per week for a child under the age of 2. The **Child Care Subsidy Program** through the NYS Office of Children and Family Services provides a subsidy to working parents to cover the cost of child care so the parent can work. The location and type of care is the parent’s choice and can range from a friend or family member to a certified day care center. The household income must be below 200% of the federal poverty level. Each family is required to pay a family fee that is based on their income and household size. Through a low-income child care grant, DSS is able to pay the balance of the cost of care up to the current market rate. All providers must be approved through the Office of Children and Family Services or Child and Family Resource Center.

DAY CARE AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



Even with its extensive documentation requirements for programs, the Department must also be alert to the possibility of fraud. The **Fraud** team consists of investigators from the Ontario County Sheriff’s Office who conduct a variety of fraud prevention and detection activities. Applicants for cash assistance who meet certain criteria undergo a Front End Detection System (FEDS) review. FEDS reduces the likelihood than an ineligible applicant will receive benefits. The review includes an interview by an investigator and may

include visits to the residence or work site. The review must be completed within 30 days to ensure that eligible applicants' benefits are not delayed.

Actual fraud investigations result from calls from concerned citizens and county staff who observe a situation and bring it to the attention of DSS staff. The Fraud Unit is responsible for reviewing the information and investigating complaints that may constitute fraud. Staff conduct interviews, gather evidence and prepare material for prosecution through the District Attorney's Office. A client may also be disqualified from receiving benefits for a prescribed period. Disqualification criteria are established by OTDA.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Fraud Referrals	379	500	325	252	430
Arrests	41	47	40	30	17
Disqualifications	55	42	22	18	23
FEDS Referrals	645	622	535	103	0
Cost Avoidance	\$793,332	\$672,924	\$314,886	\$63,828	0
Restitution ordered	\$178,536.09	\$95,378.23	\$78,067.53	\$11,056.43	\$136,066.31

*FEDS Referrals suspended in 2021 due to pandemic

Workforce Development

Employment continues to be a significant strategy for escaping poverty. The Workforce Development Unit provides employment activities for all public assistance applicants and recipients, as well as SNAP recipients. Services include orientation, assessment, job readiness training, job search assistance, career exploration, work experience, vocational training, basic skills training, on-the-job training, case management, and post-employment services. Ontario County's unemployment rate is 3.2% as of March 1, 2022.



Workforce Development is a partner in Finger Lakes Works, the local Workforce Development System that covers Ontario, Seneca, Wayne and Yates Counties. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) allows access to programs and services for job seekers and businesses. Our Hopewell office provides a fully equipped resource room for all job seekers capable of self-directed use of computers, tutorials, phones and printed material to assist in their job search. We work closely with DOL and have staff in that office in Geneva to provide assistance to job seekers and help them obtain vocational training and job search assistance.

The Business Service Representative provides businesses in Ontario County with assistance in employee recruitment efforts, access to training grants, and other human resource needs. The On-the-Job Training program provides a financial incentive to cover the extraordinary costs to hire and train job seekers that lack all of the skills necessary to perform the job. This program is a win/win for both the employer and job seeker. The Business Services Representative works closely with Economic Development staff to gather and provide workforce intelligence to assist in the retention expansion and attraction of businesses in Ontario County.

Youth programs target individuals 16 – 24 years old with barriers to employment or at-risk characteristics, including high school dropouts, foster care youth, teen parents, offenders, public assistance recipients, homeless, and runaway youth. Programs and services are coordinated with other youth service providers and partners to provide comprehensive, individualized services to meet the needs of youth and the labor market.

Our Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Summer Youth Employment Program provides 14 - 20 year old eligible youth with jobs at non-profit, government, and private employers. Youth obtain valuable skills, work ethics, and references for jobs well done.

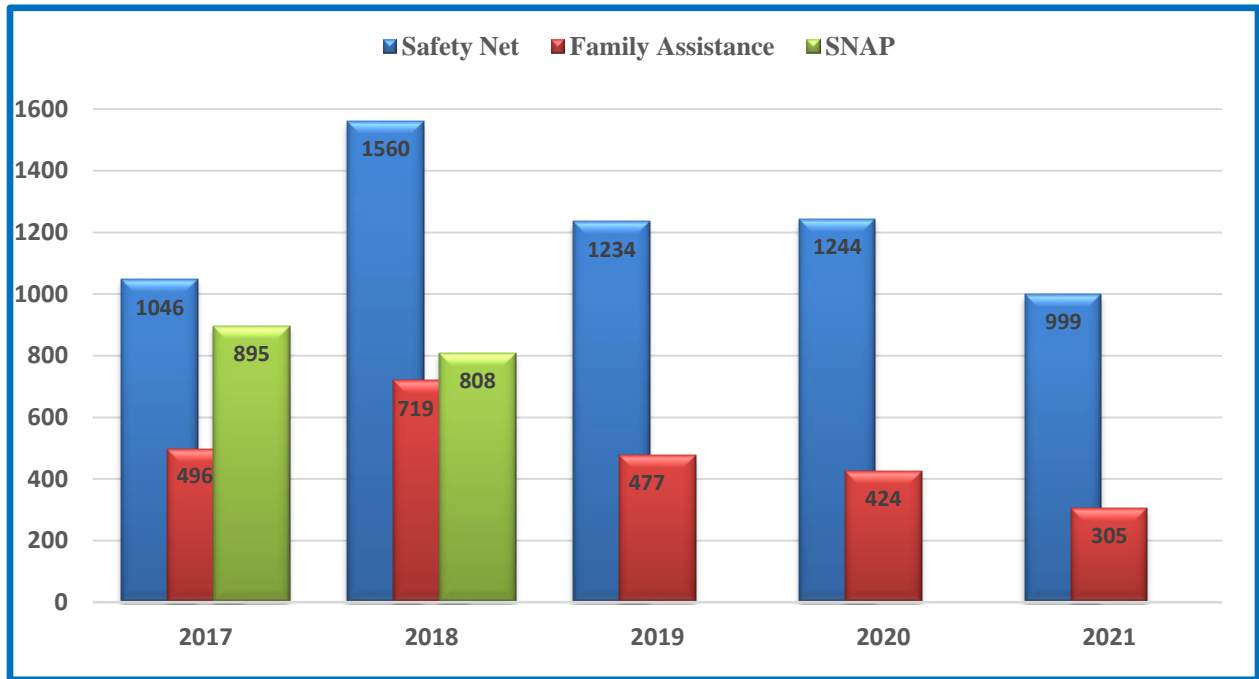
The pandemic resulted in significant decrease in the number of individuals seeking employment through Ontario County.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO OBTAINED UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT

Year	Number of Adults	SYEP Youth Served
2017	143	85
2018	141	71
2019	144	97
2020	75	29
2021	93	52

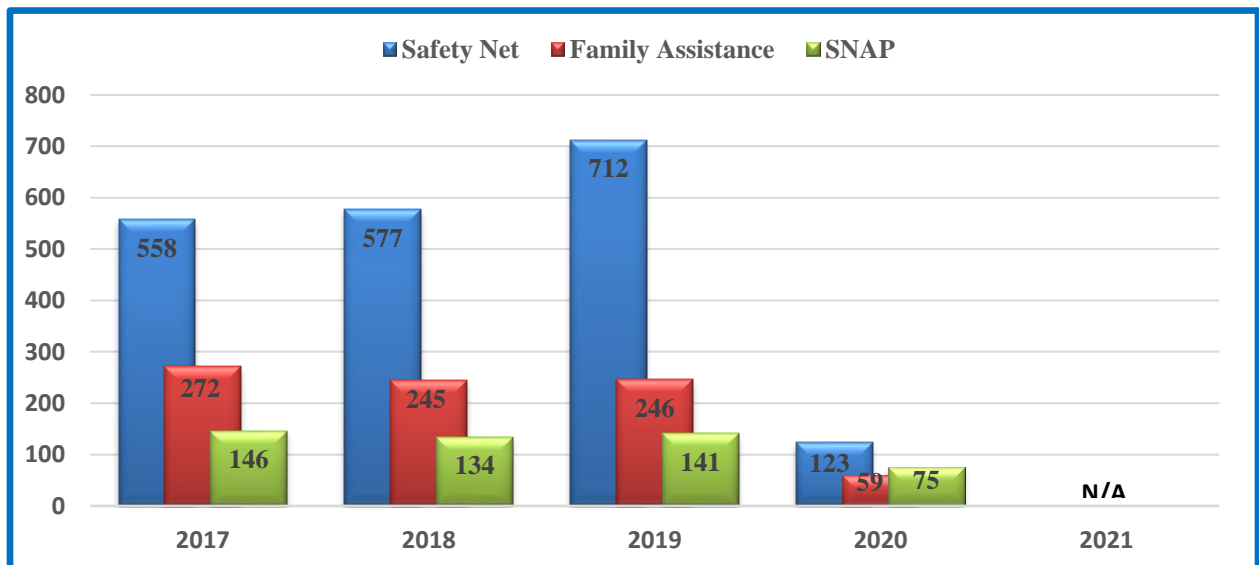
Orientation is a required activity for individuals applying for assistance. During this daily program, staff members explain key components of receiving assistance and identify individuals who may need only support services, childcare, or a one-time work expense, to be successful. A state policy change in 2019 eliminated this requirement for SNAP applicants.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE APPLICANTS SEEN FOR ORIENTATION



