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

## Department Function

DSS supports and protects vulnerable individuals and families and provides a safety net for households facing poverty, the homeless and vulnerable elderly and disabled adults through access to public benefits and a variety of preventive and support services. Determine eligibility and authorize benefits for multiple public programs including Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, Child Care Subsidy, Indigent Burials, emergency assistance and temporary shelter. Provide activities which support entry into the workforce. DSS investigates and assesses suspected cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults; provide money management for adults who are unable to handle their resources or protect themselves from exploitation; operate the NY Connects Long-Term Care Information and Assistance Line; oversee the Long-Term Care Council; assess and arrange for home care and Home Delivered Meals for adults age 60 years of age and older. Provide custodial parents with assistance in obtaining Child Support; identify and locate non-custodial parents; establish paternity and support orders; and collect and distribute Child Support payments. Assure the integrity of public benefit programs by operating a robust Fraud prevention, detection and recoupment program.

## Current Year Highlights

- Accepted and processed 35,726 applications for benefit programs during 2023
- $85,664,179 in SNAP benefits were delivered to 18,699 households with 33,333 individuals.
- $7,849,879 in HEAP benefits were delivered 20,323 times (duplicate households included)
- $17,480,670 in Temporary Assistance benefits were delivered to 3,450 individuals including 2,016 children, a 14% increase from 2022.
- Provided Child Care subsidy to an average of 1,010 children each month.
- Managed Medicaid enrollment for 24,000 individuals.
- Sheltered 1,111 unduplicated homeless individuals (including those facing Domestic Violence) and 431 families.
- Processed $24,609 million in Child Support payments for Albany County households; established 13,064 child support orders; established paternity for 7,906 cases; distributed $660,131 in unclaimed Child Support to households with past orders.
- Responded to 983 Fair Hearing requests appealing DSS decisions; DSS was upheld in 77.4 % of cases.
- Established a Call Center for SNAP case inquiries. The SNAP Call Center received a significant amount of inquiries (152,768 calls) and fielded 9,641.
- Responded to 13,595 NY Connects calls including 966 Adult Protective inquiries; provide case management to 246 home care cases, 236 Home Delivered Meal (HDM) recipients and older adults who receive both Expanded In Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) and HDM; serve as guardians for 54 incapacitated adults and act as Representative Payee for 224 adults.
- Recognized and promoted community awareness about elder abuse during Elder Abuse Awareness Month through community events and planting of a tree and plaque as a permanent reminder on the Albany County Rail Trail.
- Fully implemented an OTDA Rent Supplement grant to provide ongoing rent to 86 homeless households, primarily families with an average of $896 paid monthly per recipient by the program.

## Next Year Projects

- Implementation of SNAP case management and workflow management tools which moves DSS from a manual case assignment/tracking system to electronic case assignment and the ability to track the status of a case, staff workload distribution, call volume/handling and caseload trends, and assess workflow processes and need for changes in our SNAP staffing levels.
- Engage NYS Industries for the Disabled in a scanning project to assist with a significant scanning and indexing backlog for our mandated eligibility program documents into the NYS Imaging Enterprise Document Repository (I/EDR). This project will entail the scanning and indexing of 400 boxes of documents equating to almost 900,000 individual pages; the backlog is due to a connectivity issue between NYS and Albany County.

