

TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Shawn L. Yetter, Commissioner

P.O. Box 240 · Owego, N.Y. 13827-0240 · Telephone: (607) 687-8300 · Fax: (607) 687-6168 · NY Relay dial 711
Website: www.tiogacountyny.com



HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES - AGENDA

September 2, 2025
8:30 AM

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – August 5, 2025
- **FINANCIAL**
 - August 2025 Budget
- **OLD BUSINESS**
 - None
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 - Caseloads – Reports available after 9/2/25
 - Tioga Career Center Report
 - HEAP Funding
- **PERSONNEL**
 - Rebecca Evans, Caseworker, hired effective 8/11/25
 - Natale Hannah, Caseworker, resigned effective 8/13/25
 - Mindy Cantrell, Accounting Associate II, hired effective 8/25/25
- **RESOLUTIONS**
 - Authorize Contract with A New Hope Center
 - Appropriation of Funds and Amend 2025 Budget
- **PROCLAMATIONS**
 - None
- **ADJOURNMENT**



TIOGA CAREER CENTER

1062 Rte. 38 • P.O. Box 108

Owego, New York 13827

607-687-8500

Fax: 607-687-7759



COMMITTEE MEETING

9/2/2025

Current open job postings in Tioga =102

83 new Unemployment claims opened in August, 47 had effective claim dates in August, there were 11 seasonal claims, and 36 were older claims that just opened.

Unemployment Rates:

	Aug '25	July '25	Aug '24
Tioga	3.0	3.0	3.5
NYS	4.6	3.8	4.8
US	4.6	4.4	4.4

The Tioga County Career Center is actively preparing for a busy and productive fall season. Plans are already underway for a series of Job Fairs designed to connect local employers with job seekers, especially as demand increases for seasonal workers in the region.

Currently, the Career Center is working directly with 23 clients referred from the Department of Social Services. We're excited to report that 3 of these individuals have already received job offers, a promising sign as we head into our busiest hiring season of the year.

Our focus remains on building strong pathways to employment and supporting every individual on their journey toward sustainable work. We look forward to a successful fall and the continued collaboration that makes it all possible.

Subject:

FW: 2025-26 HEAP Plan Update

From: Guinn, Barbara C (OTDA) <BarbaraC.Guinn@otda.ny.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 10:26 AM

To: otda.dl.co.local.district.commissioners <otda.dl.donotuse2@otda.ny.gov>; paul.brady@nypwa.org

Cc: Chawla, Rajni (OTDA) <Rajni.Chawla@otda.ny.gov>; Forino, Donna (OTDA) <Donna.Forino@otda.ny.gov>; Figueroa, Valerie (OTDA) <Valerie.Figueroa@otda.ny.gov>; Stark, Keri (OTDA) <Keri.Stark@otda.ny.gov>; COOK, PAULA (OTDA) <Paula.Cook@otda.ny.gov>

Subject: 2025-26 HEAP Plan Update

I am writing to provide an update on the upcoming 2025-26 HEAP program. As we have previously discussed, absent an increase in federal funding, we are unable to support all HEAP components that we have supported in prior years. Congress has not yet taken action on HEAP funding, so the actual amount of HEAP funding New York will receive is unknown at this time. The HEAP Plan that we will submit to the federal government assumes that NYS will receive flat federal funding.

Highlights are below.

- The 2025-26 HEAP Plan assumes federal funding of almost \$400 million (\$395 million traditional base HEAP and the final year of 'infrastructure funding' of \$5M.) This amount compares to current year spending of over \$460 million.
- Congress authorized significant LIHEAP funds during the pandemic. Base LIHEAP funding has not increased with rising energy costs over the last 5 years.
- Federal pandemic related federal funding increases were significant and are now depleted. As a result, the State does not have carryover funding to support the 2025-2026 HEAP year.
- As a result of reduced federal funding, the State HEAP Plan that we submit next week does not allocate funds to support the following program components: weatherization, clean & tune, and heating equipment repair and replacement. Public assistance funds can be used to address heating equipment repair and replacement for those without resources to address this need.
- Funds are allocated to support regular HEAP benefits, emergency HEAP benefits and cooling benefits in a manner similar to the current program year.
- Final federal decisions on funding remain unknown. In the event significant additional federal funds become available, the HEAP Plan will be revisited.

We value the traditional HEAP program components, including weatherization, and will advocate for additional federal funds to support them.

Barbara C. Guinn (*she/her*)

Commissioner

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

40 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12243

(518) 474-9425 | BarbaraC.Guinn@otda.ny.gov

REFERRED TO

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. -25

AUTHORIZE CONTRACT WITH
A NEW HOPE CENTER
SOCIAL SERVICES

WHEREAS: The Department of Social Services contracts with A New Hope Center to provide three Advocates, funded through the New York State Office of Victim Services, to assist the Child Advocacy Center in their mission; and

WHEREAS: The Department of Social Services wishes to renew the contract for October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 in the amount of \$159,993.26; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Tioga County Department of Social Services is authorized to contract with A New Hope Center for the period October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED: That available funds on 12/31/25 of the original \$159,993.26 will be carried forward into the New Year.