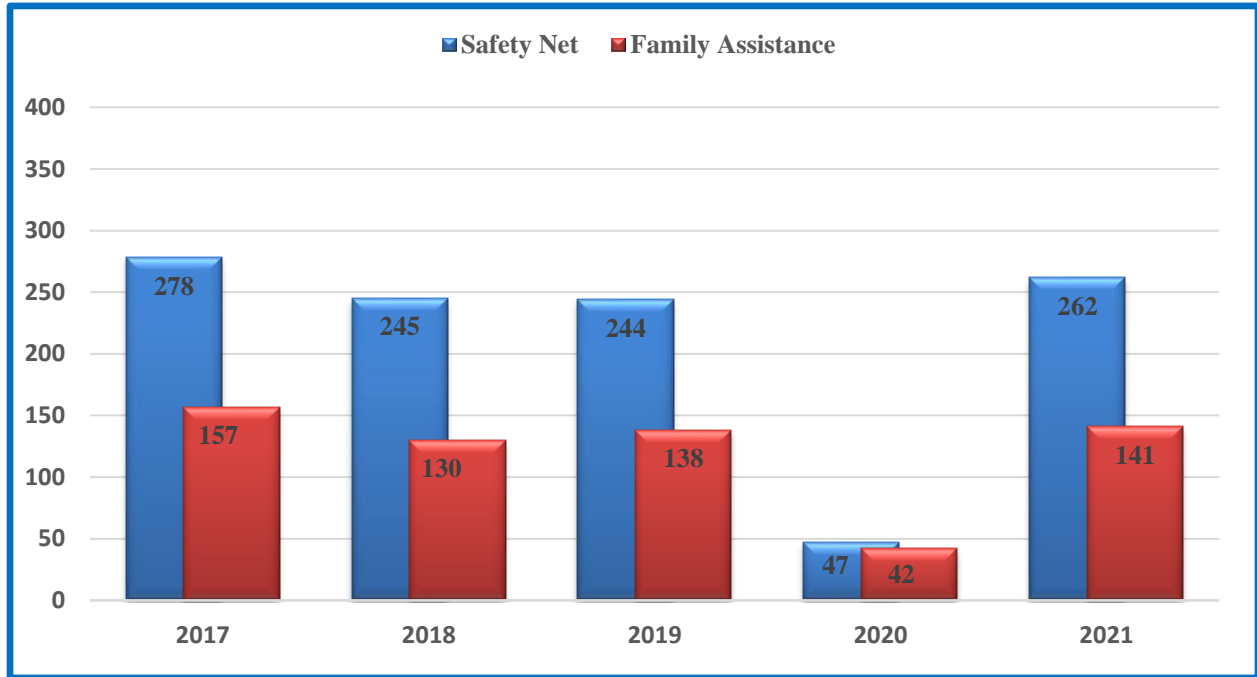
Exploring Employment is a required 3-hour overview of the basis of job seeking. Due to the pandemic, this was only offered January through March of 2020 and not at all in 2021. Applicants complete an assessment of basic math and reading skills. Workforce Development staff discuss the expectations for employment, and then meet individually with applicants to review their employment history. Since all applicants for Temporary Assistance are required to attend, the staff also will review any medical exemption an applicant may present.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE APPLICANTS PARTICIPATING IN EXPLORING EMPLOYMENT SEMINAR



Job Search is the first activity for those applicants who are deemed employable. Counselors do a brief presentation on an employment related topic (resume writing, interviewing skills, etc.), and then review each person’s job search activities.

APPLICANTS SEEN FOR JOB SEARCH SERVICES



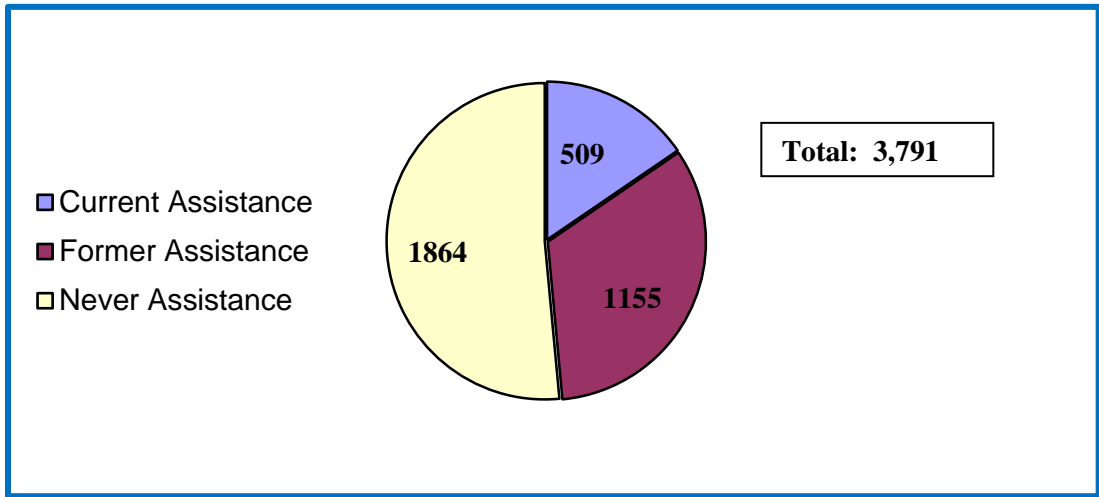
Child Support Enforcement

The Child Support Office staff assists custodial parents seeking court ordered child support for their children. They establish paternity, establish and enforce support orders, and provide services in a timely and professional manner focused on the children that they serve.

During 2021, the team collected \$11,461,469. Of this amount, \$10,674,429 was distributed directly to the single parent families. The remaining \$787,040 was retained by the County to defray the costs of providing Temporary Assistance, Medicaid, and Foster Care services to the residents of Ontario County. We partner with the County Attorney’s Office, the Ontario County Family Court, and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance to establish, collect, and enforce our child support orders. The staff of the Child Support Office is committed to helping the single parent families of Ontario County receive the financial and medical support to which they are entitled.

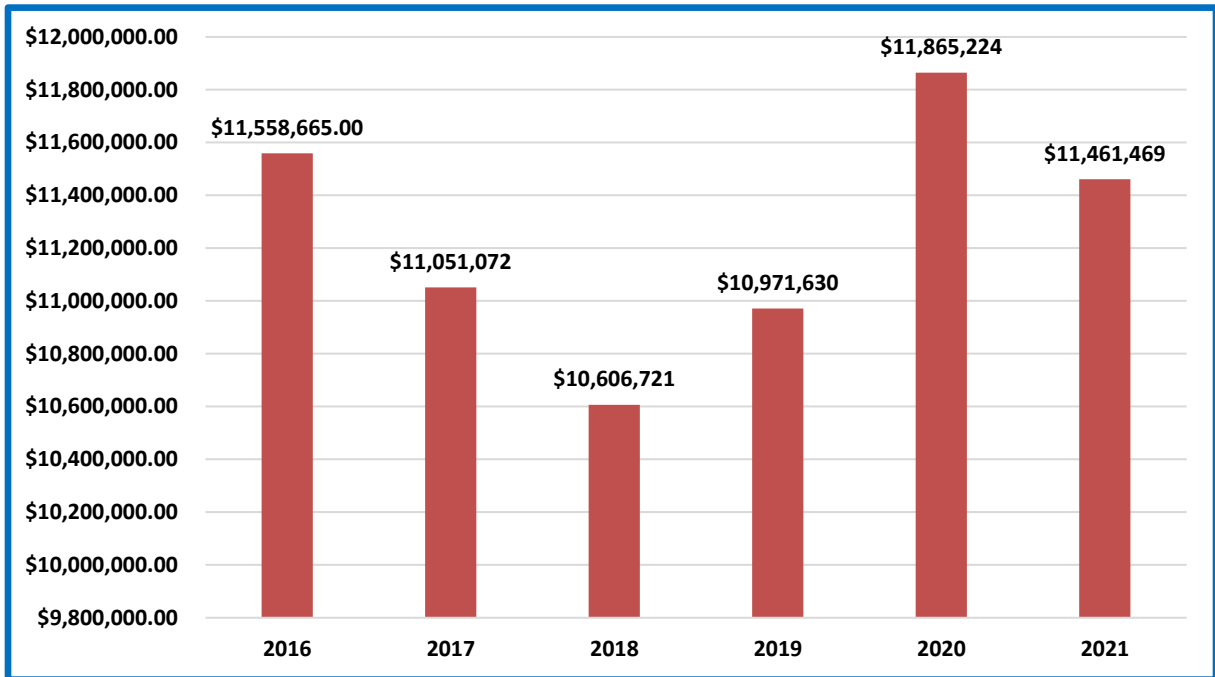
	Federal Goal	Ontario County
Cases with paternity established	90%	96.7%
Cases with support order	80%	94.7%
Cases with medical support rider	--	57%

2021 SUPPORT COLLECTION CASELOAD



Source: NYS DSS157 Report

2016 – 2021 TOTAL ANNUAL SUPPORT COLLECTIONS



Source: NYS Title IV-D Summary of Collections and Distributions Monthly Rolls

Medicaid

The Medicaid Unit determines eligibility for several of the programs included in New York's Medicaid program. The primary programs include full Medicaid which pays for all medical care, and Chronic Care which pays for nursing home and other long-term care services. Smaller programs cover Medicare premiums, AIDS health insurance premiums, family planning services, Medicaid for the working disabled and for pregnant women. Each program has its own eligibility criteria. Most individuals' Medicaid eligibility is established for 12 months, at which time the individual must renew their case to continue their eligibility.

