

DSS Commissioners'
Review of the Homeless Response System



DSS Addressing Homelessness



Overview



DSS plays a key role in addressing homelessness in each county of NYS



New York State established a legal mandate to provide shelter for anyone who is experiencing homelessness.



DSS determines program and services eligibility for individuals and families experiencing homelessness

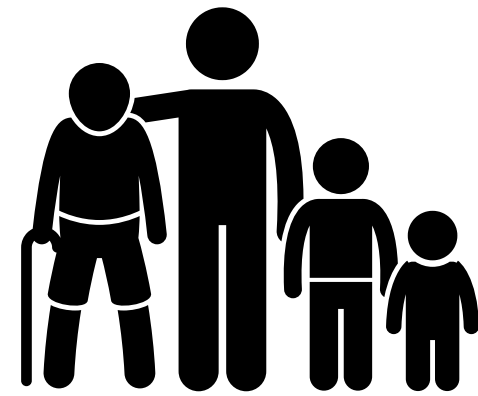


DSS works with clients to secure emergency housing through options like shelters or hotel/motel accommodations



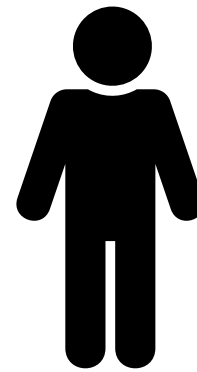
DSS collaborates and works closely with local community based organizations to address the needs of clients

Shelter Funding



Families:

- 100% Federally Funded



Single individuals:

- 29% State
- 71% local share funding

Safety Net

When a family has been on public assistance for longer than 5 years.

Safety Net families go into local share funding





Barriers for DSS

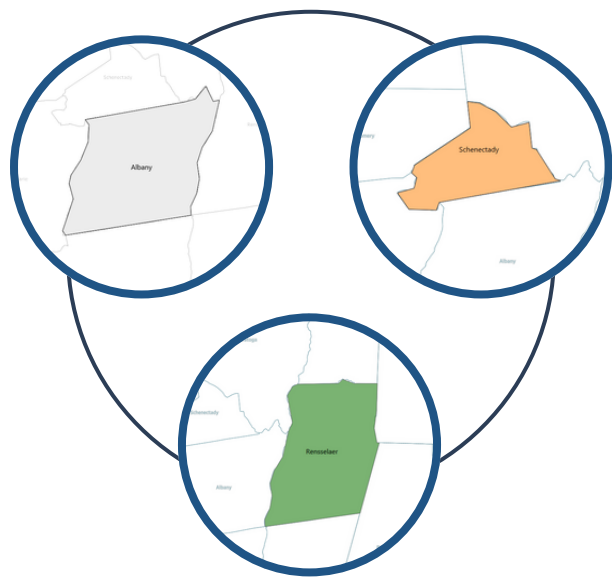
Capacity

Cost

Quality

Capacity

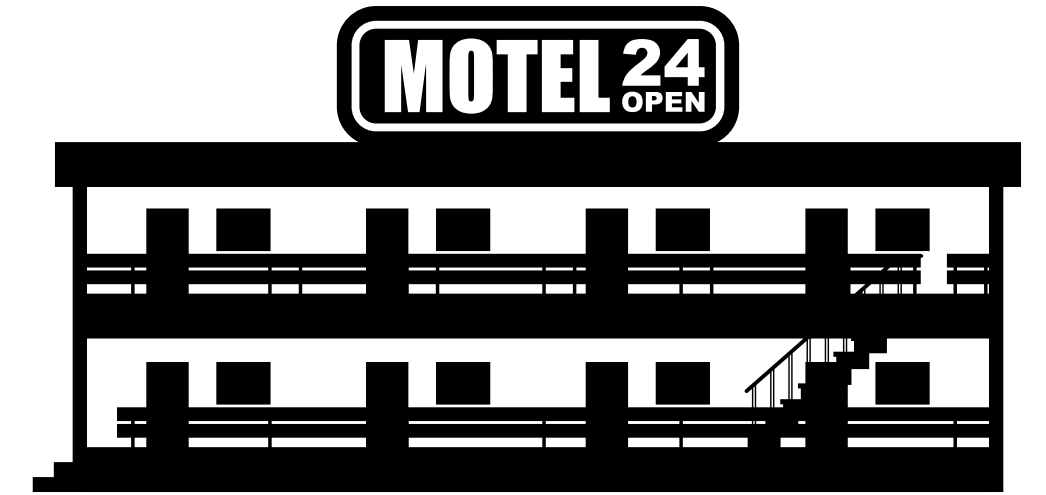
This isn't a single county issue.
This impacts the whole region.