| Link to Website | https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/social-services |
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| Department Name | Department of Social Services |
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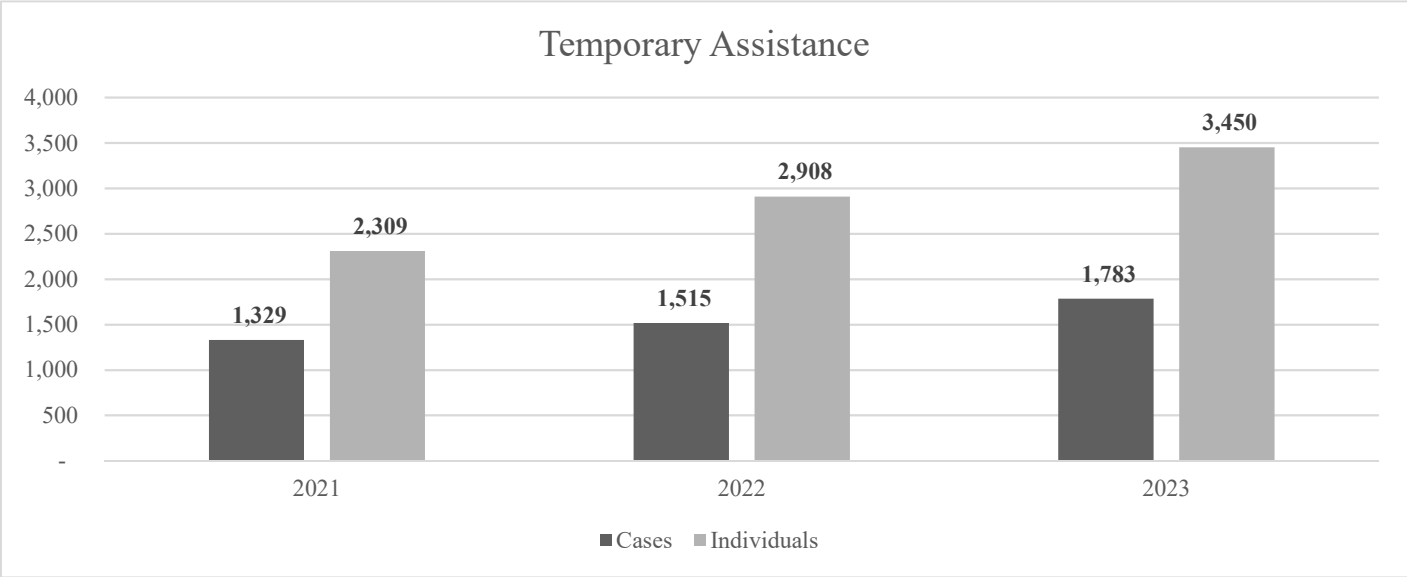
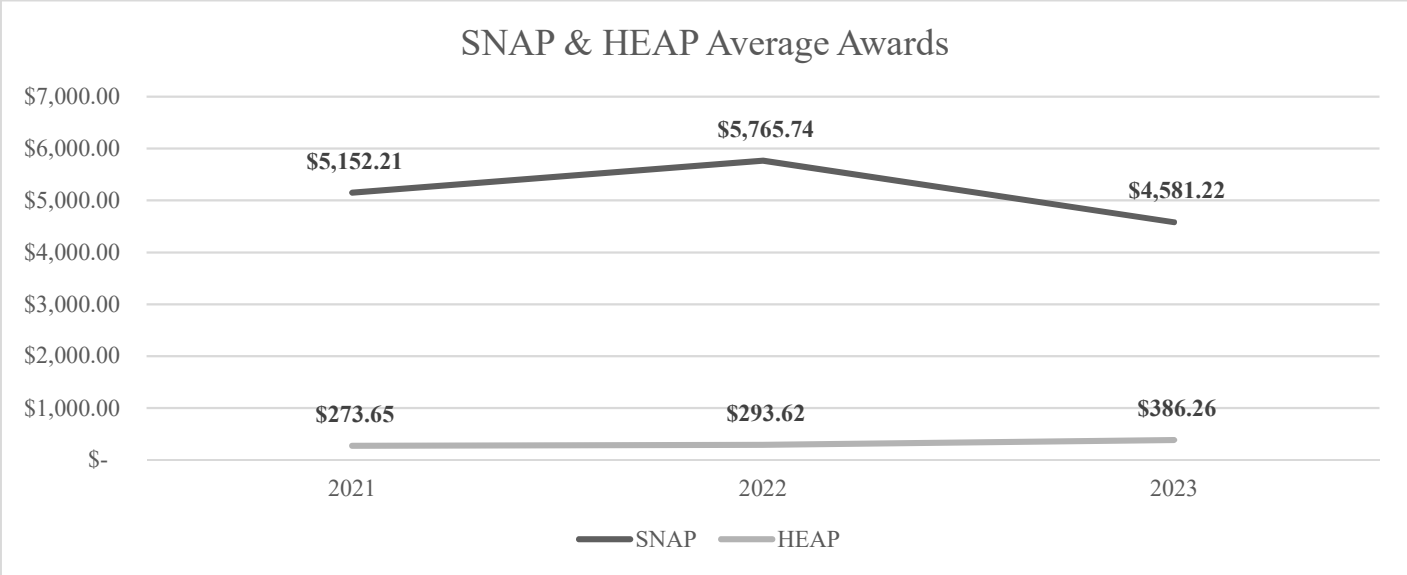
## Programmatic Highlights




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.

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

| Link to Website | www.albanycounty.com/DSS |
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