Medicaid applications processed by DSS continue to trend downward as the state takeover of Medicaid administration progresses. The vast majority of individuals under the age of 65 must apply for Medicaid through the New York State of Health (NYSOH) website (<https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov>). NYSOH uses an applicant's Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) to establish eligibility, in place of the more complex eligibility rubrics previously required by DOH. Applications that NYSOH deem not eligible for MAGI budgeting are returned to the local district for processing.

Technology continues to play a large role in Medicaid administration. Medicaid staff use the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements program (SAVE) to access the immigration and nationality information for applicants. The Social Security Administration has replaced beneficiaries' HICN (Health Insurance Claim Number) which was based on a social security number with Medicare Beneficiary Identification numbers (MBI). The MARx system allows Medicaid staff to correlate a client's HICN to his/her MBI to verify Medicare information.

Chronic Care Medicaid is available for income-eligible individuals who are in need of nursing home placement or medically necessary home care services. The Chronic Care eligibility process is the most complex of the Medicaid processes, requiring staff to review 60 months of bank records and to conduct data searches for real estate and other assets.

Some applicants for Medicaid may need assistance completing their application. Other agencies are certified as navigators assisting clients to apply through the Exchange: Thompson Health, S2AY Rural Health Network, Excellus Community Health Care Association of NYS, and Fidelis. Anyone in receipt of Medicaid in Ontario County who does not have other health insurance is mandated to enroll in a Managed Care Plan. Five plans are now available to Ontario County residents: Excellus, MVP, Fidelis, United Health Care and YourCare. New York DOH provides an employee from Maximus to provide the required education piece for new Medicaid recipients and to assist them in selecting the managed care plan that best meets their needs.

It should be noted that the Medicaid numbers reflected in this report do not include all Ontario County residents in receipt of Medicaid. The most recent statistics from the Department of Health show 24,262 Ontario County residents (21.6%) are covered by a Medicaid program.

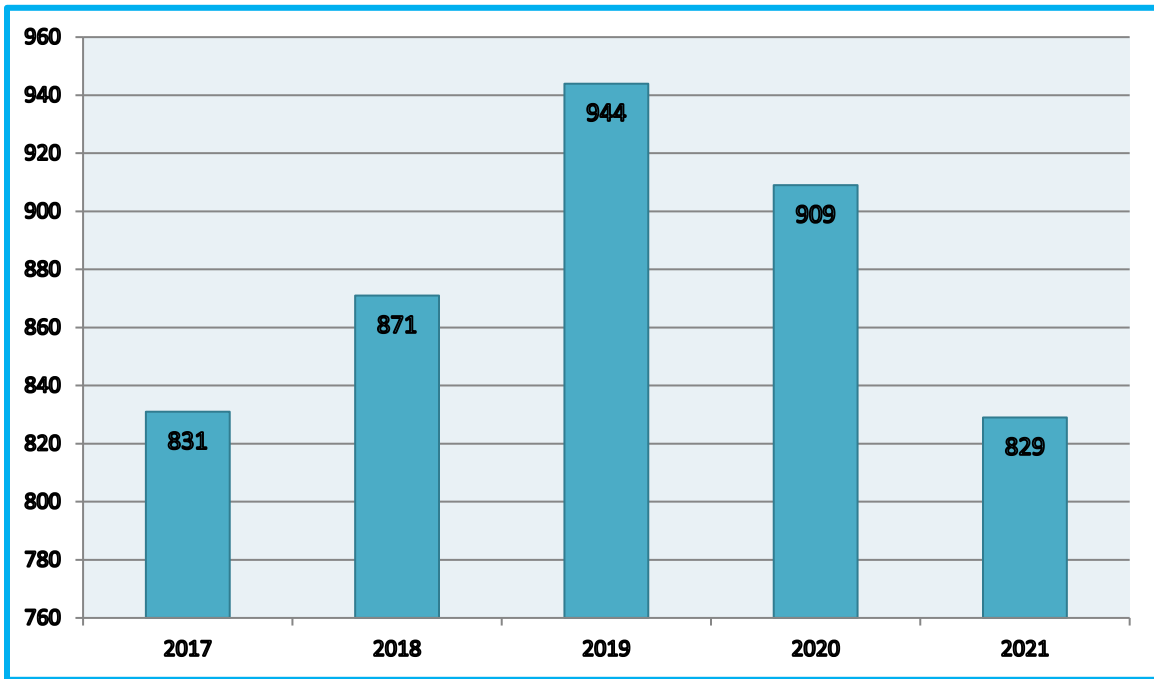
**2021 CASELOAD
DISTRIBUTION BY MUNICIPALITY
NUMBER OF CASES**

Municipality	Family Assistance	Safety Net Assistance	Total Temporary Assistance	Non-Public Assistance - Food Stamps Only	Medicaid Only	GRAND TOTAL
Bloomfield (V)	9	11	20	72	71	163
Bristol (T)	6	11	17	76	93	186
Canadice (T)	6	5	11	88	80	179
Canandaigua (C)	52	142	194	756	955	1,905
Canandaigua (T)	37	86	123	452	521	1,096
Clifton Springs (V)	11	154	165	222	274	661
East Bloomfield (T)	1	6	7	57	63	127
Farmington (T)	43	90	133	657	665	1,455
Geneva (C)	118	229	347	1,211	1,240	2,798
Geneva (T)	20	45	65	204	228	497
Gorham (T)	5	14	19	125	132	276
Hopewell (T)	10	86	96	249	429	774
Manchester (T)	17	34	51	269	292	612
Manchester (V)	8	38	46	120	106	272
Naples (T)	5	3	8	61	68	137
Naples (V)	4	3	7	71	81	159
Phelps (T)	7	23	30	141	179	350
Phelps (V)	13	13	26	85	86	197
Richmond (T)	3	20	23	120	118	261
Rushville (V)	1	3	4	22	25	51
Seneca (T)	10	11	21	76	86	183
Shortsville (V)	1	11	12	91	82	185
South Bristol (T)	2	1	3	34	49	86
Victor (T)	6	33	39	228	305	572
Victor (V)	2	11	13	88	100	201
West Bloomfield (T)	5	12	17	96	101	214
Total	402	1095	1497	5,671	6,429	13,597

Services

The Services Unit provides an array of programs including protective and preventive services for children and adults, foster care, adoption, supportive family services and long-term care services. As in the other areas of the department, DSS is required to provide these services and the work is governed by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Department of Health (DOH).