REFERRED TO: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
FINANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION NO. - 25 APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS AND
AMEND 2025 BUDGET
SOCIAL SERVICES

WHEREAS: Tioga County Department of Social Services has an approved allocation of \$165,385 for SFY 2025-2026 for Family-Centered Case Management Services; and

WHEREAS: The Family-Centered Case Management Services is to provide a range of case management services for TANF eligible families who are having difficulty stabilizing their households and transitioning toward greater financial security; and

WHEREAS: Two Employment Specialists tied to the Family-Centered Case Management Services allocation are required for said duties; and

WHEREAS: Appropriation of funds and budget modification requires Legislative approval; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That funding be appropriated as follows:

From: A6010.446100 Federal Aid: Social Services Admin	\$ 165,385
To: A6010.510010 Full Time Expense	\$ 86,382
To: A6010.581088 State Retirement Fringe	\$ 8,676
To: A6010.538088 Social Security Fringe	\$ 6,609
To: A6010.584088 Workers Compensation Fringe	\$ 2,504
To: A6010.585588 Disability Insurance Fringe	\$ 125
To: A6010.586088 Health Insurance Fringe	\$ 55,883
To: A6010.588988 EAP Fringe	\$ 34
To: A6010.540420 Office Supplies	\$ 500
To: A6010.540487 Program Expense	\$ 3,747
To: A6010.540660 Telephone	\$ 925

And be it further

RESOLVED: That available funds on 12/31/25 of the original \$165,385 will be carried forward into the New Year.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Health & Human Services

The regular meeting of the Health & Human Services Committee was held in the Legislative Conference Room, Tuesday, August 5, 2025 at 8:29AM.

Present: Mr. William Standinger	Chair of the Committee
Mr. Tracy Monell	Legislator
Mr. Ray Bunce	Legislator
Mr. Andrew Aronstam	Legislator
Ms. Lori Morgan	Director of Community Services
Mr. Chris Korba	Director of Administrative Services (MH)
Mr. Shawn Yetter	Commissioner of Social Services
Ms. Mickelle Andrews	Director of Administrative Services (DSS)
Ms. Heather Vroman	Public Health Director
Mr. Denis McCann	Director of Administrative Services (PH)

Guests: Mr. Jackson Bailey	County Administrator
Ms. Cathy Haskell	Legislative Clerk
Ms. Marte Sauerbrey	Legislative Chair
Ms. Liz Myers	Deputy Commissioner (DSS)
Ms. Laura Schurter	Accountant
Mr. Peter DeWind	County Attorney (Arrived 8:45 AM)

Legislator Standinger asked for a motion to approve the July 8, 2025 HHS Committee minutes as written. Motion made by Legislator Monell. Seconded by Legislator Bunce. Motion Carried.

MENTAL HYGIENE

1. Financial

- Mr. Chris Korba reported that the Fee-For-Service revenue is trending very well despite the vacancies. The 2025 budget is tracking well. No Criminal Psych invoices yet.
- 2026 Budget Highlights:
 - Electronic Health Records contract is up for renewal, no cost yet.
 - No increase to local share other than salary & fringe.
 - Using abatement to cover fringe & salary for position created for Sr. CSW with the DSS CAC. Also, using abatement funds for advertising & recruitment.
 - A&D Budget – add State Aid to pass through to Tioga County Jail (meds)
 - Increased Mental Health Fees to offset salary & fringe for new School-based Therapist.
 - Earlier this year Dr. Bezirgianian retired, and we moved his salary and fringe from County employee budget lines to Contractual budget lines in A4310 Nurse/Doctors through Fairview. Same holds true for 2026 budget.
 - State Aid removed from A4321- will be given directly to state employee by OMH.
 - RSS pass through State Aid to RSS for Warmline, Drop-In Center & Supported Housing

Vacancies: Mr. Jackson Bailey went over vacancies

- Still need 2 p/t clerical positions, may possibly change to 1 f/t position: not getting very many applicants. Due to the Waverly office being closed for 3 years, the clinic had an extra clerical person.
- 1 SW recently submitted resignation

2. Old Business

- Criminal Psych – No invoices have been received. There is someone inpatient but waiting for invoices.

