

# 2025 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

OTSEGO COUNTY, NY



3 West Broadway | Oneonta, NY 13820

**P** 607.433.8000

**W** [www.ofoinc.org](http://www.ofoinc.org)

This report was published and released by Opportunities for Otsego in accordance with federal standards in July 2025



## INTRODUCTION

In his State of the Union address in January 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced an “unconditional war on poverty,” and began introducing social welfare legislation that sought to transform the United States into a more just and equitable country. The resulting War on Poverty was part of a wider agenda known as the Great Society that set forth an ambitious series of policy initiatives and programs intended to end poverty, reduce crime, abolish inequality, and improve the environment.

Through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the federal government entrusted Community Action Agencies, like Opportunities for Otsego, with the unique responsibility of reducing the causes and conditions of poverty across the United States. Under the leadership of President Johnson and Sargent Shriver, the founding idea was simple: local communities are better suited to address poverty than a top-down, one-size-fits-all federal program, as issues confronting Otsego County, Michigan are different than the issues facing Otsego County, New York.

Originally, the Office of Economic Opportunity administered the Community Action Program, along with other groundbreaking initiatives such as Job Corps, Head Start and many others. The Economic Opportunity Act was repealed, and the Office of Economic Opportunity (renamed the Community Services Administration) was dismantled in 1981. Today, Community Action is authorized by the Community Services Block Grant, and is administered through the Office of Community Services, within the Administration for Children and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services.

All 1,000-plus Community Action Agencies across the nation bring their communities together to determine local priorities and how best to increase self-sufficiency, improve living conditions, and strengthen family and support systems for low-income individuals. One tenet of Community Action is maximum feasible participation by people benefiting from agency resources. As such, each Community Action Agency is managed by a tripartite board of directors composed of equal parts of local elected officials, the low-income community, and public and private community stakeholders. Furthermore, every three years, each agency must complete a Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment. **This Community Needs Assessment summarizes qualitative and quantitative data gathered from consumers, the community, and various data sources to identify community needs and resources. Findings from this assessment guide future agency planning and help to formulate outcome-based strategic initiatives to address and alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in Otsego County.**

In compliance with federal organizational standards, Opportunities for Otsego Board of Directors approved a motion to accept this report during their June 26, 2025 scheduled meeting.

Source: The National Community Action Foundation (NCAF). NCAF, founded in 1981 and based in Washington, DC, is a leading voice on federal anti-poverty policy and serves as the federal advocate for the nationwide Community Action network.

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# COUNTY PROFILE



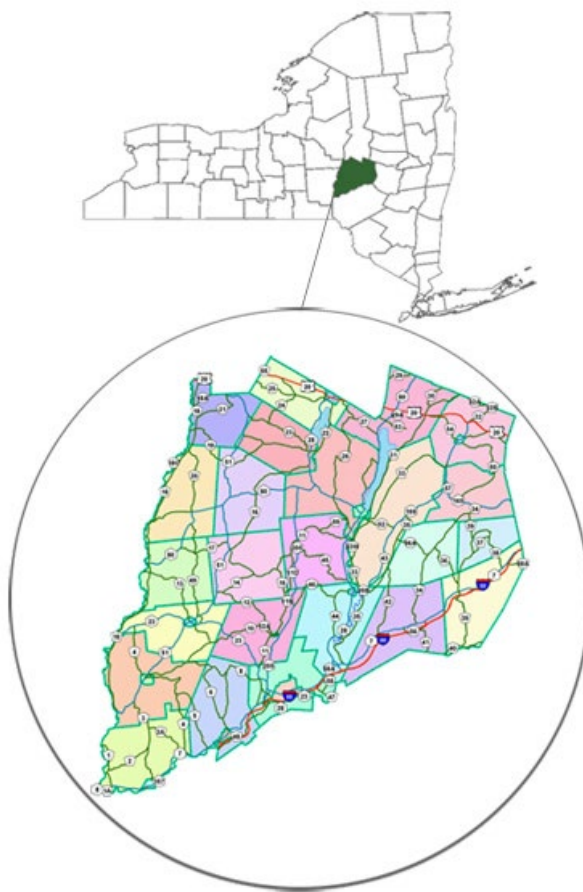
## COUNTY PROFILE

**Overview:** Otsego County is a rural, upstate New York Community, spanning 1,002 square miles through the rolling hills and vast terrain of the Catskill Mountains and is the 17th-largest county in New York by area. Otsego County is located in the Mohawk Valley and is the northernmost county in the Appalachian Region. The county is bordered by Chenango, Delaware, Herkimer, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida, and Schoharie Counties. **The closest metropolitan areas to Otsego County are Albany (80 miles to the east), Binghamton (60 miles west), and Utica (60 miles north).**

Otsego County is comprised of 34 municipalities: 24 towns, 9 villages, and 1 city. The county seat is Cooperstown, which boasts the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Glimmerglass Opera House, and is the childhood home of James Fenimore Cooper, author of *The Last of the Mohicans*. Oneonta is the only city in Otsego County (pop. 14,467<sup>1</sup>) and is home to the State University of New York at Oneonta, Hartwick College, and a downtown undergoing a transformation to revitalize its business, art, and restaurant district.

**Population Density:** Otsego County is designated “rural” by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy. The average population density of the county is 58.4 people per square mile. Within Otsego County, Census Tract 5910 in the City of Oneonta has the highest population density, with an estimated 6,502 people per square mile. Conversely, Census Tract 5906, which encompasses the town of Westford-Roseboom-Decatur has the lowest population density with an estimated 21.3 persons per square mile.

**Natural Resources:** In 2022 there were 803 farms in Otsego County, covering 140,587 acres of land: a 9% decrease in farms (n=77) and 9% decrease in farmland (n=14,047) since 2017. Approximately 50.5% of farmland is designated for crops<sup>2</sup>. Otsego County has 38 lakes, including Otsego Lake, which is the headwater for the Susquehanna River, the largest tributary that empties into the Chesapeake Bay. The Unadilla River flows southerly through Otsego County until it converges with the Susquehanna River in the Village of Sidney (Delaware County, NY), just 5 miles west of Unadilla; the most southwestern township in Otsego County. Across Otsego County, New York State manages and maintains nearly two



<sup>1</sup> Census ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles – DP05

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online\\_Resources/County\\_Profiles/New\\_York/cp36077.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/New_York/cp36077.pdf)

dozen forests and parks. Otsego County sits atop of Marcellus and Utica Shale, natural gas fields that have the potential to produce large amounts of natural gas.

Climate: The average annual temperature in Otsego County is 45°F. January temperatures average 11°F, while in July temperatures average 81°F. Annual precipitation averages 46.81 inches and annual snowfall averages 81 inches. Per the Otsego County Hazard Mitigation Plan, Otsego County recorded 59 flood events between 1950 and August 2018, including 11 floods, 28 flash floods, and 2 ice jams, resulting in \$118.849 million in property damage. During this period, the county also recorded 251 severe weather events. Property damage from hail, high winds, lightning, and tornadoes is estimated at \$6,456 million, with an additional \$10,000 in crop damage<sup>3</sup>. Among these weather events, 27 federal disasters were declared: 12 severe storms; 4 hurricanes; 3 snowstorms; 2 floods; 1 fire; 1 severe ice storm; and 4 other events (Power outage, COVID, West Nile Virus). Forty-eight percent of FEMA declared weather disasters in Otsego County occurred in July, August, and September<sup>4</sup>.

#### **Narrative Response from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey**

*“The impact of weather changes, like warmer summer temperatures and fluctuating winter temperatures, creates issues and hardships for community members. For example, this winter has been colder and resulted in higher heating costs for people. The increased amount of snow and ice has also created travel issues for people.”*

**People living in poverty have greater vulnerability than other groups in disasters and hazardous natural events.** Findings from a 2017 SAMHSA study assert persons of low socioeconomic status are less likely to receiving warnings of pending storms; are less likely to be prepared for a disaster; lack the ability to evacuate in response to disaster warnings; are more likely to live in fragile housing or high-risk areas; have difficulty accessing resources after a disaster; and experience higher rates of trauma during and after a disaster<sup>5</sup>.

Flood Hazard Areas: Historically, the towns of Laurens, Otego, and Unadilla have a higher propensity to be impacted by flooding due to their proximity to the Susquehanna River and larger tributaries feeding the river. Despite the higher rates of flooding, these communities are desirable due to ease of access to Interstate 88 and more affordable housing options. On average, 78.5% of homeowners with a mortgage in these townships pay less than 30% of their household income for housing compared to 73.2% of mortgage holders countywide. While 56.7% of renters in these townships pay less than 30% of their household income on rent compared to 57.3% of renters countywide<sup>6</sup>.

Per the Otsego County Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town of Unadilla has the greatest number of people who would be impacted by a 1-percent chance flood (n=504). At the 0.2-percent flood chance, the City

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.otsegocounty.com/departments/n-r/planning\\_department/hazard\\_mitigation\\_plan.php](https://www.otsegocounty.com/departments/n-r/planning_department/hazard_mitigation_plan.php)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/data-visualization/disaster-declarations-states-and-counties>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dtac/srb-low-ses\\_2.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dtac/srb-low-ses_2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Census ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates Selected Housing Characteristics – DP04

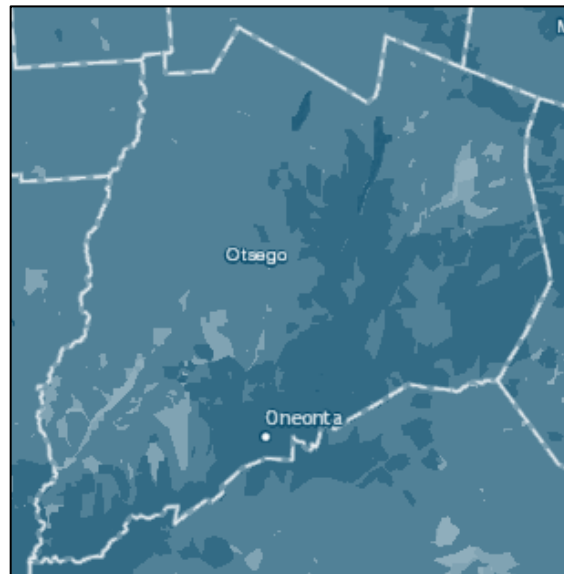
of Oneonta would have the most impact on people (n=1,684). The Village of Laurens has the highest population rate within the 1-percent chance floodplain at 48.7%. The Village of Unadilla is slightly higher than Laurens at the 0.2-percent chance with an estimated 49.1% of the municipality to be impacted<sup>7</sup>.