SERVICES AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



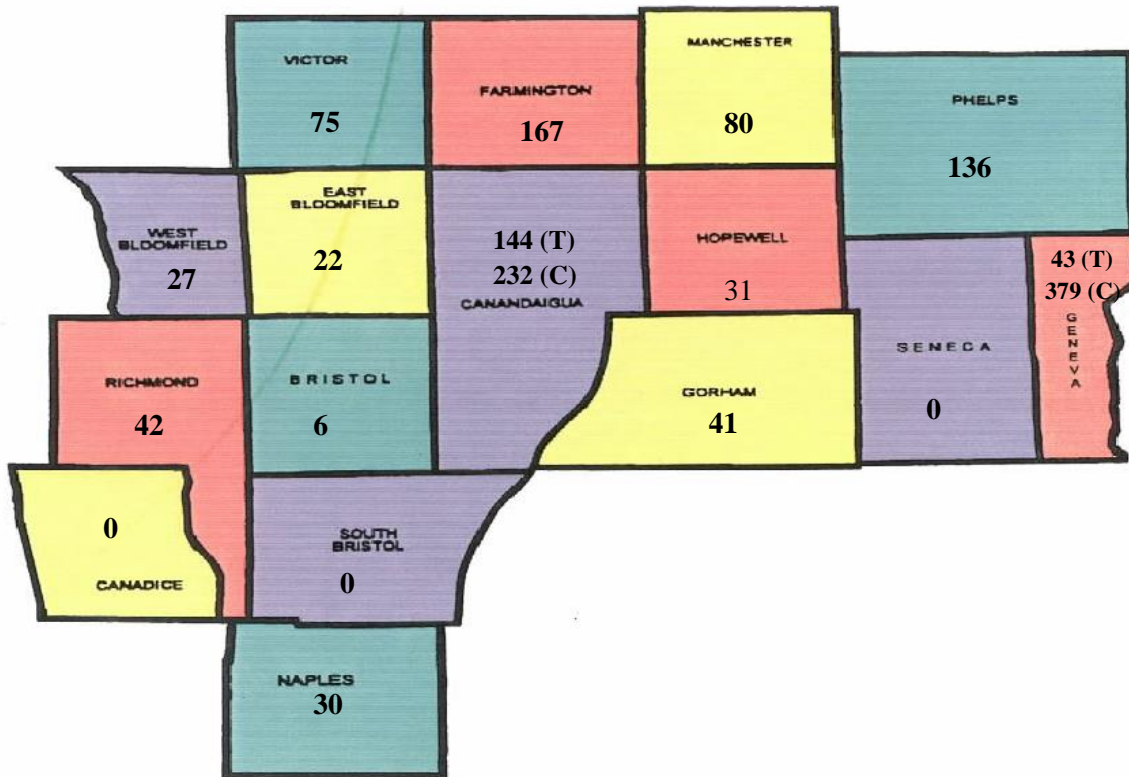
Source: Services Database

Children’s Services represents the lion’s share of the work done in this unit. *Child Protective Services (CPS)* is the front door to most families receiving services. The CPS team is charged with investigating reports of suspected abuse and maltreatment in family settings. Safety, the likelihood of immediate danger of serious harm, is a primary concept in CPS from the start. Safety assessments must be done at the 24 hour mark, after 7 days and again when the investigation is closed. The investigations must be completed within 60 days and must also include an assessment of the future risk of maltreatment.

The investigation must address the reported allegations, as well as an assessment of the entire surrounding circumstance of the identified child and any other child found in the household. This normally includes interviews with all family members, information from collateral sources, and obtaining any records that may be of value. The goal is to keep children safe and in their own homes whenever possible. Removal from the home is traumatic and is used only when there is imminent risk of serious harm and nothing can be done to ameliorate the danger.

During the investigation, the caseworker will assist the family to identify areas in which they may need assistance and will make referrals for the family to community agencies. In some cases, the family would be best served by receiving services through DSS. The Department contracts with a variety of agencies to provide specialized services to these families.

2021 CHILD PROTECTIVE REPORTS BY MUNICIPALITY
TOTAL: 1,455



Families who have experienced abuse or maltreatment and go on to receive specialized services through DSS are referred to the *Preventive Services* team. These caseworkers partner with the families and the contracted service providers to address the issues identified during the CPS investigation. This team also assists families in crisis whose children may be at risk of foster care placement due to issues other than abuse or maltreatment. Young people involved with the juvenile justice system or who are demonstrating serious emotional issues may be at risk of foster care placement and also may be eligible for intervention through Preventive Services.

When a child cannot be maintained safely in their own home for any reason, out-of-home placement becomes a necessary intervention. Children may be placed in foster care due to abuse or neglect, or due to their being adjudicated a Person In Need of Supervision (PINS) or a Juvenile Delinquent (JD). The Family Court orders these children to be placed with the Commissioner of Social Services and a caseworker facilitates placement with an appropriate relative, foster family, or in a congregate care setting. The guiding principle is that a child should be placed in the least restrictive setting available to meet their needs. Recent legislation emphasizes the value of placing children with relatives, encouraging the family member to complete certification as a foster home. This reduces the trauma the child experiences when removed from a parent’s home.

Most children placed with DSS reside with foster families certified by the *Homefinding* team. Homefinding staff assist the caseworker by matching the child coming into foster care with the family best suited to meet his or her needs. Sibling groups are kept together and, unless not permitted by the court, plans for regular visitation are developed immediately to keep the parent-child relationship intact. All foster families have been trained and certified by caseworkers who know each family's strengths and skill sets. Home finders also are available to help address issues which may arise in the foster home and threaten the placement stability.

Once a child is placed in *Foster Care*, the goal immediately becomes to return the child to his or her family of origin or another suitable relative. The caseworker works with the family to address the issues that brought the child into care. At the same time, they help the family identify extended family members who may be a resource for the child should he or she not be able to return home. Most children leave foster care, returning to either their family of origin or another family member.

The federal Family First Preventive Services Act ("Family First") went into effect in September 2021. Family First strengthened the existing requirements for ensuring that when a child could not be maintained safely in their home, family members and "fictive kin" must be sought out to take custody of the child. Removing a child from their parent's custody is a traumatic event in the life of a child. Placing the child with a familiar family member or friend has been shown to reduce the trauma. If DSS believes a child cannot be safely maintained in a family setting, either foster family or relative care, the caseworker must arrange for an assessment by a certified "Qualified Individual" or QI. The QI is a professional therapist who has met the requirements set by OCFS and has completed the necessary training. The QI conducts a specific assessment of the child to determine if congregate care (a group home or institution) is the best alternative. Ontario DSS has contracted with Ontario County Mental Health and Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes for the QI function.

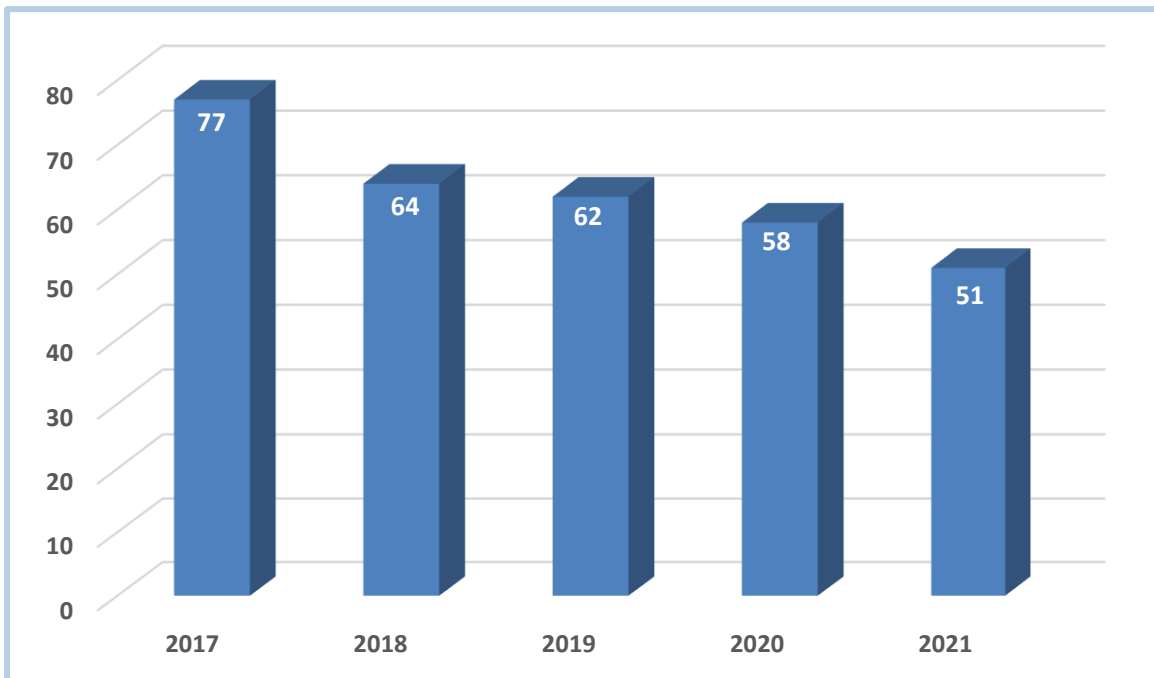
Family First also discourages congregate care stays of more than 12 months by requiring that all congregate stays over 12 months must be approved by the Commissioner of OCFS. The Department must develop a team to regularly review the progress of all children in congregate care. When DSS believes a child in a congregate setting will exceed 12 months in a congregate setting, the team must submit a review application to OCFS. If OCFS denies the application, the child must be moved. If an alternate placement cannot be found, DSS no longer will receive reimbursement for the child's placement.

When any child has been in foster care 12 consecutive months, federal legislation requires that DSS file a petition seeking to terminate the parents' rights, freeing the child for adoption, or demonstrate to the Family Court why the petition would not be in the child's best interest. In some cases, the family may be making progress and simply needs a few more months to complete their work. In others, the caseworker may be working with the extended family to provide a resource. Regardless of the scenario, the goal is to provide children with a safe permanent home as quickly as possible.

When it appears a child will be freed for adoption through a surrender or a termination of parental rights, the Homefinding team works to identify an adoptive resource. Most families who are certified to foster children are also certified to adopt. Here is where the initial matching between a child coming into foster care and the foster family proves to be most critical. Most children in foster care who are freed for adoption are adopted by their foster families.

