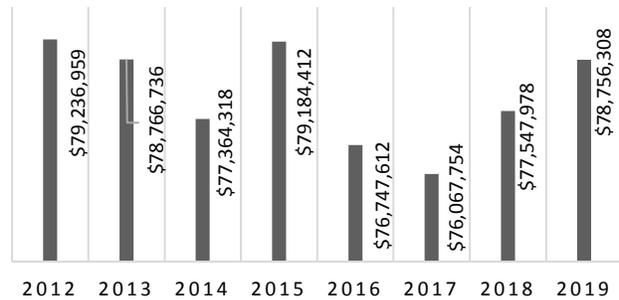


SOCIAL SERVICES

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DSS- COUNTY SHARE



MISSION STATEMENT

DSS is responsible for addressing the social service needs of the poor and working poor, as well as adults who are unable to care for and/or protect themselves. DSS delivers services that support and protect families and individuals while encouraging self-sufficiency and personal responsibility. The Department offers citizens cash assistance, food buying assistance, temporary housing, employment preparation and training services, day care and case management to support the transition to more stable, productive lives. DSS also serves the aged and disabled through access to Medicaid benefits as well as assessment and linkage to long-term services and supports. In partnership with the community, DSS is committed to providing excellent service with compassion and respect through the efficient use of resources in a fair, confidential and dignified manner.

WHO WE SERVE

Albany County residents who fall into these areas, poor and working poor, as well as adults who are unable to care for and/or protect themselves.

ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

The Reception Division greets and services all members of the public who come to the DSS building for assistance; accepts applications and documents for all program areas and routes them appropriately; identifies and manages emergency situations; authorizes benefit cards; manages mandatory finger imaging system.

Average Daily Reception Activity

Applications (all programs)	90
Benefit cards/finger imaging	75
Appointments	75
Receipts for dropped off documents	65
Miscellaneous queries and diversions	25

The Temporary Assistance Division is designed to meet the essential financial needs of eligible individuals and families and foster their ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The Division contracts with homeless shelters for temporary housing assistance and to help people obtain more permanent housing.

Year End 2017

- 13,593 Applications Processed for all TA Services
- 4,028 Eligibility Recertifications Processed
- Average Total Monthly Caseload = 2,760
- Average Total Monthly Individuals = 5,930

The Adult Services Division provides Assessment and Protective Services for vulnerable/at-risk adults and acts as Representative Payee for those who have been deemed by Social Security Administration to have challenges handling their money. Adult Services also manages the Albany County NY Connects centralized information and assistance line for long term services and supports (518-447-4177) which also serves as Albany County's Adult Protective Intake Line. The Division has a team which assesses eligibility and provides case management for individuals who need a variety of homecare programs and assesses eligibility for Home Delivered Meals, Personal Emergency Response Systems, and Social Adult Day Care programs.

One Month Snapshot

Active Guardianship Cases	72
Representative Payees	223
Home Care Cases	442
Home Delivered Meal Cases	365

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Previous 12 months

New York Connects Phone Contacts	8911
Adult Protective Intakes	864

The Child Support Enforcement Division facilitates collection and disbursement of all court ordered Child Support payments in the County. When necessary, the unit works to identify and locate financially responsible non-custodial parents in an effort to establish and enforce child support orders. For some clients this helps reduce dependence on public assistance.

Year End 2017

Active child support enforcement cases	17,921
Funds collected and disbursed to custodial parents	\$28,204,601

The Health Insurance Division provides access to health insurance coverage through Medicaid and Medicaid Managed Care, primarily for those who are age 65 and over and/or are disabled and in receipt of Medicare. We also determine Medicaid eligibility for people in skilled nursing facilities and in Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and other waiver programs.

Year End 2017

- 10,654 Applications Processed
- 12,428 Eligibility Recertifications Conducted
- Average monthly Caseload = ~19,000

The Employment and Child Care Subsidy Division provides job readiness training, job placements and assistance with child care costs to help individuals prepare for, secure and retain employment. Child Care Subsidy benefits are provided to eligible low income families to assist with the cost of child care so that adult household member(s) can maintain employment or other allowable activities.

Year End 2017

- Employment
844 New Jobs Obtained by Recipients (467 TANF; 377 Safety Net)
- Child Care
1,300 Children Receiving Child Care Subsidy (monthly average)

The SNAP/HEAP Division operates the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP- formerly known as Food Stamps). SNAP is designed to help low income individuals and families meet their nutritional needs. This Division also administers the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) which offers financial assistance to eligible households to offset residential heating fuel and utility costs.