Transportation Infrastructure: There are 2,084 miles of municipality and county owned roadways within Otsego County, of which 36% is maintained by the county and the remaining 64% by local municipalities<sup>8</sup>. Additional state-owned roadways include Interstate 88, which runs east-west along the southern border of Otsego County, and Routes 20, 23, 28, 51, 80, 165, 166, and 167.

Otsego County has a long history of rail transportation. The first excursion train arrived in Oneonta in the summer of 1865. In 1906, construction began on a roundhouse and by 1924 Oneonta held the distinction of the largest roundhouse in the world. Conversion from steam to diesel power trains diminished activity at the roundhouse, which eventually lead to the roundhouse being fully demolished by 1993<sup>9</sup>. Today, there are no commuter trains in Otsego County. East-West running tracks operated by Norfolk Southern are exclusively used as freight lines and an abandoned rail line in Milford, operated Cooperstown & Charlotte Valley Railroad, is used exclusively for recreational purposes.

Otsego County has two airports: Oneonta Municipal Airport and Cooperstown Westville Airport. Activity at both airports is primarily single engine planes.

Telecommunication Infrastructure: According to the 2023 *Wireless Substitution* report published by the CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 76% of adults in Otsego County use a wireless telephone exclusively and live in a household that does not have a landline; 1.3% of adults use landline only; 22.2% are dual users; and 0.5% have no phone. **Of adults living in poverty, 80% are wireless-only, 3.2% landline only, 3.2% dual users, and 3.7% are phoneless.** The study also found that Hispanic adults (83.9%) were more likely than non-Hispanic black (70.8%), non-Hispanic white (73.2%), non-Hispanic Asian (76%), or Other Multi-Race adults (79.4%) to be wireless-only<sup>10</sup>.



For residents in Otsego County, exclusive or primary use of wireless calling may be a barrier to communication in some areas as cellular signals are blocked by deep valleys and mountain ranges. Per

<sup>7</sup> Otsego County Hazard Mitigation Plan Section 5.4.4-8 (April 2021)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dot.ny.gov/highway-data-services/lhi-local-roads>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.oneontahistorian.com/facts.htm#question7>

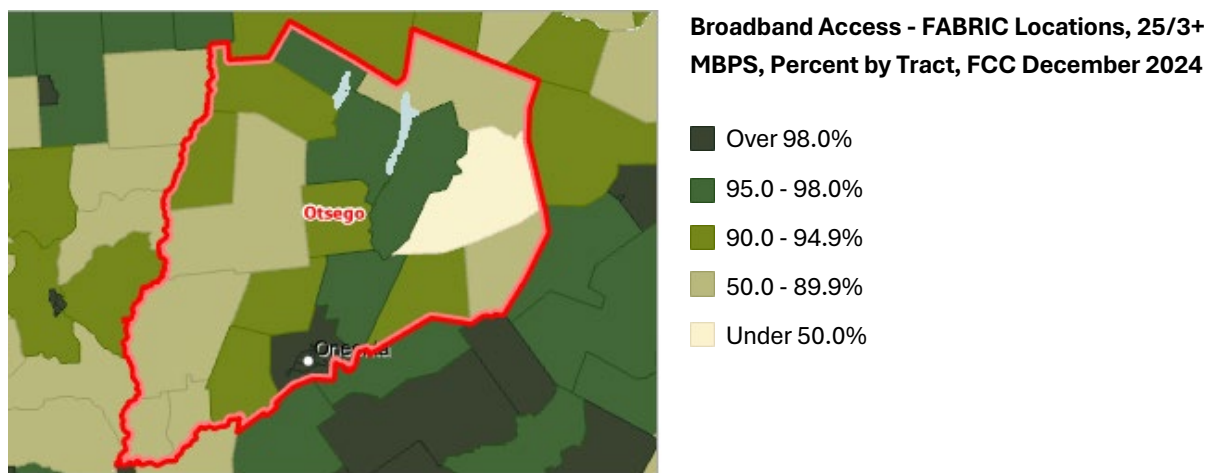
<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless202406.pdf>

the FCC, the availability of LTE providers varies throughout Otsego County. Census blocks along Interstate 88 and Route 28 corridor have at least four LTE providers, while some census blocks have no provider options<sup>11</sup>. The alternatives are landline or fiber optic options.

**Broadband Fabric:** The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines broadband availability levels at broadband serviceable locations (BSLs) based on the existence of infrastructure capable of delivering specific internet speeds. Definitions are as follows:

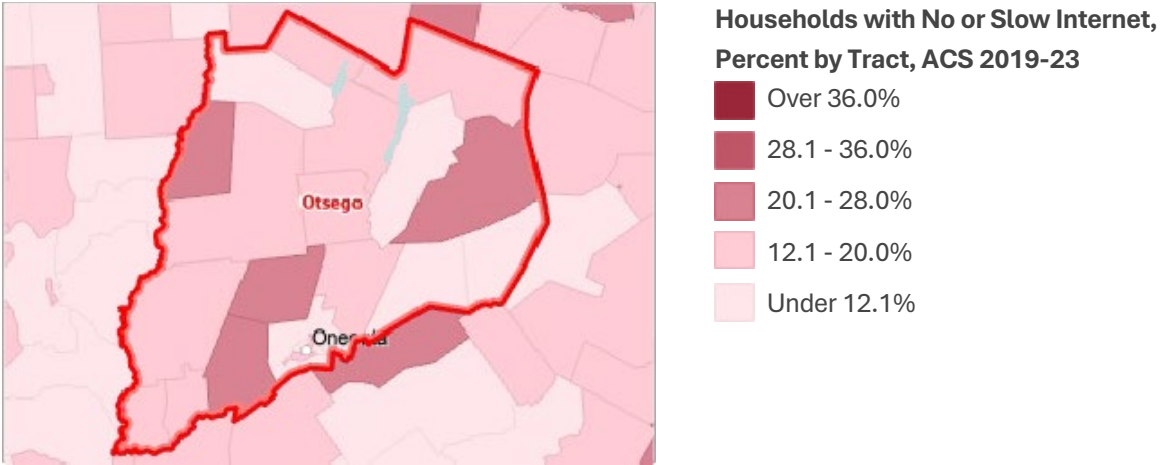
- **Unserved:** Broadband service is nonexistent or falls below 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload speeds.
- **Underserved:** Service speeds between 25/3 Mbps and 100/20 Mbps.
- **Served:** Connectivity achieves or exceeds 100/20 Mbps

Per the December 2024 FCC FABRIC Data, **there are 29,039 broadband serviceable locations across Otsego County. Of these locations, 89.4% are underserved** (speeds between 25/3 Mbps). As a community, Westford/Dectur has the least access to broadband at 48.6%, followed by Cherry Valley (68.2%), Morris/Gilbertsville (79.7%), Unadilla Census Tract 5916.02 (83.1%), Unadilla Census Tract 5916.01 (85.7%), and Burlington (88.5%).



The following map illustrates the percentage of households across Otsego County who either use dial-up as their only way of internet connection; or have internet access but don't pay for the service; or have no internet access in their home. Of the estimated 22,608 households across Otsego County, 3,248 or 14.37% have no or slow internet. **Communities with the greatest rate of households with no or slow internet are Westford (27.96%), Otego (26.1%), Laurens (21.1%), and Edmeston (20.4%).**

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/maps/lte-coverage-number-providers-ye-2018/>



At the time of this report, the Otsego County Planning Department is working in partnership with the Southern Tier 8 Regional Board on implementing a Connectivity Plan, which evaluated last-mile service gaps, and service at residences, businesses, and community anchor institutions. The goal of this initiative is to expand open-access middle-mile routes in Otsego County, based on ISP partnership availability and the funding landscape<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://cms2.revize.com/revize/otsegocountynynnew/ST8%20Connectivity%20Plan.pdf>



# POPULATION PROFILE

## POPULATION PROFILE

- The population in Otsego County dropped 6% over the past 10 years with an average of 92 people leaving due to outward migration.
- People aged 65+ are the fast-growing population in Otsego County; followed by children ages 5-19 years.
- Nearly 7% of Otsego County residents are Veterans, which is greater than the State and National average.
- Families comprise 60.7% of all households in Otsego County. Among non-family households, 86.7% of people live alone.
- The poverty rate has been on the rise since 2020, with 14.2% of all people; 18.6% of children under 18; and 17.3% of families living under 100% of the Federal Poverty line.

**Population Change:** Over the period 2010-2020, the total population in Otsego County declined 6.0%, from 62,259 persons in 2010 to 58,524 persons in 2020. This decline is consistent with population trends in adjacent counties but contrary to the overall New York State rate, which experienced a 4.2% growth in population<sup>13</sup>. Overall, the population growth in New York State lagged other states across the nation. The lower count in New York State during the 2020 Decennial enumeration resulted in the loss of one Congressional Seat and subsequent reconfiguration of district maps.