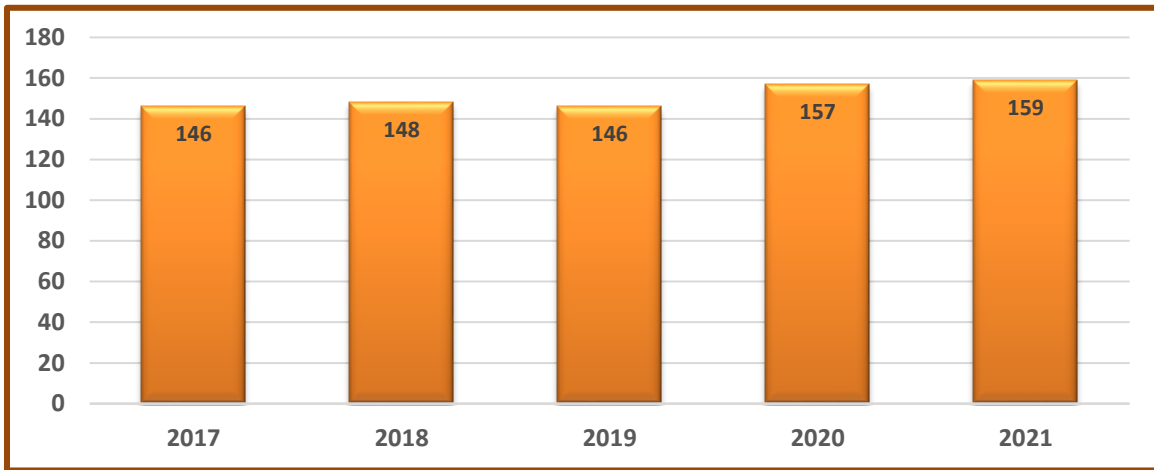
	CPS Reports	Abuse/Neglect (A/N) Petitions	Juvenile Delinquent (JD) Petitions	Out Of Home Placements			
				A/N	PINS	JD w/ DSS	JD w/OCFS
2021	2057	35	17	15	0	3	2
2020	1613	20	27	16	0	2	0
2019	2072	59	7	28	5	7	0
2018	1692	55	24	33	6	5	0
2017	1613	37	32	21	1	2	1

AVERAGE MONTHLY NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED IN FOSTER CARE



Adult Protective Services (APS) assists adults who have some physical or mental impairment that renders them unable to care for themselves without assistance and they have no one able and willing to assist them responsibly. APS receives referrals for services directly and collaborates with other local agencies to maintain these individuals safely in the community. Adults have the right of self-determination so engagement is a critical skill for these staff members. Only when an individual is deemed unable to understand the risks and consequences of their behavior can the court intervene. In a handful of cases, the court may name the Commissioner as guardian or conservator for an individual.

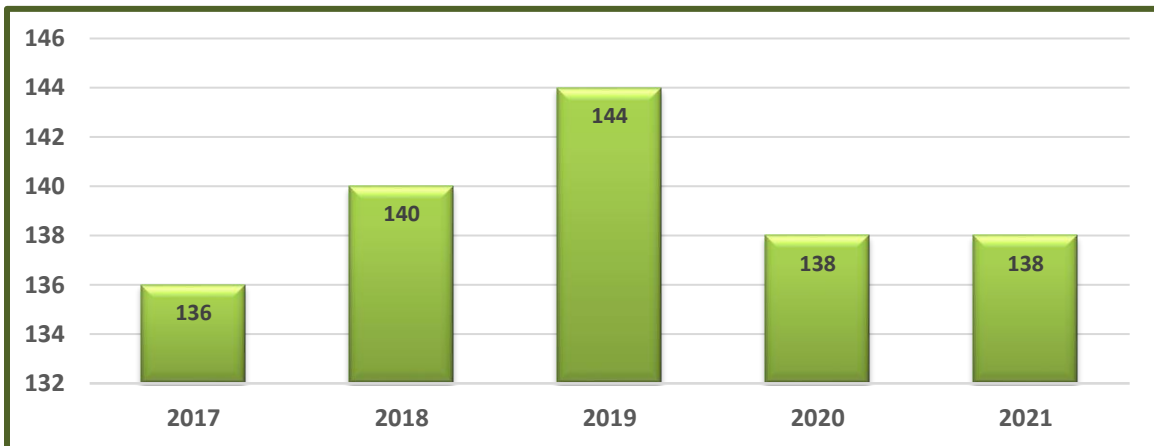
ADULT PROTECTIVE AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD



An adult with disabilities may be able to maintain a relatively stable life as long as someone else manages their finances. **Adult Preventive Services** are provided to individuals in receipt of federal benefits, often at the request of the Social Security Administration. The Commissioner becomes the representative payee and caseworkers and Accounting staff see that the individual’s rent and utilities are paid and their other basic needs are met within their budget.

Some individuals with significant health issues require some assistance to enable them to remain safely at home. If the individual receives Medicaid, they may qualify for home care services. The **Personal Care** team receives these referrals from physicians and, partnering with community home health agencies, completes an assessment of the individual’s abilities, needs and resources. Services may include personal care aides, nursing care, personal emergency response units or a combination of these services to enable the individual to avoid hospitalization or nursing home care. The care plan is reevaluated semi-annually or whenever there has been a change in the person’s circumstances. Care may be provided by a community agency with certified aides or by individuals hired directly by the client and paid through a fiscal intermediary agency.

PERSONAL CARE AIDE (PCA) AVERAGE MONTHLY CASELOAD

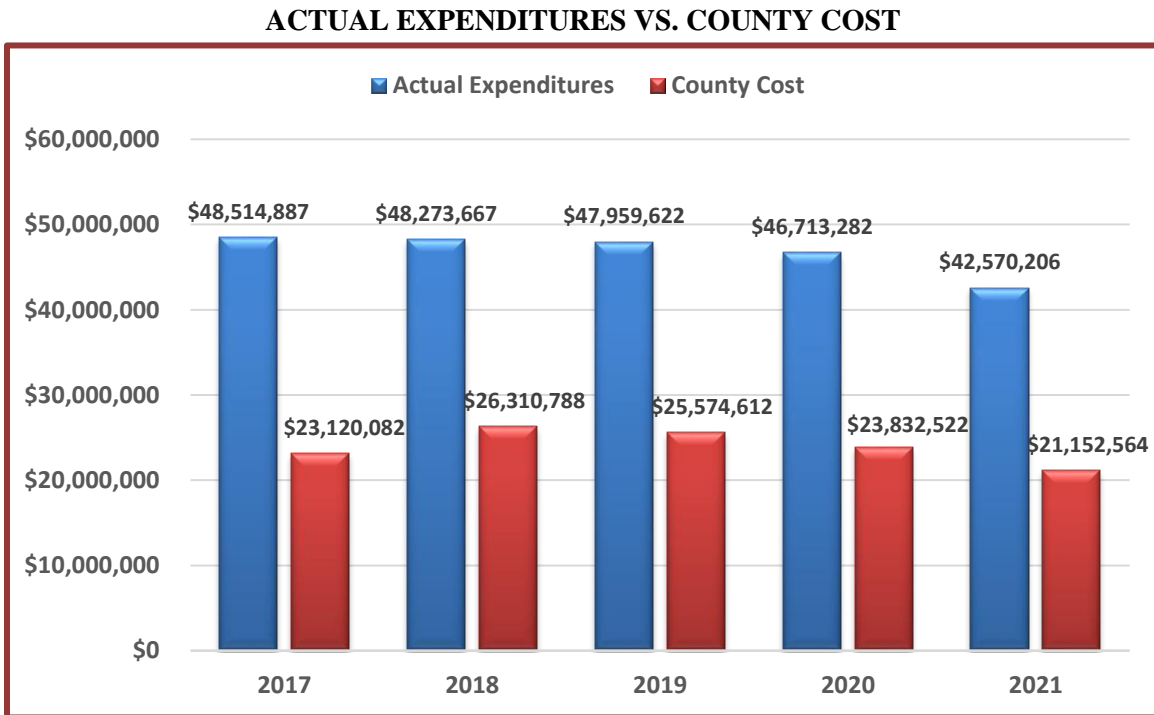


On a daily basis, the DSS staff provides *Information and Referral* services to Ontario County residents looking for information about services available through the Department or through other community agencies. The Department maintains relationships with a variety of community agencies to ensure that staff has the most current information about services available throughout the county.