3. New Business

- None

4. Personnel

- None

5. Resolutions - Legislators approved all resolutions to move forward

- None

6. Proclamations

- None

PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Financial

- Mr. Denis McCann reported that the 2025 budget is tracking well. Fee-for-Service revenues continue to be up in almost every area.
- 2026 Budget Highlights:
 - PH has slight overall increase (under \$5K) in Expenses; however, there is added Revenue of over \$30K to offset those increases.
 - Security System increased just over \$5K
 - El Escrow has decreased by \$10,000
 - Fee revenue increased in Dental (\$15K) and Environmental Health (\$6K)
 - Rabies Treatments costs have increased as the cases keep increasing; however, the revenues are also increasing
 - Pre-School savings as a result of less kids in program, so services (\$200K) and transportation (\$100K) have been reduced. These have related revenue which decreases based on formula (less expense results in less reimbursement) resulting in a net savings of nearly \$90K.
 - Overall budget comes in @ \$121, 840 under zero-local share requirement.
 - Capital Budget – PH has been working with Gary Hammond on vehicles. 3 cars will be turned over improving overall County fleet and PH will be purchasing 2 new cars. Reducing PH fleet by one vehicle in 2026.

Vacancies: Mr. Jackson Bailey went over vacancies

- Community Health Supervisor – would like to keep that position (Plan to fill by the end of 2025)
- El Services Coordinator – This position is based on the number of children in the program.

- Supervising Public Health Nurse – Currently have a Director of Patient Services but may return to this model.
- 2 Part-Time Dentists – Always have need of an extra dentist. Ongoing recruitment continues to be challenging (There is offsetting revenue to cover these positions).

2. Old Business

- None

3. New Business – Agency Report for July

- The well head program has been restored
- Tickborne illness is on the rise – Cases have doubled since last month. This is a state-wide issue. Continue to push prevention messaging and offer tick kits to public.
- Flood Response in Newark Valley – Clinic set up for tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis vaccines – 8 vaccines were given. Numerous buckets of cleaning supplies were distributed in Newark Valley & Willseyville. The people were very appreciative. The Emergency Preparedness Coordinator was involved in the planning. There were also staff members at the Newark Valley fire hall the night of the flood assisting community members with going to a shelter.

4. Personnel

- Rachael Baker, Early Intervention Service Coordinator, resigned effective 7/22/25

5. Resolutions

- None

6. Proclamations

- Immunization Awareness Month

SOCIAL SERVICES

1. Financial

- Ms. Mickelle Andrews reported that the administrative side of the 2025 budget is tracking under budget due to payroll (vacancies). Foster Care continues to run over budget.
- 2026 Budget Highlights
 - Local share increase of \$400,000
 - Positions – add Sr. Social Welfare Examiner, upgrade p/t CSW to f/t, there is savings to the p/t line after a retirement. CAC has increased funding – will add an Office Specialist II.
 - 3.5% increase in contracts line
 - JD decreased by \$78,562
 - State training decreased by \$210,500
 - Family Assistance decreased by \$110,000
 - Foster Care line increased \$565,894 – FC Block Grant funding is unknown at this time. Recruitment for Foster Parents continues to be a challenge. Most want to adopt young children already cleared for adoption, not fostering
 - Capital – Purchasing 1 vehicle in 2026

Vacancies: Mr. Jackson Bailey went over vacancies

- o Part-Time Youth Bureau Director (This can come off budget) This is being done by the Director of Employment & Transitional Supports
2. Old Business
 - None
 3. New Business
 - Caseloads – See Caseload Summary
During July, Cash Assistance decreased 11 cases, with Family Assistance decreasing 5 cases and Safety Net decreasing 6 cases.
MA-Only decreased 14 cases
MA-SSI decreased 11 cases
Total Individuals on Medicaid decreased 52 to 3,428
SNAP decreased 29 cases
Day Care increased 5 cases
 - Tioga Career Center report is attached. The unemployment numbers continue to run below State & Federal levels. Some job fairs are coming up.
 4. Personnel Changes
 - Caitlin Scanlon, Accounting Associate II, removed effective 7/18/25
 - Cassandra Forrest, Office Specialist II, resigned effective 7/25/25
 - Brett Bright, promoted to Social Services Investigator (Fraud), effective 7/28/25
 5. Resolutions - Legislators approved resolutions to move forward
 - Authorize Replacement of the Mail System at DSS
 - Create & Fill Seasonal Social Welfare Examiner Positions and Seasonal Office Specialist I Positions for the HEAP Program
 - Appoint new Youth Board Member Term (Application attached)
 - Reimbursement Rates for Funeral Home. (Historically, rates increase every ten years)

Legislator Standinger asked about the response to the Newark Valley flooding from DSS. Commissioner Yetter noted that DSS staff met with each family (12) the next morning to explain services that are available, but the resident's declined assistance.

Legislator Bunce asked if food insecurity is a problem in Tioga County. Commissioner Yetter responded that SNAP provides several million dollars into the community. DSS also works with the food pantries. The Southern Tier Food Bank distributes food to Tioga Opportunities, Inc. who then pass it onto the food pantries. Catholic Charities received funding for a mobile food distribution vehicle with scheduled days throughout the community. Tioga Downs also donates food to Catholic Charities. The Veteran's Office comes with a truck to offer food to veteran's families. There are several free meals a week provided through various churches. Schools also have a free meal program.

6. Proclamations

- None

ADJOURNED:

Health & Human Services Committee adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail V. Perdue

Executive Secretary, Social Services