Report Area	Total Population (2023 ACS)	Total Population (2020 Census)	Total Population (2010 Census)	Pop. Change (n) 2010-2020	Pop. Change (%) 2010-2020
<b>Otsego County</b>	<b>59,738</b>	<b>58,524</b>	<b>62,259</b>	<b>-3,735</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>
Chenango	46,685	47,220	50,477	-3,257	-6.5%
Delaware	44,551	44,308	47,980	-3,672	-7.7%
Herkimer	59,932	60,139	64,519	-4,380	-6.8%
Madison	67,572	68,016	73,431	-5,415	-7.4%
Montgomery	49,461	49,532	50,219	-687	-1.4%
Oneida	229,645	232,125	234,889	-2,764	-1.2%
Schoharie	29,979	29,714	32,749	-3,035	-9.3%
New York State	19,872,319	20,201,249	19,378,102	+823,147	+4.2%

Typical components of population changes include live births, deaths, international and domestic migration, and natural increases. In 2022, the number of births and deaths in Otsego County was 458 and 715 respectively<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census. 2020, 2010; 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

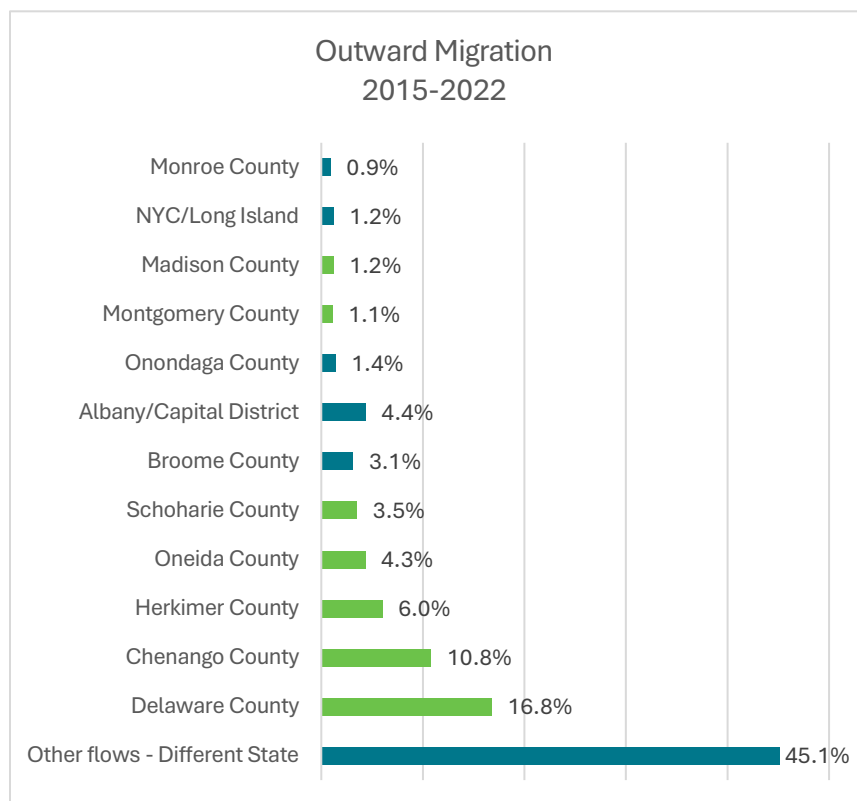
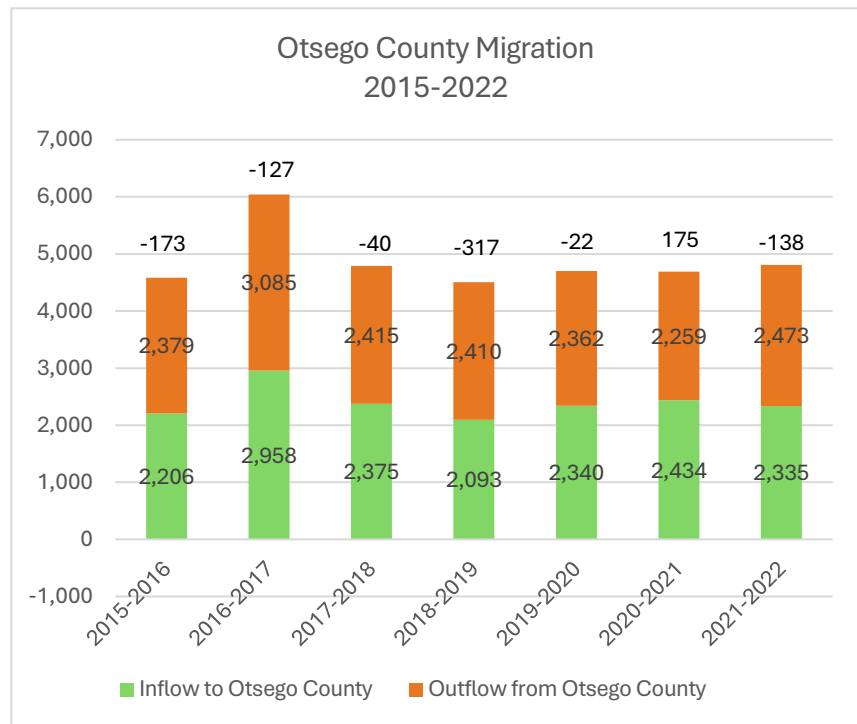
<sup>14</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital\\_statistics/2022/](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital_statistics/2022/) - Tables 9 and 35



**Migration Patterns:** According to the Internal Revenue Service, Otsego County averages a loss of 92 people per year due to outward migration. Over the period 2015-2022, Otsego County lost a total of 652 people, with the greatest net loss in 2018-2019 (n=317). Only from 2020-2021 did the County have a gain of residents<sup>15</sup>.

Among all people leaving Otsego County over the period 2015-2022, the majority (45.1%) migrated to areas outside of New York State and a similar number of people moved to counties adjacent to Otsego County. A smaller population (9.8%) migrated to upstate metro areas, like Albany, Binghamton, Rochester, and Syracuse.

Data released by the US Census Bureau shows an overall loss of 6.0% of the population in Otsego County from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census. In total, **only four townships experienced population growth: Decatur (5.9%), Edmeston (4.4%), Plainfield (0.8%), and Cherry Valley (0.5%).** Townships with the greatest loss in population were Exeter (-14.4%), Richfield (-13.5%), Otego (-11.5%), and Middlefield (-11.0%).



<sup>15</sup> <https://www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-migration-data>

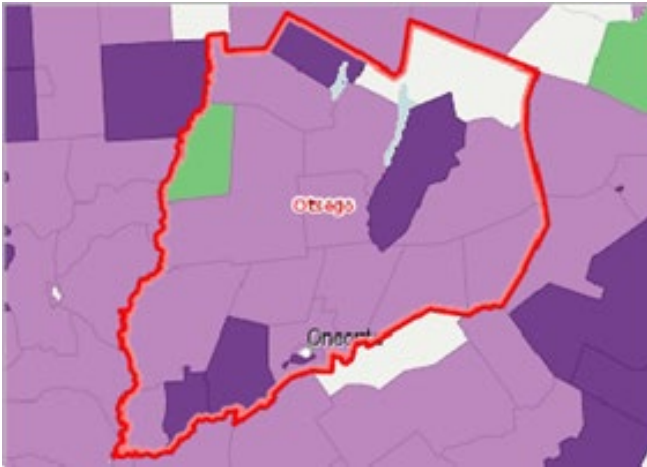


Township	Population 2020 Census	Population 2010 Census	Change (%)
Burlington	1,045	1,140	-8.3%
Butternuts/Gilberstville (V)	1,665	1,786	-6.8%
Cherry Valley (T/V)	1,229	1,223	+0.5%
Decatur	374	353	+5.9%
Edmeston	1,907	1,826	+4.4%
Exeter	845	987	-14.4%
Hartwick	1,952	2,110	-7.5%
Laurens (T/V)	2,311	2,424	-4.7%
Maryland	1,760	1,897	-7.2%
Middlefield	1,882	2,114	-11.0%
Milford (T/V)	2,827	3,044	-7.1%
Morris (T/V)	1,735	1,878	-7.6%
New Lisbon	1,084	1,114	-2.7%
Oneonta (City)	13,079	13,901	-5.9%
Oneonta (Town)	5,065	5,229	-3.1%
Otego (T/V)	2,756	3,115	-11.5%
Otsego/Cooperstown (V)	3,641	3,900	-6.6%
Pittsfield	1,312	1,366	-4.0%
Plainfield	922	915	+0.8%
Richfield/Richfield Springs (V)	2,065	2,388	-13.5%
Roseboom	690	711	-3.0%
Springfield	1,346	1,358	-0.9%
Unadilla (T/V)	4,116	4,392	-6.3%
Westford	804	868	-7.4%
Worcester	2,112	2,220	-4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,524</b>	<b>62,259</b>	<b>-6.0%</b>

### Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

*"When you retire, you are forced to move because you can no longer afford to live where your friends and family reside."*

*"Aging and declining population. Need to be more welcoming to new people."*



**Population Change, Percent by Tract, US  
Census 2010 - 2020**

- Over 10.0% Increase ( + )
- 2.0 - 10.0% Increase ( + )
- Less Than 2.0% Change ( +/- )
- 2.0 - 10.0% Decrease ( - )
- Over 10.0% Decrease ( - )

**Population Density:** Within Otsego County, the City of Oneonta has the highest population density, with an average of 3,615.8 people per square mile. Contributing to the population density within the City of Oneonta are Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta. Combined, these educational institutions enroll an estimated 5,959 students. According to the 2020 Census, **4,537 students live in college/university student housing (a.k.a. Group Quarters) within the City of Oneonta**. Conversely, Census Tract 5906, which encompasses the town of Westford-Roseboom-Decatur has the lowest population density with an estimated 21.3 persons per square mile.