Accounting

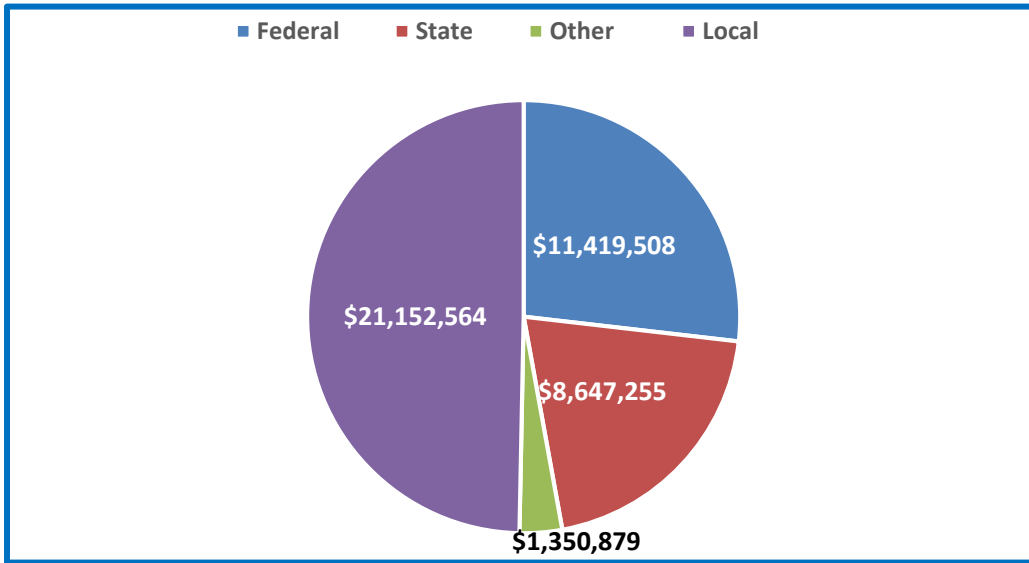
Accounting is responsible for all accounting functions of the department, including preparing claims for federal/state reimbursement, processing vendor payments, maintenance of trust accounts/assets, recoveries, repayments, burials and preparation of the Department’s annual budget.

Total expenditures for 2021 were \$42,570,206. County cost of the total expenditures was \$21,152,564 or 49.6%. Each program has its own reimbursement strategy for program and administrative costs. For example, Safety Net benefit costs are reimbursed 29%, but the administration receives no reimbursement. Family Assistance benefits and administration are fully reimbursed. Other programs, such as HEAP, have no direct county outlay.



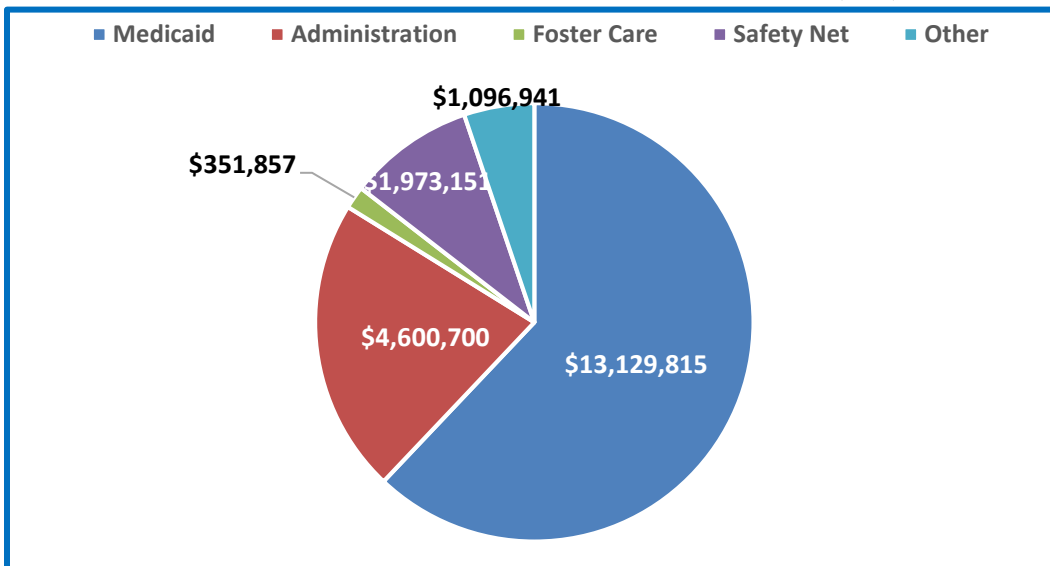
Source: MUNIS YTD Budget Report

**FUNDING SOURCES: WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM
2021 TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$42,570,206**



Data Source: MUNIS YTD Budget Report

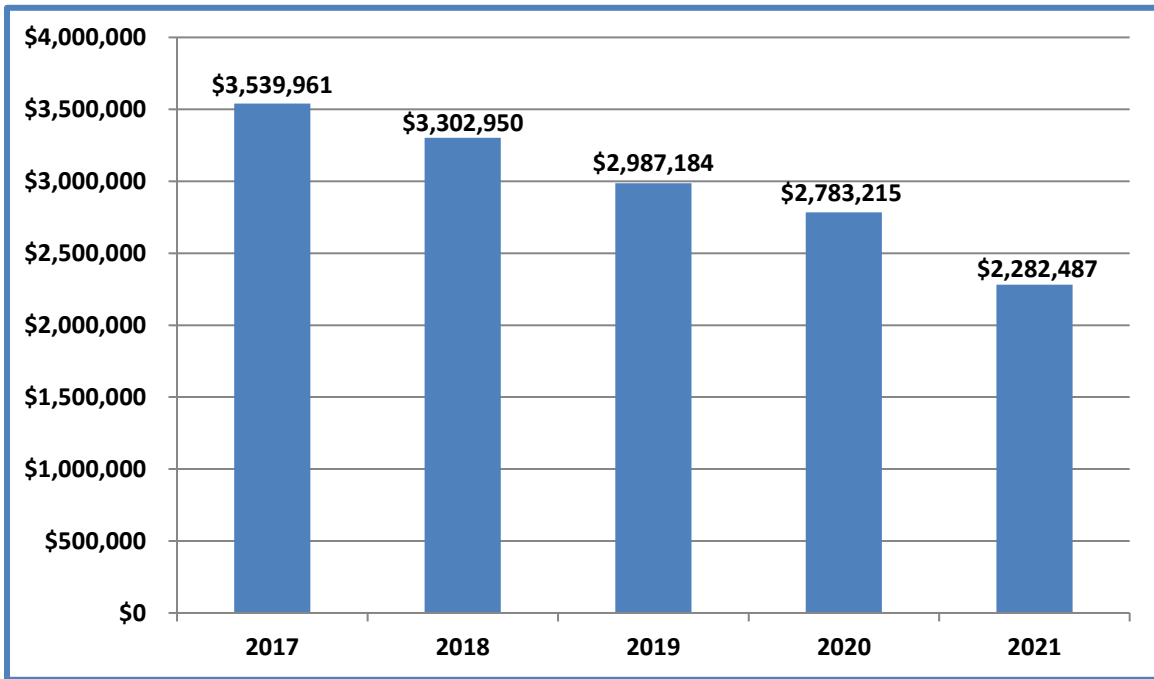
WHERE IT GOES....2021 COUNTY COST: \$21,152,564



Data Source: MUNIS YTD Budget Report

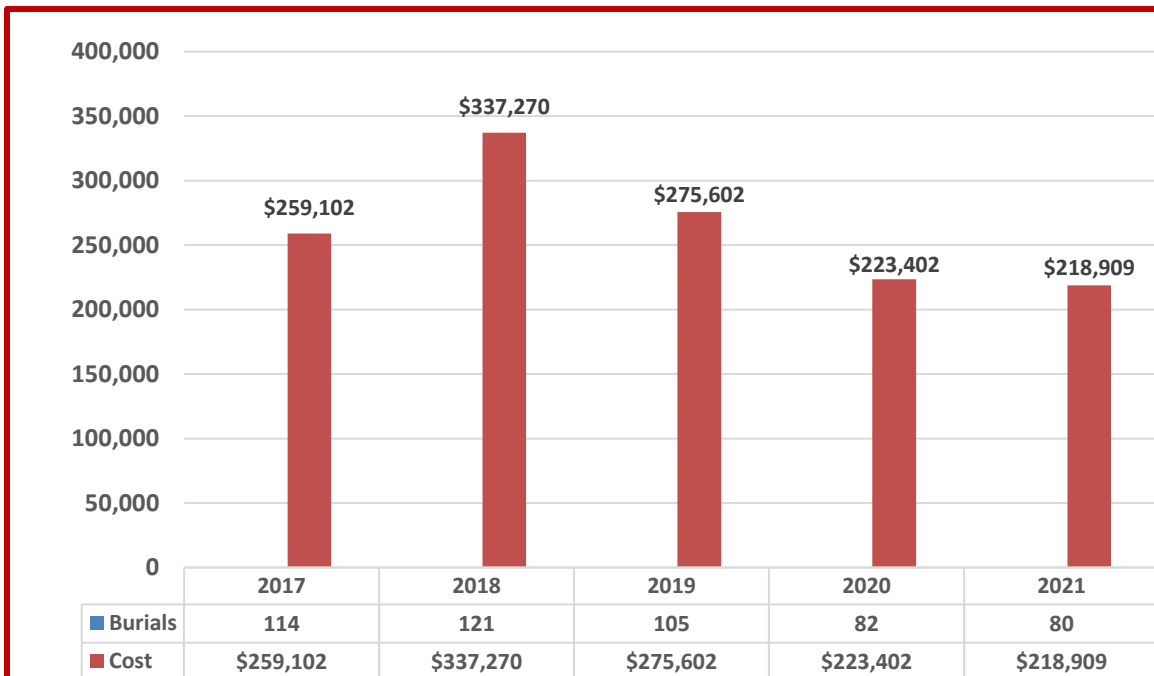
Accounting staff track and monitor a variety of program areas, large and small, such as expenses related to housing the homeless and those related to indigent burials.

