

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 23, 2022

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Clary, Fedler, Shaw, Skellie, Ferguson, Wilson

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES MEMBERS ABSENT: Campbell

SUPERVISORS: Hall, Henke, O'Brien

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1) Call to Order

2) Accept Minutes – January 26, 2022

3) Department Reports/Requests:

A. Social Services

1. Benefit Program Updates

2. Request to Recognize Revenue – PEA Funding \$112,240

B. OFA/ADRC

1. Program Updates

a. Personal Care Services RFP

b. Senior Times/Manchester Newspapers

c. GoGo Grandparents Program

C. Youth Bureau

1. Pre-Pins Program Update

D. Public Health

1. Request for Budget Amendment – Recognize Additional COVID Grant Funds

2. Miscellaneous

4) Other Business

5) Adjournment

Chairwoman Clary called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. in person and via zoom.

A motion to accept the minutes of the January 26, 2022 meeting was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Ferguson, and adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/REQUESTS:

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: Tammy DeLorme, Commissioner, addressed the following items:

• Benefit Program Updates:

- Submitted the rental supplement plan as discussed last month with the focus being to assist individuals and families that are currently in receipt of temporary housing assistance and within the plan detailed prioritize employable recent parolees in large families.
- Office of Children and Family Services – Advised of a grant opportunity for new child care providers who are opening programs, “Child Care Deserts Program”. Flyer attached and linked information to County website under Social Services Department.
- Office of Temporary Disability Assistance – Information on a newly launched program, a federal connectivity program providing discounts of up to thirty dollars a month towards internet service for low-income families and a one-time discount in the purchase of a computer or tablet, flyers attached.

- Home Energy Assistance Program has extended the dates of operation for regular and emergency benefit components to close of business April 29th and also a second emergency grant became available starting yesterday.
- American Rescue Plan Act of 2021:
 - The Pandemic Emergency Assistance Program (PEAF) is allowing for a diaper payment and a multi-generational food payment to household that are in receipt of temporary assistance or SNAP. Households in receipt of temporary assistance or SNAP who have a child under the age of 3 during the month of January 2022 will receive a payment of \$140 and households who receive temporary assistance or SNAP who have an adult age 55 or over and at least one child under the age of 17 during the month of March will receive a payment of \$730 per older individual. Benefits are loaded directly to the electronic benefit transfer account of the recipients and recipients will be notified. The estimated total for Washington County for the diaper supplement is \$45,080 and the multi-generational food payment is \$67,160. The local district has to front that money and then submit claims for the reimbursement of payments and is 100% reimbursable.
 - Budget Amendment – Recognize Revenue – PEAFF Funding \$112,240; diapers \$45,080 and groceries \$67,160. A motion to amend DSS budget to recognize Pandemic Emergency Assistance Program funding in the amount of \$112,240 in revenue account A.6010.4609 Federal Aid for Family Assistance and increase appropriation account A.6109.4290 Family Assistance \$112,240 and forward to the Finance Committee for consideration was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Shaw and adopted.
- Miscellaneous:
 - Assemblyman Matt Stimpson – As a follow up to last month's meeting, virtually met with the Assemblyman and discussed a variety of topics related to the budget, foster care costs and situations with homelessness.
 - Congresswoman Stefanik's Office reached out to the Commissioner seeking comments on a proposed bill relating to SNAP flexibility – adding waiver present during the pandemic into the law.

OFA/ADRC – Gina Cantanucci, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Program Updates:
 - Personal Care Services RFP – Last month requested permission to go out for an RFP to expand their home care workforce seeking additional in-home personal care providers but determined that the RFP process is not applicable to their situation. Requesting a waiver from the procurement policy, RFP process, and instead engaged in specialized outreach with the continued goal of increasing our personal care and home contractor list. A motion to approve waiver from procurement policy, RFP process, was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Wilson and adopted.
 - Senior Times/Manchester Newspapers – Had an agreement with Manchester Newspapers to produce the Senior Times quarterly newspaper and that agreement has expired. From residents feedback would like to continue producing a newsletter that reaches older adults but also caregivers and individuals of all ages and abilities. This will require changing the name of the newsletter from Senior Times to something more appropriate. They would like to prepare an insert into an existing paper or a newsletter on a monthly basis rather than quarterly. Purchasing has advised this can be done

through acquiring three quotes. Funds are contained in her budget for the quarterly newspaper and plans to stay within those parameters for the monthly newsletter/insert being requested. A motion to approve going out for quotes from local newspaper companies for the production of a monthly newsletter or insert in the paper and award by the department based on the quotes was moved by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Shaw. Discussion. The OFA Director has a quote from the current vendor and it is within the current budgeted amount. She stated the overall goal is to gather as much current information from various providers and agencies and put it in one place for people to read. The motion to approve going out for quotes from local newspaper companies for the production of a monthly newsletter or insert in the paper and award by the department based on the quotes was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Shaw and adopted.