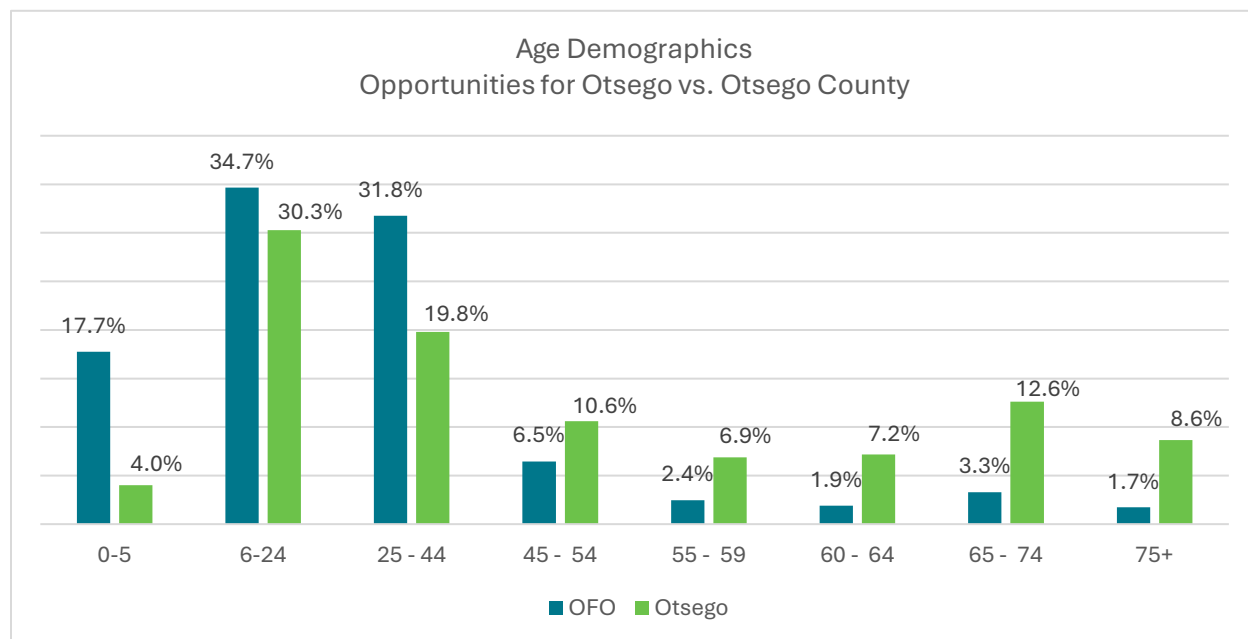
**Vulnerable Populations:** Vulnerable populations include the economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, the uninsured, low-income children, the elderly, the homeless, and those with chronic health conditions, including severe mental illness. It may also include rural residents, who often encounter barriers to accessing healthcare and other support services<sup>16</sup>. Below offers a summary of vulnerable populations in Otsego County and a comparison of people who accessed Opportunities for Otsego services during CSBG program years 2021 through 2024.

**Age:** The table below illustrates the change in age distribution from the year 2010 to 2023 in Otsego County. **The age cohort that represents the largest population in Otsego County is persons 65+ followed by people aged 5-19**. The age group with the greatest rate of growth is 65+ (27.9%). The largest percentage decline in population was in the age group 45-54, with -31% rate change, followed closely by people age 25-34 (-19.3%). Per 2023 ACS estimates, the median age in Otsego County is 40.4. Males comprise 48.6% of the population, while female represent 51.4%.

Age Demographics: Otsego County								
Year	0-4	5-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
2023	2,401	11,077	7,010	5,975	5,850	6,327	8,698	12,700
2010	2,784	12,900	6,982	5,356	7,248	9,174	8,230	9,930
Change	-13.8%	-14.1%	-0.4%	11.6%	-19.3%	-31.0%	5.7%	27.9%
% Total Population	3.87%	17.85%	11.30%	9.63%	9.43%	10.19%	14.02%	20.46%

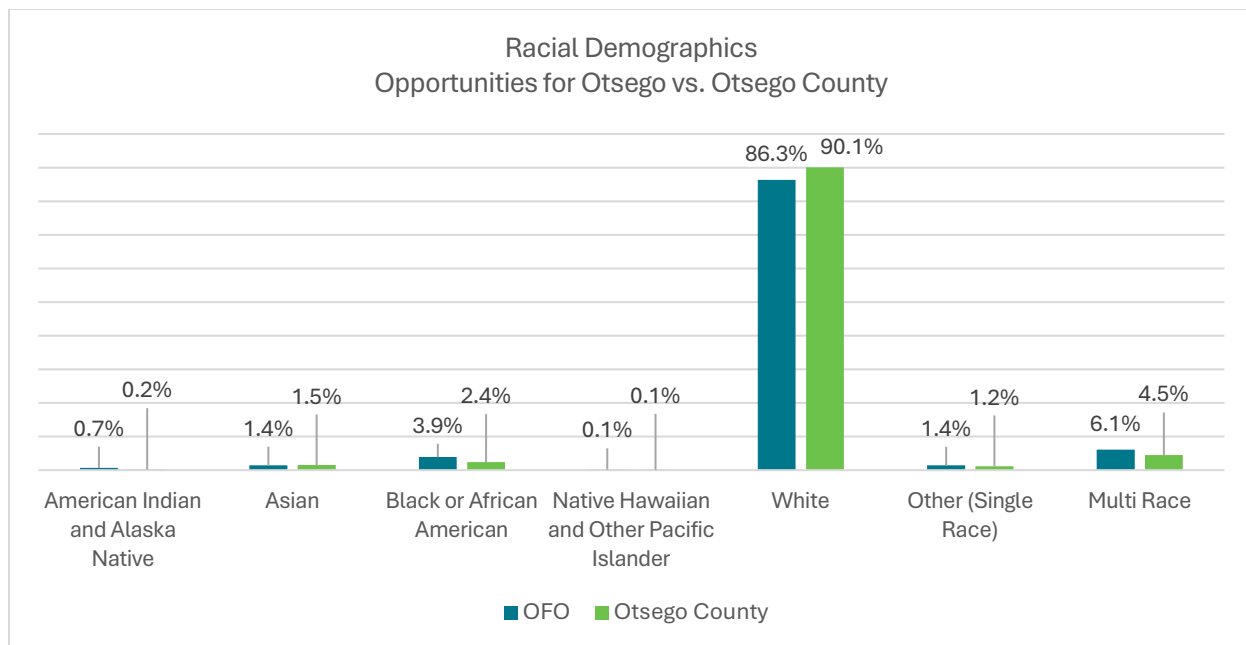
<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ajmc.com/view/nov06-2390ps348-s352>

Based on client data, the majority of Opportunities for Otsego’s clientele are ages birth through 44. After age 44, the number of people accessing programs and services declines; contradictory to the aging trend in Otsego County<sup>17</sup>.



Race: Otsego County remains primarily Anglo; however, shifts in demographics have boosted racial diversity in the area slightly. According to 2023 ACS data, Whites comprise 90.1% of the population, Blacks represent 2.4% of the population, Multi/Mixed Race made up 4.5% of the population, and the remaining races combined represent 3% of the population. **The greatest change overall amongst racial groups as noted by the 2020 Census was an 11.1% decline in persons identifying as White and a 203.1% jump in persons identifying as Multi/Mixed Race.** Of all persons, 4.3% (n= 2,576) identify as Hispanic or Latino/Latinix. Based on client data, the racial demographics Opportunities for Otsego’s client population mirror that of Otsego County residents.

<sup>17</sup> Opportunities for Otsego CMS (2021-2024); Census 2023 ACS



SOURCE: Opportunities for Otsego CMS (2021-2024); Census 2023 ACS

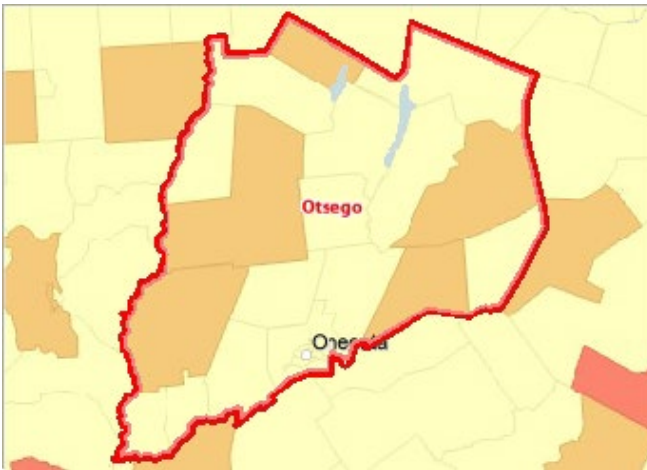
**Spoken Language:** Overall, 1.24% of Otsego County resident identify as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Of the estimated 738 persons, 48% speak Spanish or Spanish Creole. The other top five languages spoken are Chinese (6.8%), Italian (6.5%), Other West Germanic languages (5.4%), Japanese (4.5%) and Tagalog (3.5%<sup>18</sup>). **Of all persons receiving services from Opportunities for Otsego during PY 2021-2024, 96.7% reported English as their primary language. Other languages spoken include Spanish (1.8%); “Other” language (0.5%); Chinese (0.4%); Urdu (0.2%); French (0.2%); Portuguese (0.1%); Caribbean (0.1%); and <0.1% Russian.**

**Veterans:** Overall, 6.61% (n=3,341) of the adult population in Otsego County are veterans, which is greater than the national average of 6.44% and the New York State rate of 3.86%. This cohort includes civilians age 18 years old and over who served (even for a short time) but are not now serving on acting duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, or who served as a Merchant Marine seaman during World War II. **During CSBG PY 2021 through 2024, Opportunities for Otsego provided support to 84 military personnel: 1.6% of all people accessing agency support over the age of 18.**

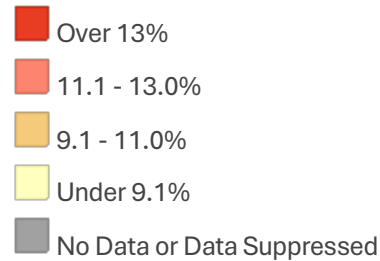
Among all Veterans in Otsego County, 93% are male (n=3,103) and 7% female (n=238). Over 61.4% are over age 65 and 94.6% identify as White, Non-Hispanic/Latino. Within Otsego County, Veterans identified as Two or More races (4.1%) make up the largest portion of POC Veterans; followed by Black/African American, Other race, and Asian. Nearly 1.8% of all Veterans in Otsego County are Hispanic/Latino<sup>19</sup>. The greatest concentration of veterans in Otsego County live in the towns of Maryland/Schenevus (10.9%); Burlington (10.4%); Richfield Springs (10.6%); Westford/Decatur (10%); and Morris/Gilbertsville (9.7%).