EMERGENCY HOUSING & EVICTION PREVENTION



Data Source: BICS Paytype

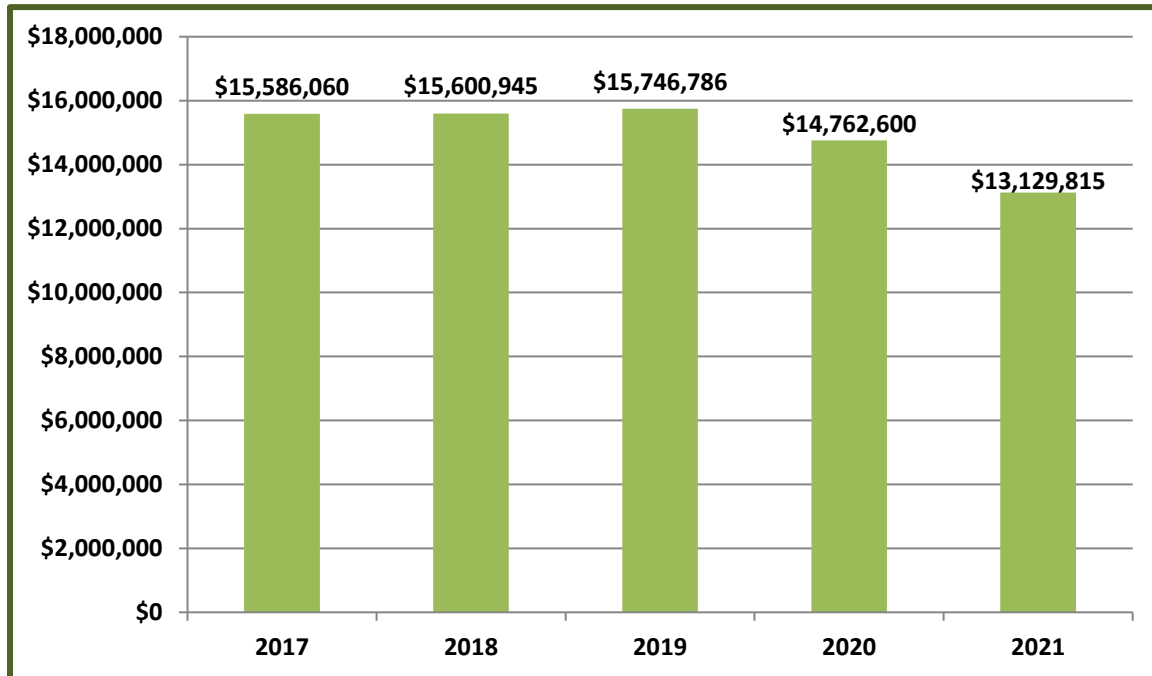
NUMBER OF BURIALS & YEARLY COST



Data Source: BICS Payment Rolls

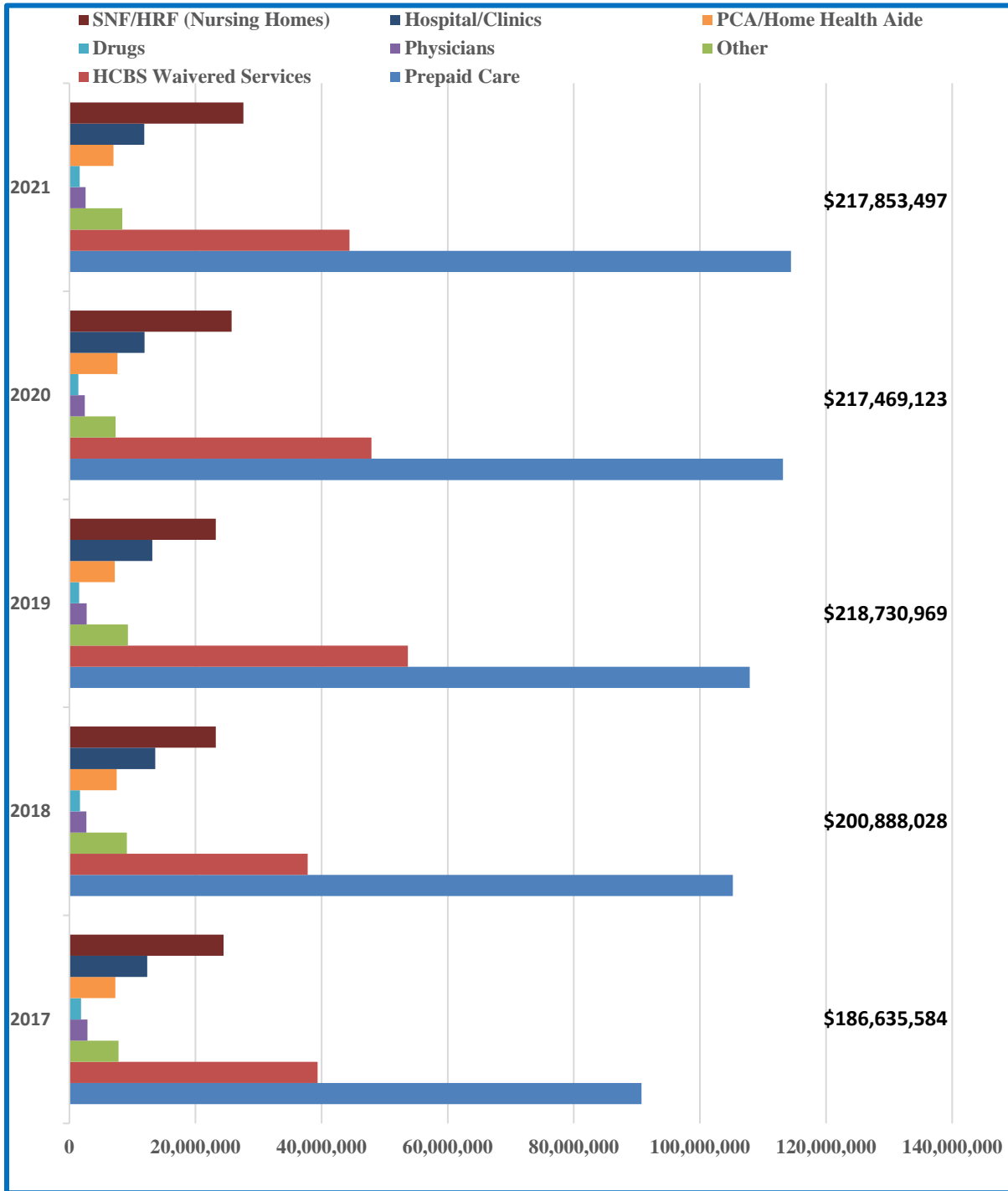
More than half of the Department’s County cost is attributable to *Medicaid*. New York State determines each county’s contribution to the Medicaid program and the county pays its “share” every week. All costs incurred by Medicaid recipients beyond the County’s contribution are covered by the state and federal sources. The “return on investment” of the local Medicaid share is approximately 10:1. Medicaid funding to health care organizations supports services to low-income, the elderly and the disabled resident of Ontario County. It also provides employment to health care professionals and support staff at these organizations.