- GoGo Grandparents Program – Finalized agreement with GoGo Grandparents in mid-January and started service for County residents age sixty and older but due to the late start date are still gathering data on the program's effectiveness. The current agreement expires March 31, 2022 and would like to continue piloting the program through March 2023. County Administration has determined that due to the new unique and specialized services GoGo Grandparents provides it was determined that it is a sole source provider. A motion to approve entering into an agreement with GoGo Grandparents, sole source provider, through March 2023 for senior transportation services for Washington County residents age sixty and older within the existing budgeted amount was moved by Mr. Shaw and seconded by Mr. Wilson. Discussion. Mr. Shaw asked if the cost will be the same for another whole year and the Director responded yes and they have unmet needs funding to cover this cost. They currently contract at the lowest tier level. OFA has unmet needs funds in their budget to cover this cost, 100% State funds with no local share. Mr. Wilson stated allow the OFA Director to move forward with the sole source process and bring it back to the Finance Committee if it goes beyond the budgeted amount. A motion to approve entering into an agreement with GoGo Grandparents, sole source provider, through March 2023 for senior transportation services for Washington County residents age sixty and older within the existing budgeted amount was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Wilson and adopted.
- OFA Appointments – Fort Edward & Granville – A motion to appoint Jeanie Mullen, Fort Edward, and Gerald Foelsch, Granville, to the Office for Aging Advisory Council for a two-year term January 2022 through December 2023 was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Wilson and adopted.
- March National Nutrition Month – Typically activities are conducted to highlight the importance of nutrition as you age but this year will be adapting activities due to COVID. This year they will be using their monthly newsletter and also using social media to highlight their nutrition program. Please support them and follow them on Facebook.
- Unmet Needs Funding – Requested an extension for the allocation given last year and right now plans are still under development. These fund are focused on filling gaps and services and one proposal is to add an eleventh route to the home delivered meal program. Currently, home delivered meal recipients in the towns of Putnam and Dresden are serviced only one day a week and provided with four frozen meals and one hot meal and proposing to add this route for delivery Monday through Friday providing

five hot meals. Unmet needs funds would cover 100% of the personnel costs, meals and a vehicle. The Treasurer asked if this was one time unmet needs funding or ongoing unmet needs funding. The OFA Director stated right now being told by the Governor that it is a continued funding source.

YOUTH BUREAU – Mike Gray, Director, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Pre-Pins Program Update – Updated the committee on a program that started at the beginning of the current school year, Pre-Pins Program. It is funded through STSJP; 62% State reimbursement. This program is in collaboration with DSS to work with youth that do not quite rise to the level of Pins behavior. At about half way through school year they have had thirty six cases to date. Referral sources have come from: DSS eleven (11), two (2) direct family referrals and twenty three (23) from three school districts. Reasons for the referrals are truancy, family not responding to the school and they go into the household twice a week and also work with parents and incorporate parenting education skills, disrespectful behavior, substance abuse and internet safety. This is a collaboration between departments and a steering committee meets every few weeks to discuss cases. He is pleased with the outcomes and have had eighteen (18) successful closures within sixty (60) to ninety (90) days, thirteen (13) cases still open, one unsuccessful case and four (4) closed prior to 60 days. He will keep the committee updated as they move forward. Once the new staff person is trained then they will open the program up to more school districts. The DSS Commissioner stated working with the truancy population empowers the parents and throws a lifeline for those kids because this would quickly escalate and the child would be called into child protective services due to inadequate education for the parent failing to get the kid to go to school. This is a huge service for the county.
- Lifeguard training is going on right now and the class is full with another training scheduled for the April school vacation break.
- Youth Council – A youth from each county in the State has a seat on the Governor's Youth Council. They report directly the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus who makes policy recommendations to the Governor's office. Grace McFarren, Greenwich, is our current member. Her term expires at the end of March and he will open up for candidates in mid-March and accepting applications. If Supervisors know of anyone who might be interested, please refer them to the Youth Bureau and they will let them know the time obligation and mission and purpose of the council. It is a good experience for a youth that might be interested in politics and policy and get to meet other youth from around the state.