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.lep.gov/maps/lma2015/Final\\_508](https://www.lep.gov/maps/lma2015/Final_508)

<sup>19</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates, Tables S2101, B21001



**Veterans, Percent of Total Population by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



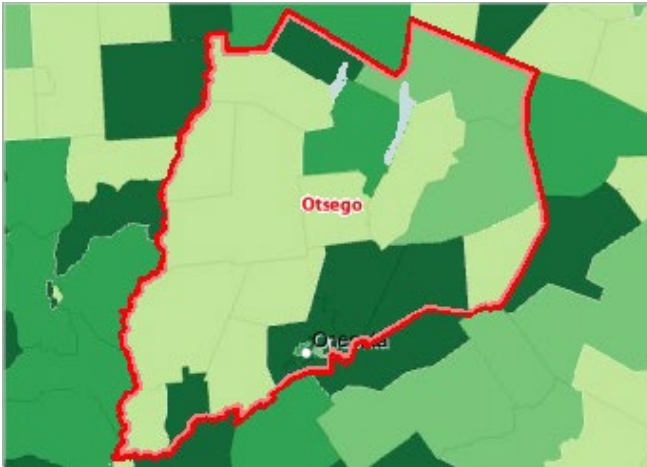
**Households:** Comparing 5-year ACS estimates from 2013-2017 and 2019-2023, Otsego County lost 1,019 households; bringing the total estimated number of households to 22,608. This represents a 4.3% loss. Comparatively, households increased 5.02% statewide and 7.3% nationwide<sup>20</sup>.

Report Area	Total Households (2017)	Total Households (2023)	Change in Households	Percent Change
<b>Otsego County</b>	23,627	22,608	-1,019	-4.31%
New York State	7,302,710	7,668,956	366,246	5.02%
United States	118,825,921	127,482,865	8,656,944	7.29%

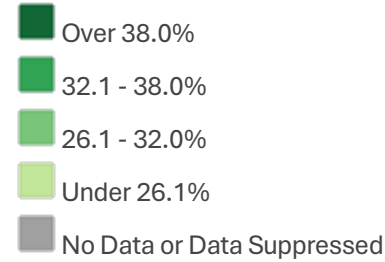
**Family Households:** Per US Census definition, a “family” includes a householder and one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Of the 22,608 households in Otsego County, an estimated 13,734 are families. Among all household types, married-couple households comprised 47.8%; Cohabiting-couples 7.5%; Male head of household (HoH) 20.4%; and Female HoH 24.3%.

Townships with the highest rate of single parent households are in the City of Oneonta (37-58.57%); the Town of Oneonta (56.4%); Maryland/Schenevus (51.8%); Milford (51.5%); Richfield/Richfield Springs (50.1%), and Unadilla (44.4%).

<sup>20</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2019-23.



**Single Parent Households with Children (Age 0-17), Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



Additional Census data reports **of the 535 grandparents living with their grandchildren in Otsego County, 32.1% (n=172) are responsible for the care of their grandchildren.** Ages of children under the care of a grandparent: 2.1% less than 1 year old (n=11); 2.4% 1-2 years old (n=13); 11.4% 3 or 4 years old (n=61); and 16.3% age 5 or older (n=87).

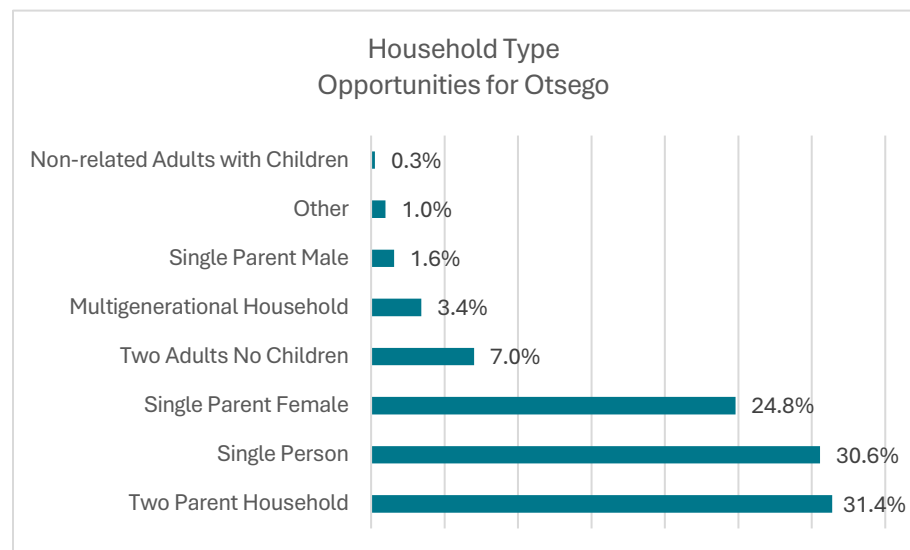
**Non-Family Households:** Of non-family households, approximately 13.2% are cohabitating without children (n=1,116) and 86.7% people live alone (n=7,287). Among those living alone, 47% are male; 53% female; and 46% over the age of 65. The average family household size in Otsego County is 3 people and the average household size is 2.4 people<sup>21</sup>.

Households served by Opportunities for Otsego over program years (PY) 2021-2024 by type are illustrated in the chart.

**Over 60% of households served by Opportunities for Otsego are two-parent and single people.**

**Group Quarters:** The Census Bureau considers people not living in housing units as living in group

quarters. Per the 2020 Decennial Census, **5,799 people live in group quarters in Otsego County.** Among the “Institutionalized” population, 286 live in a nursing or skilled-nursing facility; 14 in a juvenile facility; and 41 in another type of institutional facility. Persons living in noninstitutionalized facilities include 4,578



<sup>21</sup> Census, 2023 ACS, Table DP02 - Selected Social Characteristics in the United States

in College/University student housing and 880 in another type of noninstitutional facility<sup>22</sup>.

**Poverty:** The measure of poverty first originated as a tool in President Johnson’s War on Poverty in the 1960s. Before the “war” could begin, the administration needed a way to count the number of people in poverty, deliver aid, and measure the effectiveness of anti-poverty policies. The Office of Economic Opportunity settled on a definition based on an article written by Social Security Administration economist Mollie Orshansky. She developed the measure using the Department of Agriculture’s food plans, based on the minimum amount of food needed to have a nutritionally “fair” to “good” diet. The definition has remained largely unaltered since the 1960s<sup>23</sup>.

The federal government releases poverty guidelines annually. These pre-tax income limits are used by to determine federal program eligibility, including Department of Health and Human Services (Head Start, LIHEAP, Children’s Health Insurance Program, Family Planning Services), Department of Agriculture (SNAP, WIC, National School Lunch Program), Department of Energy (Weatherization Assistance Program), Department of Labor (Job Corps, Workforce Investment Act Youth Activities), Department of the Treasury (Low-Income Taxpayer Clinics), and Legal Services Corporation (Legal Services for the Poor). The standard threshold in establishing poverty status is 100% of the federal poverty level. In Fiscal Year 2020, Congressional action expanded eligibility for services under the Community Services Block Grant, a key source of funding for Opportunities for Otsego, from 125% of the federal poverty level to 200%. This change opened service eligibility to an estimated 7,589 persons in Otsego County.

Federal Poverty Guidelines for Federal Fiscal Year 2025					
Household Size	100% FPL	125% FPL	130% FPL (Free School Lunch, SNAP)	185% FPL (Reduced School Lunch, WIC)	200% FPL (TANF)
1	\$15,650	\$19,562.50	\$20,345	\$28,952.50	\$31,300
2	\$21,150	\$26,437.50	\$27,495	\$39,127.50	\$42,300
3	\$26,650	\$33,312.50	\$34,645	\$49,302.50	\$53,300
4	\$32,150	\$40,187.50	\$41,795	\$59,477.50	\$64,300
5	\$37,650	\$47,062.50	\$48,945	\$69,652.50	\$75,300
6	\$43,150	\$53,937.50	\$56,095	\$79,827.50	\$86,300
7	\$48,650	\$60,812.50	\$63,245	\$90,002.50	\$97,300
8	\$54,150	\$67,687.50	\$70,395	\$100,177.50	\$108,300

SOURCE : <https://aspe.hhs.gov/>

The chart below offers comparison rates of poverty for the year 2023 in Otsego County, seven adjacent counties, New York State and nationally. Per the US Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, approximately **7,501 persons were living in poverty in Otsego County during 2023**,

<sup>22</sup> US Census Bureau, 2020 DEC Redistricting Data

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.prb.org/resources/how-poverty-in-the-united-states-is-measured-and-why-it-matters/>

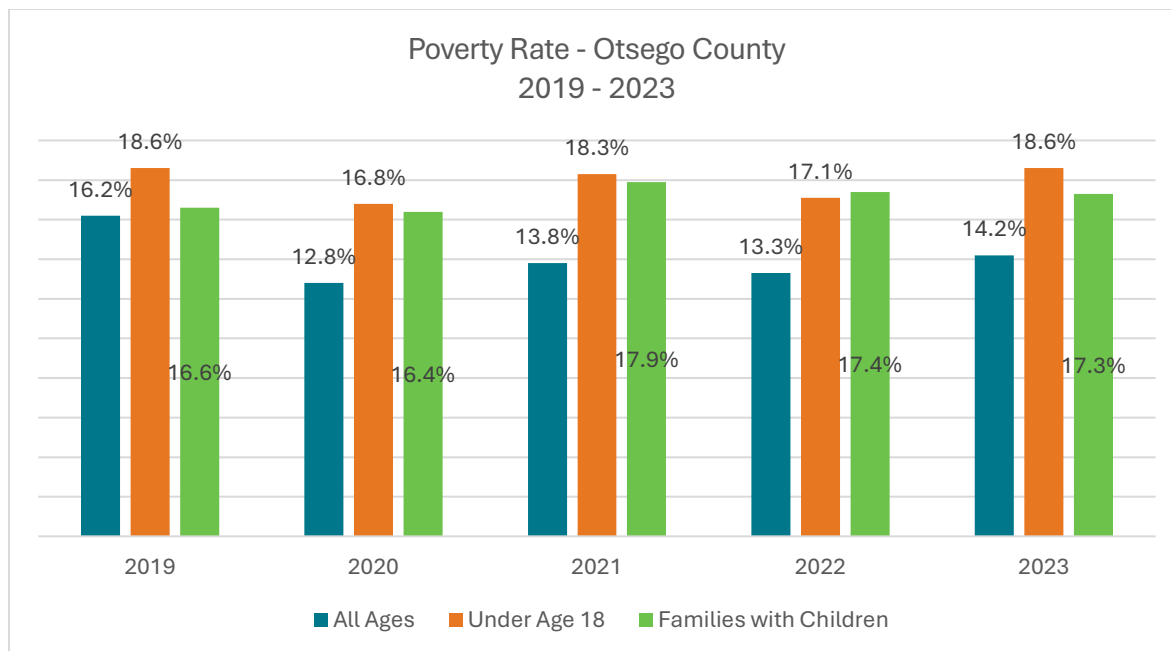
**representing 14.2% of the total population.** This rate is higher than 2022 (13.3%) and 2021 (13.8%). Comparably, the 2023 poverty rate in Otsego County is better than four of the seven adjacent counties, but slightly higher than the New York State rate (14.1%) and the national rate (12.5%)<sup>24</sup>.