NET LOCAL SHARE OF MEDICAID EXPENDITURES



Data Source: MMIS

TOTAL MEDICAID EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY



Data Source: MARS 20 Quarterly Report

2021 ANALYSIS OF PAYMENTS TO MAJOR MEDICAID PROVIDERS
Institutions receiving over \$1,000,000 of gross Medicaid dollars

Provider	2021			2020
	Grand Total	Category Total	Category Description	Category Total
Blue Choice/Blue Choice Option	\$ 60,313,398	\$ 60,313,398	Managed Care	\$ 55,395,233
Finger Lakes DDSO	\$ 18,010,146	\$ 18,010,146	HCBS Waived Services	\$ 2,993,008
Ontario County ARC	\$ 13,288,323	\$ 13,288,323	HCBS Waived Services Case Management Plans	\$ 14,865,072 \$ -
NYS Catholic Health Plan, Inc.	\$ 11,316,716	\$ 11,316,716	Managed Care Case Management Plans	\$ 10,517,023 \$ -
Icircle Services of the Finger Lakes	\$ 6,727,728	\$ 6,727,728	Managed Care	\$ 10,386,462
Excellus Health Plan, Inc.	\$ 12,208,220	\$ 12,208,220	Managed Care	\$ 10,820,782
MVP Health Plan, Inc/ Preferred Care	\$ 5,295,018	\$ 5,295,018	Managed Care	\$ 5,428,574
MM Ewing Continuing Care Ctr	\$ 5,284,394	\$ 5,284,394	SNF	\$ 5,636,926
Strong Memorial Hospital	\$ 4,900,401	\$ 3,761,597 \$ 708,220 \$ 11,201 \$ 272,617 \$ 143,693 \$ 239 \$ 2,834	Hospital Inpatient Hospital Outpatient OP Methadone Clinic Drugs/Supplies Clinic-Freestanding Other Eye Appliances & DME	\$ 3,686,856 \$ 530,171 \$ 10,194 \$ 129,381 \$ 16,707 \$ 188 \$ 3,393
VNA Homecare Options LLC MLTC	\$ -	\$ -	Managed Care	\$ 3,006,054
Center for Disability Rights	\$ 3,150,074	\$ 3,150,074	Personal Care-Regular Case Management Plans LTHHC Waived Services	\$ 3,385,847 \$ - \$ -
Living Ctr at Geneva South/North	\$ 1,468,391	\$ 1,468,391	SNF	\$ 2,816,828
Clifton Springs Hospital	\$ 3,646,833	\$ 2,980,887 \$ 296,938 \$ 369,008 \$ -	SNF Hospital Inpatient Hospital Outpatient Other	\$ 2,008,646 \$ 266,362 \$ 412,962 \$ 190,638
United Healthcare of NY, Inc.	\$ 2,648,337	\$ 2,648,337	Managed Care	\$ 2,376,265
Ontario Operations Assoc LLC	\$ 3,097,740	\$ 3,097,740	SNF	\$ 3,304,613
Person Centered Services CCO	\$ 1,632,483	\$ 1,632,483	Case Management Plans	\$ 2,545,084
Companion Care of Rochester	\$ 1,974,854	\$ 1,974,854	Personal Care-Regular	\$ 1,761,864
Lochland School Inc. SPV	\$ 1,777,247	\$ 1,777,247	HCBS Waived Services	\$ 1,441,118
New York Quality Healthcare C	\$ 2,743,469	\$ 2,743,469	Managed Care	\$ 2,295,572
F.F. Thompson Hospital	\$ 1,249,129	\$ 771,578 \$ 477,551	Hospital Inpatient Hospital Outpatient	\$ 595,969 \$ 539,963
Independent Living for SRS	\$ 1,520,083	\$ 1,520,083	Managed Care	\$ 1,284,457
Lakeview Mental Health ICM MH	\$ 1,289,451	\$ 1,289,451	Rehab Other Total	\$ 1,042,853
Prime Care Coordination LLC	\$ 990,471	\$ 990,471	Case Management Plans	\$ 1,360,213
Soldiers & Sailors Memorial SNF	\$ 1,900,975	\$ 1,900,975	SNF	\$ 1,290,509
Finger Lakes UCP	\$ 2,057,813	\$ 288,413 \$ 4,474 \$ 2,512 \$ 1,762,414 \$ - \$ -	Clinic-Freestanding LTHHC Waived Services Early Intervention HCBS Waived Services Other Case Management Plans	\$ 303,438 \$ 123 \$ 10,103 \$ 1,690,620 \$ - \$ -
Totals	\$ 172,985,416			\$ 154,349,781

Source: MARS 4th Quarter, MARS20 Report

ONTARIO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
SUPPORT TO COUNTY DEPARTMENTS
JANUARY 1, 2021– DECEMBER 31, 2021

Funding for many other departments flows through the DSS budget. In 2021, 2.2 Million funded other departments as noted.

County Attorney	\$1,160,166.96
Probation COPS	\$ 405,753.88
Information Services	\$ 126,551.24
Finance	\$ 66,104.24
Sheriff Department	\$ 191,582.49
Safe Harbors	\$ 10,048.96
Office for the Aging	\$ 73,162.00
Public Health – Early Intervention	\$ 69,848.00
Veteran’s Services	\$ 167,295.00
TOTAL	\$2,270,512.77

Staff Development

Employees are the Department’s greatest asset and we believe in offering a variety of training opportunities. The residents we serve face complex challenges and training provides staff with the tools needed to assist our clients in moving forward. Each program area has its own basic technical trainings as well as more advanced courses beyond the state’s mandated minimums. Our contract with Empire State College provides the mechanism to bring in trainers to address additional critical issues. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic stopped all in-person training. The state agencies were able to develop virtual programs covering the basics of the assorted state-mandated trainings. Many of these programs will return to in-person classes in 2022.

While training targeting program-related issues is critical to employee competence, staff development also includes opportunities for broader development. Other sessions have included Conflict Resolution, Coaching for Performance and Critical Thinking. Depending on the funding source, the Department opens these courses to other County Departments and the not-for-profit community as space allows.

Technology has changed the face of training. Even prior to the pandemic, more and more courses were being offered via computer-based training and webinars. The classroom portion of the recent revision of the Child Welfare Foundations training, for example, relies heavily on computer-based training which the employee completes prior to the classroom training. This gives flexibility to staff and decreases the time traveling as well as time spent out of the office.

The child welfare community across the country experiences significant turnover in its staffing due to high caseloads and emotionally demanding work, among other factors. The Social Work Education Consortium Rochester Region is a collaboration of counties and the Office of Children and Family Services whose goal is to “stabilize and professionalize the public child welfare workforce” with education, training and workshops. In collaboration with the consortium, Ontario County has been able to host a variety of trainings intended to provide professional development for child welfare staff.

The Coordinator is the liaison with Empire State College. Our contract allows employees to earn college credits toward a degree program or to enhance skills related to the job. The contract provides excellent opportunities for staff to further their education while continuing to work. A number of staff have moved into different positions within the Department and the County after receiving a degree through this program.



The Youth Bureau received \$95,948 from the Office of Children and Family Services to allocate to programs and agencies within our county. Ten programs were funded by OCFS Youth Development Funds (Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes, Partnership’s Community Support Center, Richmond Recreation, Boys & Girls Club of Geneva, Salvation Army of Geneva, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Family Counseling Services of the Finger Lakes ACE Trauma & LGBTQ, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and Child & Family Resources). These programs were able to serve 4,874 individuals. Family Counseling of the Finger Lakes provided Safe Zone training to 890 youth and adults.

Our Safe Harbour Team was able to provide 17 trainings throughout 2021 reaching 354 individuals with agencies and the community at large. We also provided a quarterly newsletter that was distributed to over 1,900 individuals each quarter. The Office of Children and Family Services Human Trafficking provided \$40,000 to our county. With the expertise and wisdom of our county’s CSEC Outreach & Education Taskforce and Safe Harbour Advisory Team along with the amazing staff within our DSS, Child Advocacy Center and Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes, we were able to help 44 youth find their way out or away from the dangerous web of exploitation and trafficking.

The 2021 Youth Recognition Awards honored 24 teens from Ontario County’s nine school districts. The award recognizes their achievements and positive role modeling despite personal challenges and obstacles the teens may have faced. Three adults received the Honorable Craig Doran award. This award recognizes the positive relationships obtained with youth, adding to their success and overall well being in education, work, and life. Fourteen school district employees received the School Employee of the year award for outstanding contribution to their school, along with positive influence and investment in our youth.

GLOSSARY

CC	Chronic Care- medical assistance coverage for people in long-term care, i.e. nursing homes
DOB	Department of the Budget
DOH	Department of Health
DOL	Department of Labor
FA	Family Assistance-a federally funded cash program that provides temporary assistance to needy families that include a minor child living with a parent
FFFS	Flexible Fund for Family Services
HCBS	Home Community Based Services- non-medical services that can be provided to certain individuals to keep them in the community, paid by Medicaid through a waiver
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
JD	Juvenile Delinquent- a person over seven and less than sixteen years of age who has committed an act that would constitute a crime if committed by an adult
MA	Medical Assistance-a program to assist low-income persons in obtaining and paying for medical care
MMIS	Medicaid Management Information System- a computerized system for claims processing which also provides information upon which management decisions can be made
OCFS	Office of Children and Family Services
OPWDD	Office for People with Developmental Disabilities
OTDA	Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
PCA	Personal Care Aide - some or total in-home assistance for certain populations with personal hygiene, dressing, feeding, nutritional and environmental support and health-related tasks
PINS	Person in Need of Supervision- a juvenile under the age of 17 who is a habitually truant, or is incorrigible, ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and requires supervision or treatment.
SN	Safety Net-non federally funded cash program for adults, childless couples, children living apart from relatives, families of persons found to be abusing drugs or alcohol, families of

persons refusing drug/alcohol screening assessment or treatment, persons who have exceeded the 60-month limit.

- SNAP** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - a federally mandated program with the purpose of reducing hunger and malnutrition by supplementing the food purchasing power of eligible low-income individuals. Previously known as Food Stamps.
- SPOA** Single Point of Accountability
- SSI** Supplemental Security Income- a federally supported and administered benefit program for eligible individuals or couples who are 65 or over, or who, regardless of age, are certified blind or certified disabled
- TA** Temporary Assistance- temporary help for needy adults and children. Temporary Assistance Programs include Family Assistance and Safety Net Assistance.