Households experiencing homelessness are shifting between Albany, Schenectady, and Rensselaer County.



Shelters are full,
at max capacity

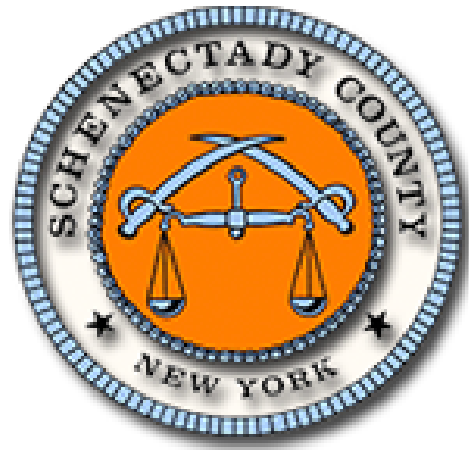


Relying on hotels and
motels to house people

Limited shelter allowances
and lack of affordable housing stock
results in long lengths of stay in shelters



Schenectady County DSS



Serving 75 families
and 67 singles

- Their average length of stay 185 days.

*Source: County data
Reference: January 2025*

Rensselaer County DSS

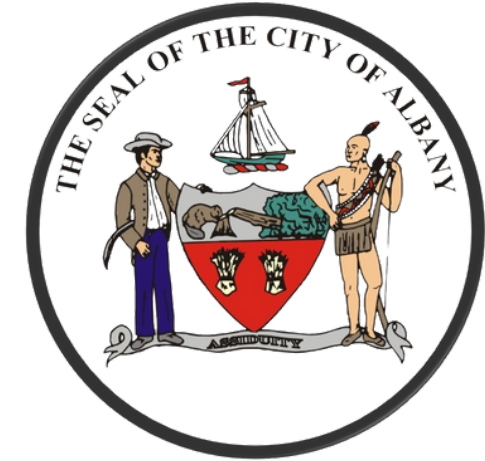


Serving 82 families
and 70 singles

- Their average length of stay 160 days.

**note: this data excludes emergency shelter
beds that are not funded by the Counties*

Albany County DSS



Serving 84 families
and 140 singles

- Their average length of stay 144 days.



Example

Schenectady County

It costs **\$2,815 a month** to house a family in the **hotel/motel**

It costs **\$2,647 a month** to house a family in a **contracted shelter**

It costs more to house someone in a hotel/shelter than to pay for a month's rent

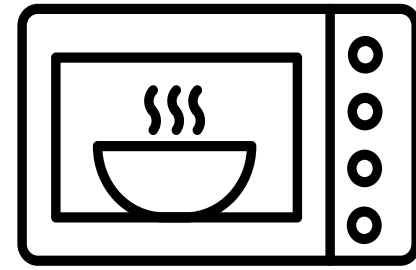
Fair Market Rent for a 3-bedroom apt: \$1,792



Quality of Life



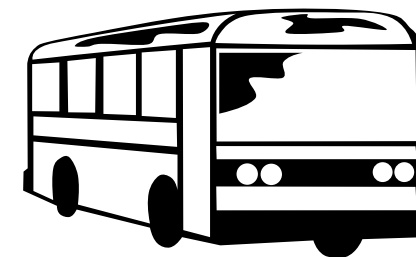
Sharing small rooms



Eating microwavable food



Barriers for children accessing their schools



Difficulties in coordinating transportation



Policy requirements that mandate occupants move every 27 days



Quality of Life concerns for clients sheltering in hotels



Summary

**Impacts
on DSS**



Supportive Housing reduces costs to the State and County.



A reduction of supportive housing funding

Results in

Increased costs to the State and County

Results in

Huge demands on the Departments of Social Services

Results in

Increased episodes of homelessness

Results in

Decreased quality of life for community members



Reduced funding for shelters

- Increased reliance on using hotels and motels
- Reduction in supportive services
- Reduction in quality of life and positive outcomes

Limited hotel/motel capacity

- Households being sheltered in adjacent counties
- Increasing transportation costs to the County