

Department Name	Albany County Legislature
Account(s)	1010

Department Function
Pursuant to the Albany County Charter, the County Legislature is the legislative, appropriating, and policy-determining body of the County. It is charged with exercising all powers of local legislation, including enacting, amending, or rescinding local laws and resolutions, and determining county policy. The County Legislature also makes appropriations for and adopts the annual County Budget, which includes the tax levy, and authorizes bonds to administer the County financial plan. The County Legislature is made up of 39 legislators elected from each of the districts in the County. A Chair, majority leader, and minority leader are appointed, as are a clerk, deputy clerk, and majority and minority counsels, and any other necessary employees.

Current Year Highlights
The Legislature had a productive year focused on making Albany County a safe and enjoyable community for all residents. The Legislature took part in several opportunities to help strengthen our neighborhoods. Of note, members of the Legislature delivered many medical supplies to St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church to help sustain the people of Ukraine. Legislative members also provided COVID-19 testing kits and masks to residents in need throughout the County. For more than a year, the Albany County Crisis Officials Responding and Diverting (ACCORD) pilot program has connected people in the hilltowns who are in crisis to appropriate mental health services. ACCORD provides a partnership between the County Legislature, Sheriff's Office, and Department of Mental Health, and a recent study demonstrates its success. The ACCORD program will expand into all County municipalities in 2023. The Legislature also expanded the Sheriff Office's existing Explorer Program into a county-wide program, and invested \$15,000 to guarantee that Fire and EMS explorer programs in the County can effectively recruit, transport, and train future first responders. The Legislature established a Mind Your Health Training Program, to train employees with direct and consistent interaction with the public and others, in Mental Health First Aid. The Legislature also introduced a local law to ensure that County residents can safely and confidently access healthcare as needed, without worry of being accosted by protestors. After recent decisions at the Federal level left gun laws in flux, the Legislature passed a local law requiring firearm dealers to post and distribute notices to gun buyers warning them of the dangers of having guns in their homes. The Legislature also introduced legislation to require appropriate gun storage – through gun locks and safes – in the home, and to ban a variety of weapons from County buildings. The Legislature passed a law reducing the time stray cats are held in shelter, providing for the costs associated with caring for them to decrease and the quality of life for the cats to increase. To alleviate issues of pay inequity for women and people of color, the Legislature passed the CROWN Amendment which bans hair style discrimination in employment situations, and also introduced a local law requiring employers to disclose salary ranges for advertised positions. The Legislature took further action to protect the rights of new and nursing mothers by providing for placement of lactation rooms throughout County facilities. Given the climate crisis, the Legislature took several significant steps to help save and restore trees and ensure greater carbon sequestration throughout the County by enacting a tree replacement policy for County projects and revamping and expanding the Albany County Nature and Historical Preserve System. These actions will help to ensure that County residents can enjoy the ecological and historical benefits of the County for many years.

Link to Website	www.albanycounty.com/Legislature
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