PUBLIC HEALTH – Kathy Jo McIntyre, Director of Patient Services – Public Health, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Budget Amendment – Requesting to recognize additional award for COVID Enhancement Grant funds in the amount of \$1M. Public Health has received the award notification but no contract yet. A motion to amend Public Health budget to recognize additional award for COVID enhancement grant funds in the amount of \$1M was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Shaw and adopted.
- Miscellaneous:
 - Fellow Program – The Fellows Program is a New York State Department of Health program to help strengthen the public health programs and approved for Public

- Health six (6) fellows, one (1) local coordinator and one (1) graduate fellow. Personnel has determined the grade and salary schedule. Everything will be covered under the program through the end date of July 2023 but there may be addition funding beyond that. A motion to add these positions under the Fellow Program to the title by grade schedule and create a salary based on the recommendation by New York State and forward to the Personnel Committee was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Shaw and adopted.
- Last public clinic is scheduled for March 3rd at Whitehall School. The numbers at the clinics have been decreasing and now doing them in the office and wrapping up using the Cambridge Valley EMS vaccination team. Homebound vaccination clinics are wrapping up also. Continuing to do some testing in house with not a lot of response. The positivity rate as of February 22nd was 4.7 and for the last seven days it was 5.1. The vaccination rate is not moving. She thanked Public Safety for handing out test kits.
 - Public Health is still required to wear masks because they are an article 28, health care entity.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 A.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors

INVEST IN NEW YORK- CHILD CARE DESERTS GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The NYS Office of Children and Family Services is offering a grant opportunity to help you open a new child care program in your region!

Child care deserts are areas that do not have enough licensed and registered child care slots to serve the children who live there.



? DID YOU KNOW:
CHILD CARE DESERTS
EXIST ACROSS
NEW YORK STATE
IN BOTH
RURAL & URBAN
AREAS

The **INVEST IN NEW YORK-CHILD CARE DESERTS GRANT** hopes to address *child care deserts* across our state by offering **\$100 million in funding** to help build child care in the areas of New York with the least supply.



Are you interested in opening a child care program? Learn more at...



VISIT: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/deserts>



Office of Children
and Family Services



AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

WHAT IS IT?

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC program that helps connect families and households struggling to afford internet service.

The benefit provides:

- Up to \$30/month discount for internet service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guide lines;
- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;
- Is approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income program.

TWO STEPS TO ENROLL

1

Go to **ACPBenefit.org** to submit an application or print out a mail-in application.

2

Contact your preferred participating provider to select an eligible plan and have the discount applied to your bill.

Some providers may have an alternative application that they will ask you to complete.

Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.

LEARN MORE

 Call **877-384-2575**, or

 Visit **[fcc.gov/acp](https://www.fcc.gov/acp)**





Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

DANIEL W. TIETZ
Acting Commissioner

BARBARA C. GUINN
Executive Deputy Commissioner

Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	22-INF-02
To:	Social Services District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Employment and Income Support Programs
Date:	February 4, 2022
Subject:	Information Regarding the Federal Affordable Connectivity Program
Suggested Distribution:	Temporary Assistance Directors, SNAP Directors, Employment Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	OTDA Employment and Advancement Services Bureau at: (518) 486-6106
Attachments:	Attachment 1 - Affordable Connectivity Program Flyer

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to inform social services districts (districts) of the federal government's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a newly launched program that provides discounts of up to \$30 a month toward internet service for low-income families, as well as a one-time discount on the purchase of a computer or tablet.

II. Background

In accordance with Congressional directives in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) officially launched ACP on December 31, 2021 to provide millions of Americans with affordable internet access. The ACP is the \$14.2 billion successor program to the Emergency Broadband Benefit that helped nearly nine million people afford internet access during the pandemic.

The newly created ACP provides:

- Up to \$30/month discount for broadband internet service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and

- A one-time device discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider if the household contributes more than \$10 but less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

The ACP is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

A household is eligible if one member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Has an income that is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines;
- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in one of several Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal Head Start (only households meeting the relevant income qualifying standard), Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;
- Is approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income program.

To enroll, eligible individuals should go to [ACPBenefit.org](https://www.acpbenefit.org) to submit an application or print out a mail-in application, contact their preferred participating provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to their bill. Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan in order to receive the benefit.

III. Program Implications

During Governor Hochul's January 5, 2022 State of the State presentation, she announced that the Department of Public Service, in coordination with other public-facing state agencies and Internet service providers, will lead a statewide, all-of-government awareness and marketing campaign under the Governor's ConnectALL Initiative to increase enrollment in the ACP among eligible New Yorkers. Such efforts will help ensure that low-income New Yorkers are able to afford the digital tools that are increasingly critical for access to employment and education opportunities.

Districts are encouraged to inform clients and other low-income individuals about the availability of the ACP and post the attached flyer in their lobby or other areas visible to visitors and the public. In addition to the flyer, the [FCC's website](https://www.fcc.gov) has a variety of consumer awareness content, including fact sheets, audio PSAs, and overview videos that are also helpful for outreach and education efforts.

Issued By:

Name: Valerie T. Figueroa

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Employment and Income Support Programs/Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance