

Department Name	Department of Social Services
Account(s)	6010, 6055, 6070, 6100, 6101, 6109, 6140, 6141, 6142

Department Function
Our mission is to support and protect vulnerable individuals and families by providing access to public benefits for households facing poverty, those who are homeless, vulnerable elderly and disabled adults. The Department's primary task is to determine eligibility and authorize benefits for applicants seeking assistance, in an effort to improve their financial security and ensure household stability. These benefit programs include: Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, Child Care Assistance Program, Indigent Burials, emergency assistance and shelter for the homeless, and Medicaid. In addition, the Department investigates and assesses suspected cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse/neglect and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. We also provide money management programs for adults who are unable to handle their resources or protect themselves from exploitation, and operate the NY Connects Long-Term Care Information and Assistance Line, oversee the Long-Term Care Council, and arrange home care and Home Delivered Meals for vulnerable adults. Finally, we offer services for families by providing custodial parents with assistance obtaining child support, identifying and locating non-custodial parents, establishing paternity and support orders, and collecting and distributing child support payments.

Current Year Highlights
Accepted and responded to 38,434 applications for benefit programs. As a result of our work: • \$97.7 million in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits were delivered to over 19,000 households. • \$8.3 million in HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) benefits were delivered to 15,230 households; 1,342 HEAP Arrears Supplement payments (up to \$10,000 in outstanding utility arrears) were authorized. • \$11.7 million in Temporary Assistance benefits were delivered to 1,329 households. • Reimbursed funeral homes for 183 indigent burials. • Provided Child Care Subsidies to an average of 766 households each month; reduced parent contribution to 1% down from 10%. • Sheltered 1,087 unduplicated homeless individuals, including those facing domestic violence; Quarantined 120 homeless persons with COVID. • Processed \$28 million in child support payments for Albany County households; established 140 child support orders; identified paternity in 683 cases. Distributed \$379,092 in unclaimed child support to households with past orders. • Responded to 723 Fair Hearing requests appealing DSS decisions; DSS was upheld in 95% of cases. • Managed Medicaid eligibility for 24,384 individuals. • Responded to 19,479 NY Connects calls including 1,079 Adult Protective Inquiries; provided case management to 317 home care cases, 398 Home Delivered Meal (HDM) recipients and 81 individuals who receive both EISEP (Expanded In-Home Services to the Elderly Program) and HDM. • Awarded OTDA grant for Rent Supplement Program to provide ongoing Fair Market Rent to up to 90 households.

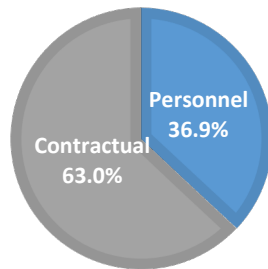
Next Year Projects
• Conduct outreach on Child Care Assistance Program as eligibility for the program increases to 300% of Federal Poverty Level. • Establish supervisory and management training both internally and externally to enhance the skills of future DSS leaders. • Enhance employment services for Temporary Assistance recipients by contracting out programs: 1) to focus on meeting mandated employment requirements; and 2) to focus on improving entry level workforce retention for our clients. • Promote community awareness of elder abuse during Elder Abuse Awareness Month through community events and plan the placement of a permanent memorial at an Albany County location. • Collaborate with the Division of Information Services on improving DSS technology and data infrastructure to identify areas to increase operational efficiency, better understand the populations we serve, measure the impact of programs, and refine services. • Partner with the Department of Mental Health and other community mental health/substance abuse providers to arrange for onsite mental health counselors at our shelters to provide supportive services with the hope of engaging these individuals in care.

Link to Website	www.albanycounty.com/DSS
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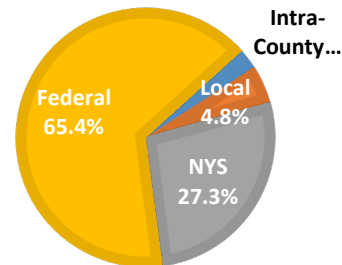
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Financial Charts

FORECASTED COSTS, BY TYPE



FORECASTED REVENUES, BY TYPE



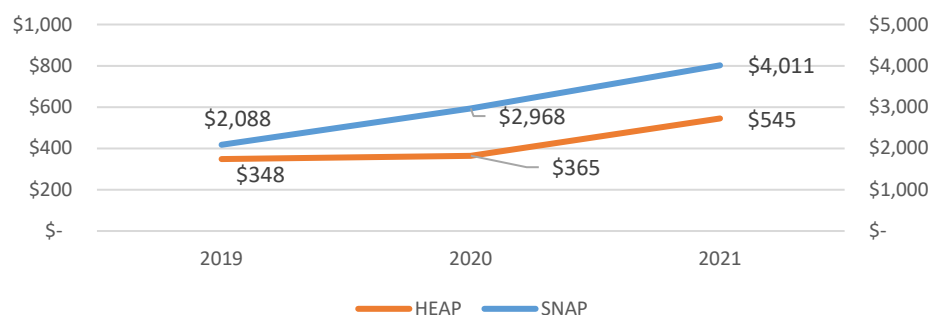
The Department of Social Services has a complex annual budget but their two main costs are personnel - associated with intake, application assistance and review, data processing, caseworkers and administrative support - and contractual expenses. Contractual expenses are for services procured by DSS in order to fully deliver the suite of programs mandated by the Federal and State governments.

As the chart indicates, there are a variety of revenue streams in DSS. The bulk of the money comes from the Federal government in the form of repayments of costs associated with mandated Social Services provided and managed at the local level. The revenue received from NYS is similarly to reimburse State mandated programs.

The 2023 Budget has a forecasted County Share of \$10.6 million for DSS (across all department codes).

Programmatic Highlights

SNAP & HEAP Average Awards



DSS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) at the local level, as mandated by the Federal Government. Applicants are able to apply for each individually, but oftentimes an applicant is eligible for these programs based on their application for Temporary Assistance. The Division of SNAP & HEAP, within DSS, is comprised of approximately 40 personnel. Employees process and review applications and renewals, provide informational guidance to those interested in applying, and conduct community outreach.

The SNAP and HEAP programs provide vital assistance every year but they have become particularly important since the onset of the pandemic and its resulting economic disruptions. The chart shows that the efforts of the Division of SNAP & HEAP has led to an increase in average award per household.

The Division has also been awarded the SNAP Process and Technology Improvement Grant (SNAP PTI). The grant will allow the Division to expand their processing capacity by creating a Call Center with new computer equipment and money for additional staff training. This grant is 100% Federally funded.

For more information regarding SNAP, HEAP, or other DSS programs, please see their County Website.

Link to Website www.albanycounty.com/DSS