Poverty Rates (2023)						
Report Area	Persons (n)	Persons (%)	Age 0-17 (n)	Age 0-17 (%)	Age 5-17 (n)	Age 5-17 (%)
<b>Otsego County</b>	<b>7,501</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>17.3</b>
Chenango	6,464	14.3	1,721	18.7	1,278	18.6
Delaware	6,851	16.3	1,465	21.5	951	19.1
Herkimer	8,219	14.1	1,963	16.6	1,392	15.7
Madison	6,838	11.0	1,552	13.0	1,121	12.5
Montgomery	7,647	15.8	2,535	22.8	1,695	20.9
Oneida	34,084	15.7	9,274	19.6	6,475	18.5
Schoharie	3,871	13.5	835	16.5	608	16.3
New York	2,697,685	14.1	718,306	18.6	509,260	17.9
United States	40,763,043	12.5	11,445,264	16.0	8,139,044	15.3

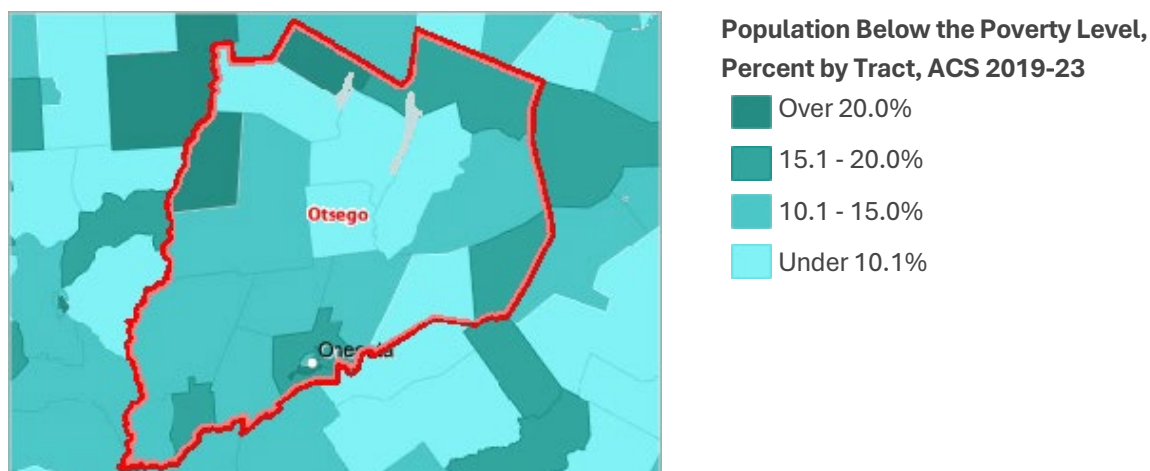
The chart below shows comparison rates of poverty over the 5-year period, 2019 through 2023, for all people in Otsego County; children under 18; and families with children aged 5-17. On average, the poverty rate over this period was 14.1% for all people. The lowest rate of poverty over this period was in 2020, which may be attributed to measures implemented by the state and federal government to combat the impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis. **During PY 2021-2024, 80.5% of households accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego lived at or below the 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.**

<sup>24</sup> US Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), 2023





Distribution of poverty by Census Tract is mapped below. **The highest rates of poverty in Otsego County are within the townships of Edmeston (Census Tract 5904.01) at a rate of 28.1%, Richfield Springs (Census Tract 5903.01) at 21.3%; and the City of Oneonta (Census Tract 5911) at a rate of 21.72%.** People living below 100% of FPL in these communities represent approximately 1,752 people.



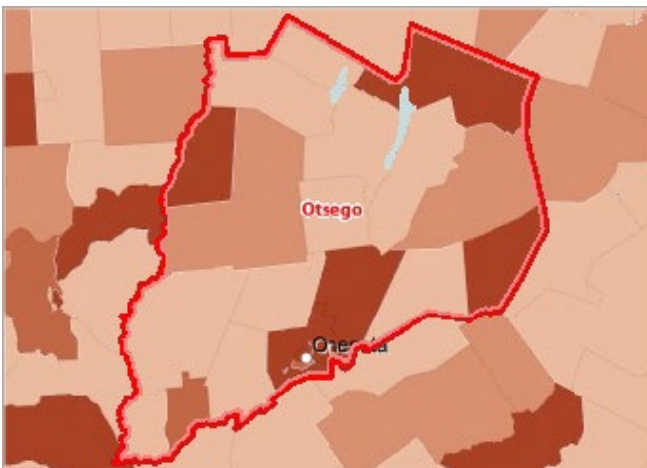
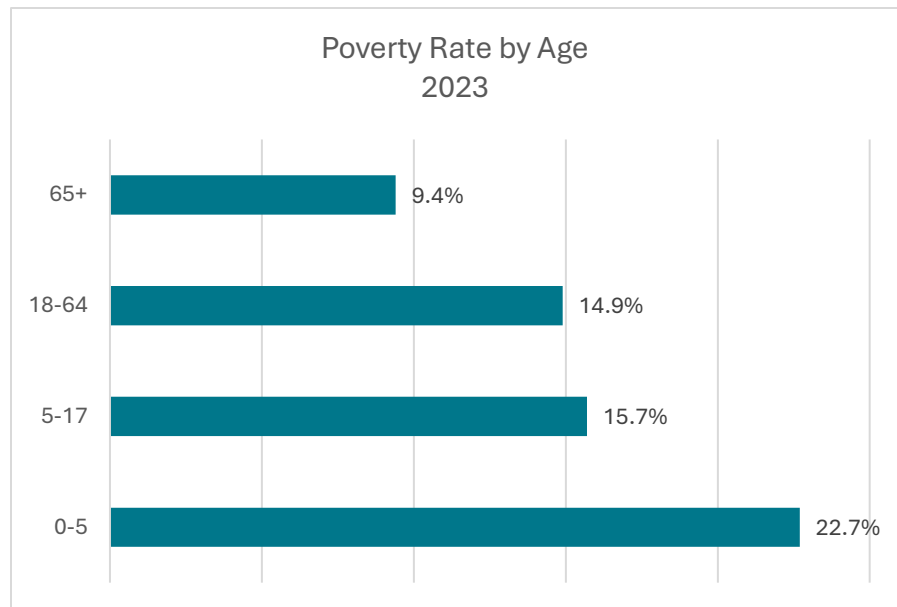
Families with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty threshold are often classified as “low-income.” **During PY 2021-2024, 95.3% of households accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego lived at or below the 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.** In Otsego County, communities with the highest rates of low-income people mirror those living at 100% of the federal poverty level with the addition of two Census Tract in the greater Oneonta area. Communities include Edmeston (Census Tract 5904.01) at a rate of 48.5% (n=992); Richfield Springs (Census Tract 5903.01) at a rate of 43.2% (n=815); City of Oneonta (Census Tract 5911) with a rate of 41.7% (n=1,414); City of Oneonta (Census Tract 5910) with a

rate of 39.3% (n=1,143); and the Town of Oneonta (Census Tract 5908) with a rate of 38.5% (n=1,930). **Overall, 17,306 people in Otsego County are low-income at a rate of 31.6%.**

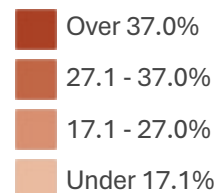
Economically Disadvantaged Populations: The following diagrams offer a summary of demographics of low-income and economically disadvantaged populations living in Otsego County<sup>25</sup>.

**Among children aged 0-4 living in poverty, the highest rates by township are Edmeston (47.1%) and Milford (44.3%).** Other

communities with childhood poverty rates over 37% include Cherry Valley (39.6%), the Town of Oneonta (39.6%), Worcester (37.7%), and the City of Oneonta (Census Tract 5909 - 42.3%; Census Tract 5908 - 39.6%; Census Tract 5917 - 37.5%).

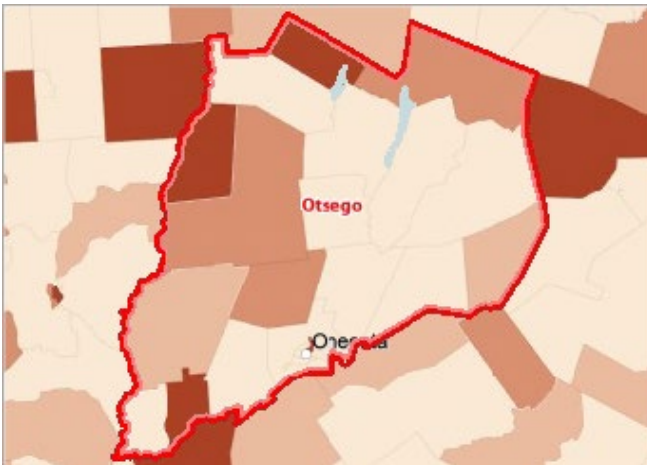


**Population Below the Poverty Level, Children (Age 0-4), Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**

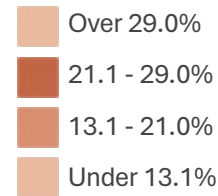


An estimated 1,038 children aged 5-17 live below the poverty line in Otsego County at a rate of 15.7%, compared to the New York State rate of 18.0%. **The highest rates of childhood poverty (age 5-17) in Otsego County are in the town of Richfield (55.1%), Edmeston (42.9%), Census Tract 5910 in the City of Oneonta (35.7%), and Census Tract 5916.01 encompassing Wells Bridge/Unadilla area (31.3%).**

