

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

<b>Department Function</b>
DSS supports and protects vulnerable individuals and families and provide 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. Improve financial security and household stability for struggling individuals and families. Determine eligibility and authorize benefits for Temporary Assistance, SNAP, HEAP, Child Care Subsidy, Indigent Burials, emergency assistance and emergency shelter. Provide activities which support entry into the workforce and self-sufficiency for recipients. Operate the Child Care Assistance Program to help Temporary Assistance and low-income families pay for child care. Process applications and authorize Medicaid benefits for elderly and disabled, including those receiving nursing home care or community based long term care. DSS also investigates and assesses suspected cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults; we provide money management for adults who are unable to handle their resources or protect themselves from exploitation. DSS operates the NY Connects Long-Term Care Information and Assistance Line; oversees the Long-Term Care Council; assesses and arranges for home care and Home Delivered Meals for vulnerable adults age 60 years of age and older. We also 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. DSS assures the integrity of public benefit programs by operating a robust Fraud prevention, detection and recoupment program.

<b>Current Year Highlights</b>
DSS accepted and processed 33,324 applications for benefit programs. We also recertified 25,848 applications for existing recipients of SNAP, Temporary Assistance, and Medicaid. As a result of our work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$78,461,455 in SNAP benefits were delivered to 17,801 households with 25,745 individuals.</li> <li>• \$21,207,612 in Temporary Assistance benefits were delivered to 5,775 individuals including 3,132 children, a 19% increase from 2023.</li> <li>• \$6,496,312.02 in HEAP benefits were delivered 14,996 times (duplicate households included)</li> <li>• Provided Child Care subsidy to an average of 1,253 children each month.</li> <li>• Sheltered 1,501 unduplicated homeless individuals (including those facing Domestic Violence) and 431 families.</li> <li>• Responded to 1,140 Fair Hearing requests appealing DSS decisions. Of those requests only 184 of the Fair Hearings were actually heard by an arbitrator. DSS decision was affirmed in 93 of those cases.</li> <li>• Responded to 13,823 NY Connects calls including 1,294 Adult Protective inquiries; provide case management to 195 home care cases, 403 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 66 incapacitated adults and act as Representative Payee for 215 adults.</li> <li>• Provided a Rental Supplement through NYS OTDA grant funding to provide ongoing rental assistance to 86 homeless households, primarily families with an average of \$886 paid monthly per recipient by the program.</li> <li>• Albany County DSS has contracted with the Altamont Program to provide a Warming Center during the Code Blue Season which sheltered 307 unduplicated individuals and 2,237 duplicated individuals our most vulnerable and high-risk clients that have a myriad of maladies and co-morbidity that make it difficult to find appropriate shelter during the 150 days of Code Blue.</li> <li>• Childcare providers began transitioning from an electronic attendance submission as well as a manual check payment process to a direct deposit process for their payments for child care subsidy payments. We currently have 129 providers enrolled for direct deposit, which is approximately 39% of our providers.</li> <li>• In 2025, the DSS Fraud Unit conducted 204 Front End Detection System (FEDS) investigations resulting in cost avoidance of \$385,332.00 and 1614 Eligibility Verification Reviews (EVR) resulting in cost avoidance of \$2,433,308.00.</li> </ul>

<b>Next Year Projects</b>
In 2026, in addition to continuing our efforts to ensure access and determine eligibility for public benefits for our constituents, DSS will undertake several new projects. We plan to increase the number of providers who can assist DSS in supporting clients with job searching, including work experience programs, high school classes, ESL classes, and vocational studies. Additionally, we will work to redevelop three unused kiosks to be deployed in the community, enabling clients to apply for public benefits through the NYS myBenefits website. We will also collaborate closely with CARES and the Albany County Coalition on Homelessness to develop a plan to address homelessness. Finally, we aim to increase the number of childcare providers utilizing direct deposit and to boost the electronic submission of childcare attendance.

Link to Website	<a href="https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/social-services">https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/social-services</a>
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