Year End 2017

- SNAP
 - 13,237 Applications Processed
 - 15,562 Eligibility Recertifications Processed
 - ~ \$1,000,000 in SNAP "dollars" Per Week Authorized
 - Average Total Monthly Caseload = 17,000
- HEAP
 - Fuel/Utility/Repair Benefits Provided 15,419 times
 - \$3,774,234 Paid to Fuel/Utility Vendors

The Fair Hearing Unit provides an opportunity for an applicant/recipient to appear before an impartial State appointed Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) to explain why they disagree with an action taken by ACDSS. The ALJ issues a written decision based on testimony, law and procedure.

Year End 2017

- 1,607 Fair Hearing Requests Made
- 93% Affirmation of Agency's Determinations

The Fraud Division has three main functions: Front End Detection System (F.E.D.S.) which helps to prevent fraudulent activity during the application process; Back End Detection System (B.E.D.S.) which investigates allegations of fraudulent activity in established cases; Eligibility Verification Review (EVR) which investigates a random sampling of cases in an ongoing way.

SOCIAL SERVICES

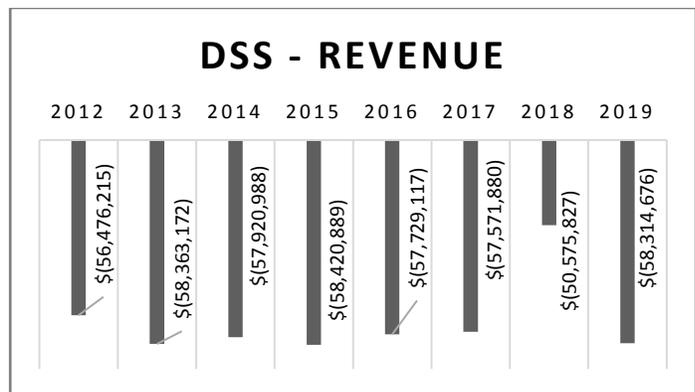
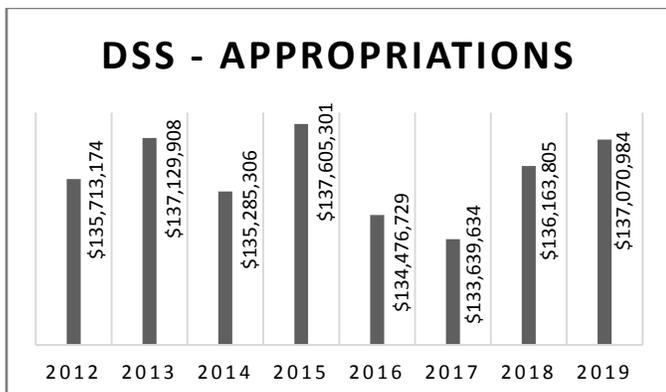
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Year End 2017

- Front End Detection and Eligibility Verification Review
 - 354 Referred for F.E.D.S. investigation
 - 102 Denials of applications based on F.E.D.S. and EVR
- Back End Detection (B.E.D.)
 - 848 Investigations
 - 389 Cases closed or benefits reduced based on B.E.D.S.
 - 126 Provable fraud with ~\$500,000 recovered

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- The first floor Reception Area underwent a complete renovation during 2017-18 to enhance client meeting and employee work spaces. This involved 6 phases of construction and allowed us to reorganize our work flow to better support staff and client needs. The space provides a more accommodating, safe and professional work and client welcome area. It moves our Language Line translation services and fingerprinting to the Reception Area reducing the need for clients to go to the basement for services. Clients continued to receive services during construction with the help of various community partners who offered their off-site locations to help us conduct business.
- DSS prevented evictions for 333 households and paid Security Deposits for 515 households during the year. As a result of specialization of our TA eligibility workers, we reduced the Family Assistance Caseload by 52, the Safety Net Assistance cases by 101 and Safety Net Family cases by 52. TA works closely with the Employment Division to make sure that all families and singles are actively engaged in employment related activities.
- DSS entered into a contract with Altamont Program for Employment Preparedness Services. The contract places an emphasis on intensive case management with our entire employable client population which addresses the unique needs each person has as they move forward on their path to self-sufficiency. Individualized services are wrapped around clients and focus on:
 - Preparation for employment
 - Employment placement
 - Retention and re-employment
 - Skills upgrade for employment enhancement and better employment opportunities
- Nearly all of our Employment Orientation and Assessments are conducted at various sites throughout Albany County allowing us to meet our clients in their communities while also offering providers the opportunity to share their services and programs with our clients. We continue to expand our foot print in the community by developing a comprehensive community resource partnership targeted to meet the many needs of our TA population.
- The Fair Hearing Unit, in collaboration with DSS Divisions, developed a new process whereby each program area designee reaches out to clients in advance of a scheduled hearing to resolve issues in a positive manner. If an issue can be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, the client is asked to withdraw their request for the hearing, reducing the burden on all parties to prepare for, attend and otherwise address Fair Hearing requests.
- Medicaid and Adult Services Division developed and implemented an expedited application process to provide timely emergent home care to eligible Medicaid applicants who have completed and submitted a NYS "Attestation of Immediate Need." Adult Services and Medicaid must obtain necessary documentation, process Medicaid application, assess and open a homecare case for these "immediate need" cases within 12 days.
- In 2017 the Fraud Unit achieved an overall cost avoidance of \$3,460,900 by denying fraudulent applications for assistance; and closing or re-budgeting active assistance cases where fraud was detected.



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2019 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- Continue to enhance Reception Area services by adding counters that can be utilized as stations for clients to complete applications and to install a new queuing system.
- The TA Homeless Team will work intensively with the homeless population in Albany County to reduce the number of individuals and families placed in emergency shelters and motels. We will collaborate with landlords and community providers to prevent evictions, and help clients secure and maintain permanent housing. When an individual and/or family is placed in emergency shelter/motel, we will have our Client Support Specialist and Caseworkers work closely with the individual/family to assist with removing the obstacles that have led to the individual/family being homeless.
- Work with the NYS Medicaid Exchange to reduce the number of duplicate case numbers which appear in the Exchange, creating duplicate coverage issues.
- Identify and connect with Case Managers from other service provider systems Veterans Administration, Behavioral Health, OPWDD, Managed Long Term Care Insurers, as well as other Service Providers that have shared clients so we can better serve and coordinate case management goals for existing Representative Payee Cases, Guardianship and Home Care Cases.
- Lack of affordable, stable child care continues to be the single largest barrier to self-sufficiency families must overcome. Child care assistance is mandated by NYS regulations for all TA households, but is limited by the funding provided by the NYS Child Care Block Grant (CCBG) for non-TA households. Over the next year we will continue to monitor the CCBG expenditures to ensure that we are able to support as many eligible families as possible in Albany County with the financial assistance to help with associated costs for providing quality child care.
- Develop and implement training for Temporary Assistance staff in an effort to generate more FEDS (Front End Detection System) referrals. These referrals are instrumental in keeping integrity to the programs at the application stage.
- The Fraud Unit will update FEDS plan with OTDA to add more "Fraud Indicators" that will generate more referrals.

SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

- Medicaid appropriation increases by \$775k or 1.2% from \$66.4M to \$67.2M.
- Administration appropriation increases by \$299k or 1% driven by collective bargaining agreement & step increases to Union positions.
- Emergency Aid for Adults (EAA) appropriation increases by \$150,000 or 27% driven by increases in Shelter expenses related to SSI clients, and National Grid arrears.
- Overall appropriation increases by \$619k or less than one-half percent.
- Overall local share increases by \$1m or 1.3% driven by increases to Medicaid, EAA and Administration.

DSS developed an MOA with the Capital District Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) to provide our employment readiness clients an introduction to the services provided by the EOC. We acknowledge that our clients need exposure to vocational and educational programs in order to understand what they really are, what they can offer and the potential for a future in a career earning a living wage. EOC, in collaboration with Altamont Program and Albany County Employment Unit, works with each person to bring them to the point that they qualify for the EOC programs. Our goal is that, together, we may spark the interest in some of our clients to engage with the EOC by providing them this hands on introduction to the EOC. This has the potential to be life changing for people. Our first session was held on May 31, 2018 and of the 7 clients who participated, 6 enrolled in different programs at the EOC that same day; the second session held on June 14 and 9 out of 11 clients showed, and all 9 clients who attended signed up for EOC programs. We will continue to work with EOC and Altamont Program to prepare our clients for this potential track.