<sup>25</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates

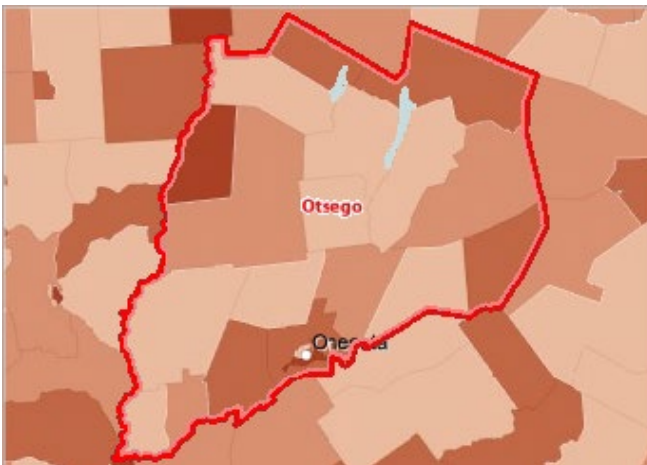


**Population Below the Poverty Level, Children (Age 5-17), Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**

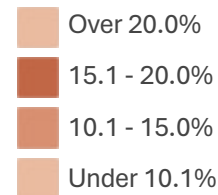


**Of the 4,970 adults age 18-64 in Otsego County, the greatest concentration of poverty is in the City of Oneonta within Census Tracts 5911(27.4%) and 5909 (25.1%), followed by Edmeston (23.3%).**

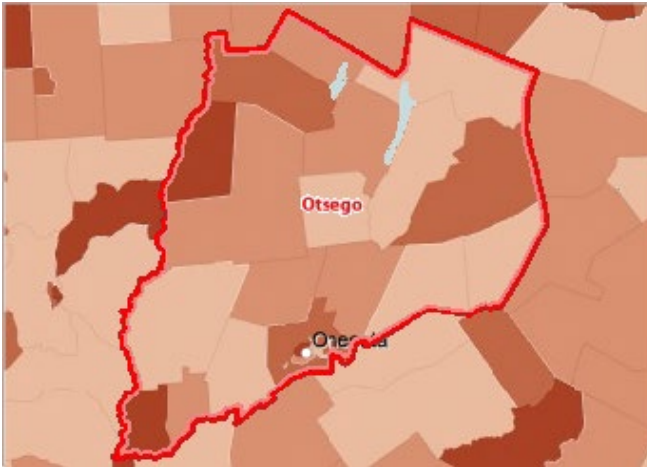
People in these communities represent nearly 27% of adults living in poverty across Otsego County.



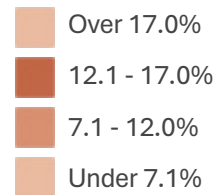
**Population Below the Poverty Level, Adult (Age 18-64), Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



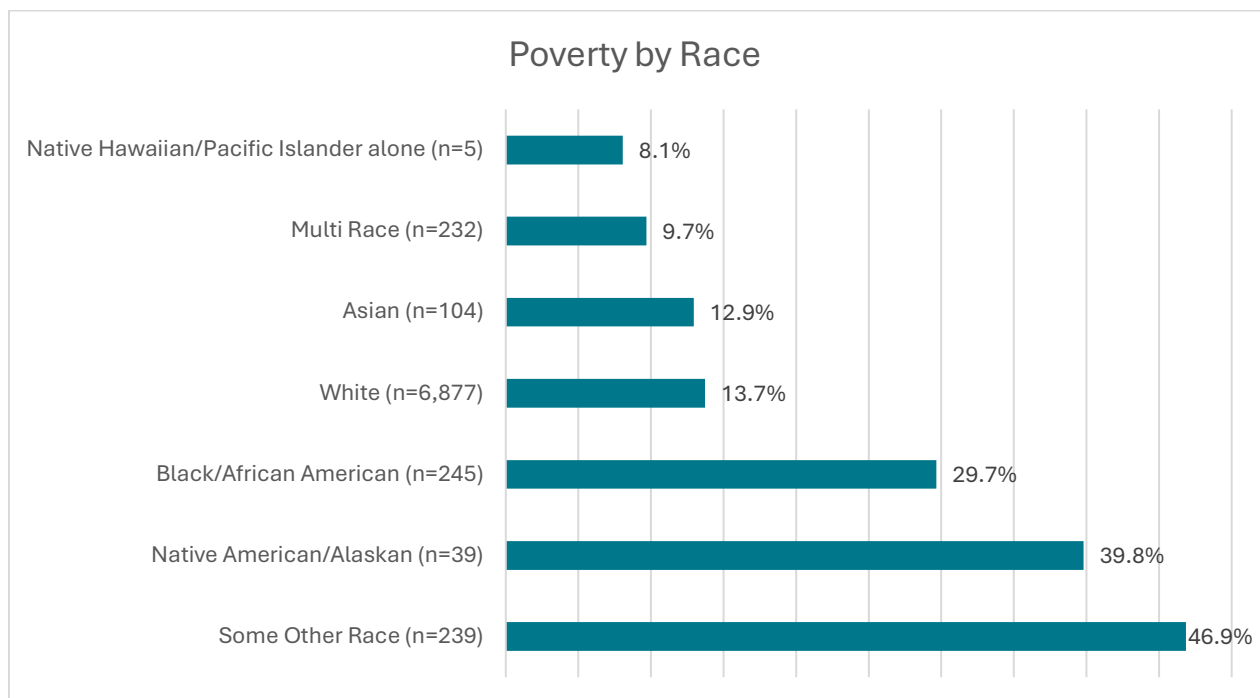
**There are an estimated 1,173 people over the age of 65 living in poverty across Otsego County.** The highest concentrations reside in the City of Oneonta, Census Tract 5917 (28.8%), Unadilla (25%), and Edmeston (20.6%). In total, these communities are home to 128 elderly people living in poverty: nearly 11% of the total population of elderly people living in poverty.



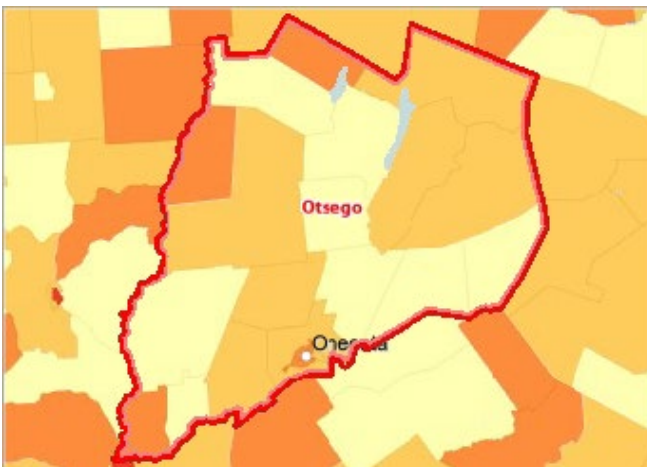
**Population Below the Poverty Level,  
Senior (Age 65+), Percent by Tract, ACS  
2019-23**



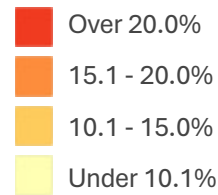
The chart below summarizes the rate of poverty by race of people living in Otsego County. **The largest percentage of people living in poverty identify as Some Other Race (46.9%), followed by Native American/Alaskan (39.8%), Black/African American (29.7%), White (13.7%), Asian (12.9%), and Multi-Race and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander both under 10%.** The greatest number of people living in poverty by race are White (n=6,799), followed by Black/ African American (n=245) and Some Other Race (n=239). Among the overall population, Hispanic/Latino persons comprise 18.2% of persons living in poverty in Otsego County.



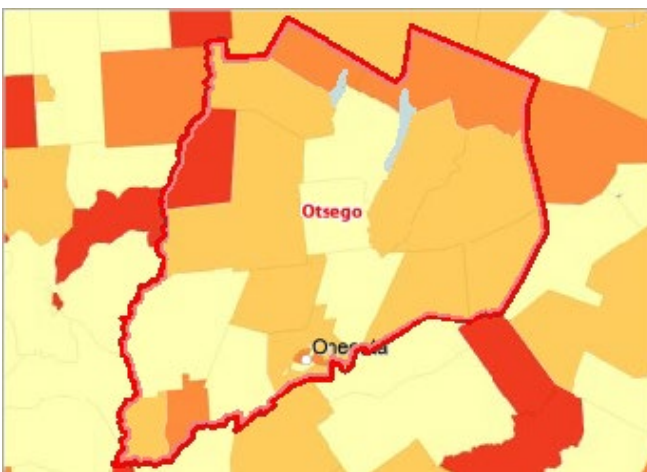
**There are an estimated 2,767 households living in poverty in Otsego County, comprising 12.2% of all household types.** Communities with over 15% of households living in poverty include Edmeston (19.1%), Richfield Springs (16.2%), and Unadilla (15.7%). Census Tracts within the City of Oneonta with the highest rate of households living in poverty are 5911 (20.0%), 5910 (17.9%), and 5917 (16.1%).



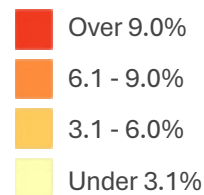
**Households Living Below the Poverty Level, Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



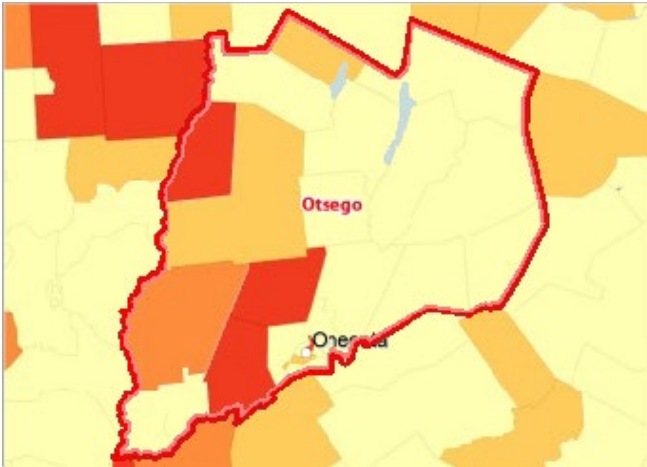
Among households living in poverty, approximately 41% are families, of which 37.1% are married couples and 62.9% are single parent head of households. **The highest rate of married households living in poverty reside in Edmeston (13.6%).** Communities with the greatest number of married families living in poverty are the Town of Oneonta (n=42), Cherry Valley (n=33), and Burlington/Garrettsville (n=28).



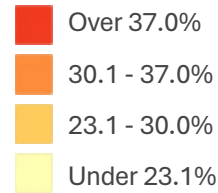
**Married Family Households Living Below the Poverty Level, Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



Of all household types living in poverty, female single parent households comprise 49.3% and male single parent households 13.6%. **The highest rate of single parent households living in poverty reside within Census Tract 5910 in the City of Oneonta at a rate of 77.1%.** Less, but still significantly high rates are in Edmeston (44.2%), Otsego (39.8%), and Laurens (38%). Communities with over 100 single parent households are both with the City of Oneonta: Census Tracts 5910 (n=131) and 5911 (n=108).

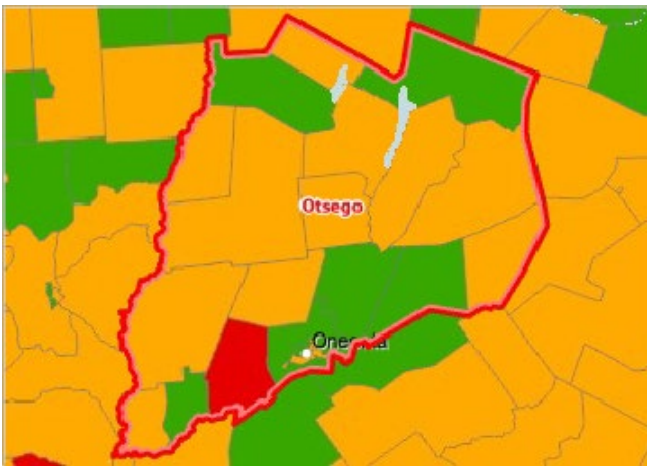


**Single Parent Family Households Living Below the Poverty Level, Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**

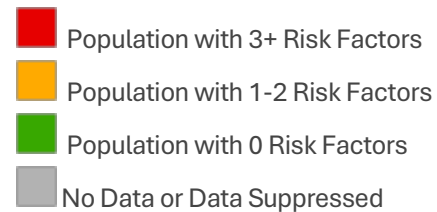


**Vulnerable Communities:** The Census Bureau Community Resilience Estimates (CRE) assess the risk and impact of disasters on communities based on several factors: poverty; single head of household; overcrowded housing; communication barriers; unemployment; presence of a disability; lack of health insurance; persons age 65+; households without a vehicle; and households without broadband internet.

**Within Otsego County, 21.7% of residents are “socially vulnerable”, possessing three or more vulnerability risk factors (n=11,604).** The Otsego County township with the greatest risk is Otego (Census Tract 5914.01) with 36.6% of its residents with three or more risk factors (n=2,733).



**Resilience Estimates - Predominant Risk Factor by Tract, CENSUS\_CRE 2022**



SOURCE: US Census Community Resilience Estimates: 2022

Key facts of the 2022 Community Resilience Estimates for all people in Otsego County, based on ACS population estimates, are noted below.

Community Resilience for Equity Key Factors (Otsego County)						
Poverty	Age 65+	Disability	No Vehicle	Female HOH	Male HOH	No Broadband
14.2%	21.2%	14.1%	7.0%	3.0%	1.3%	15.1%





# EMPLOYMENT

## EMPLOYMENT

- The median household income in Otsego County has trended upward since 2019; however, has remained below median incomes of adjacent counties.
- At the current minimum wage, no household type in Otsego County could sustain themselves without assistance from public benefit programs (e.g. SNAP, Day Care Subsidy, PHIP)
- The 2024 civilian labor force in Otsego County is at a historic low, with an estimated 25,700 people age 16+ who are either employed or unemployed and actively seeking work. Of this cohort, 23% work outside Otsego County.
- Current inventory of childcare providers does not meet the needs of working parents, with 70% of Otsego County Census Tracts deemed “childcare desert”.

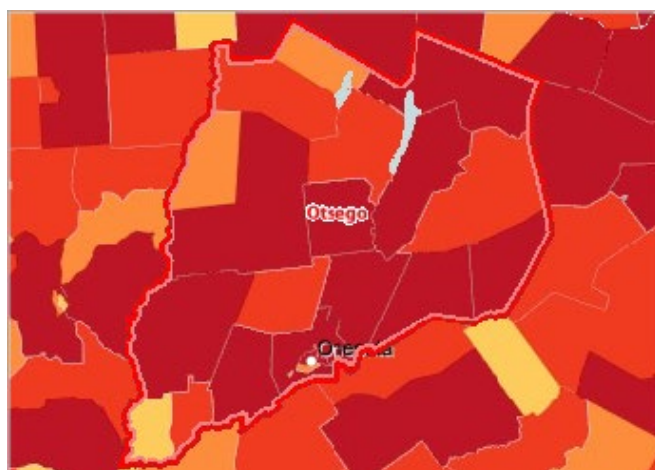
**Income Levels:** Three common measures of income are median household income, per capita income, and average income per earner. In comparison to New York State and the nation, the average income in Otsego County is below average in all categories.

Household Income (2023)			
	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Average Income Per Earner
Otsego County	\$67,086	\$36,505.87	\$47,408.42
New York	\$84,578	\$49,520.21	\$68,861.02
United States	\$78,538	\$43,288.98	\$60,662.81

The Census Bureau defines an earner as someone aged 15 and older that receives any form of income, whether it be wages, salaries, benefits, or other type of income.

Source: 2019 - 2023 ACS

Disparities of income distribution within Otsego County are visualized in the map below. **Townships whose median household income fall below the countywide average include Unadilla Census Tracts 5916.02 and 5916.01 at \$44,794 and \$61,464 respectively; Edmeston (\$56,406); City of Oneonta Census Tracts 5911 and 5910 at \$56,450 and \$65,503 respectively; Westford (\$61,172); and Laurens (\$62,083).**

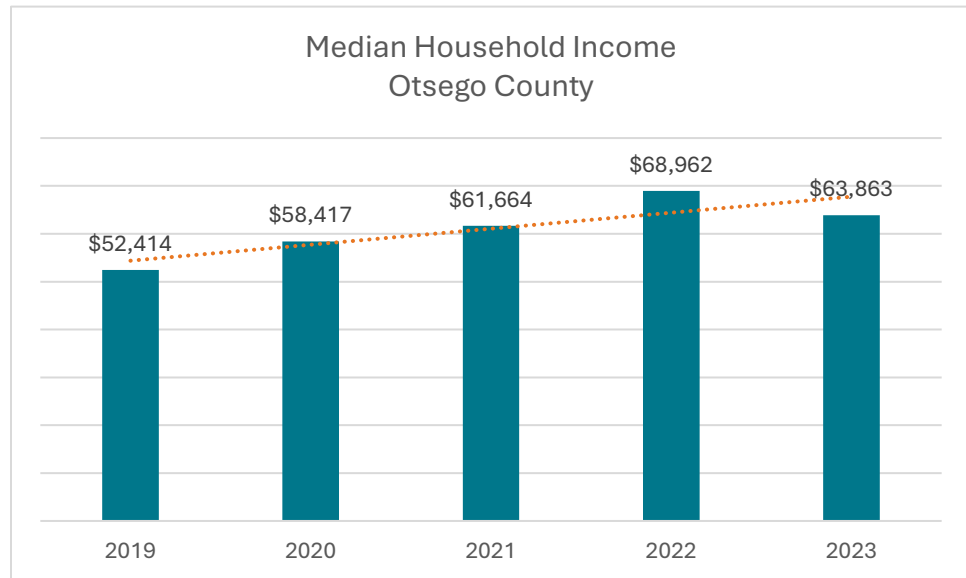


**Median Household Income by Tract, ACS 2019-23**

- Over \$70,000
- \$60,000 - \$70,000
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- Under \$50,000



**Median Household Income:** The median household income in Otsego County increased by \$11,449 from 2019 to 2023. This rate of change kept up with inflation over this period. Per the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the buying power of \$52,414 in 2019 is equivalent to the purchasing power of \$62,469 in 2023.



In comparison, the buying power of the 2023 median household income of \$63,863 has the same buying power of \$67,027 in 2025. “This means that today’s prices are 1.25 times as high as average prices since 2019, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index. A dollar today only buys 79.943% of what it could buy back then<sup>26</sup>.” **High inflation tends to “worsen inequality or poverty because it hits income and savings harder for poorer or middle-income households than for wealthy households. Households that have recently escaped poverty could be pushed back into it by rising inflation”<sup>27</sup>.**

On average, the median income for all households in Otsego County from 2019 to 2023 was \$60,717. Comparing median household income with surrounding counties, Otsego has consistently ranked 5<sup>th</sup> over the five-year period, falling short of Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, and Schoharie counties. Beginning in 2019, the household income in Herkimer County began rising above Otsego County levels<sup>28</sup>.

Median Household Income (2019-2023)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Otsego	\$54,028	\$56,171	\$60,523	\$65,778	\$67,086
Chenango	\$52,002	\$51,756	\$55,690	\$61,741	\$62,093
Delaware	\$49,544	\$49,945	\$52,757	\$58,338	\$60,226
Herkimer	<b>\$54,646</b>	<b>\$58,438</b>	<b>\$60,561</b>	<b>\$68,104</b>	<b>\$68,858</b>
Madison	<b>\$61,633</b>	<b>\$61,176</b>	<b>\$63,312</b>	<b>\$68,869</b>	<b>\$73,141</b>
Montgomery	\$49,462	\$50,146	\$53,533	\$58,033	\$62,923
Oneida	<b>\$56,027</b>	<b>\$59,113</b>	<b>\$61,733</b>	<b>\$66,402</b>	<b>\$68,819</b>
Schoharie	<b>\$57,714</b>	<b>\$58,926</b>	<b>\$64,220</b>	<b>\$71,479</b>	<b>\$71,188</b>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.in2013dollars.com/>

<sup>27</sup> “Inflation could wreak vengeance on the world’s poor”, Brookings Institute, 03.18.2022

<sup>28</sup> US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5 Year Estimates, Table S1901

**Wages:** Average weekly wages for private industry workers and local government employees in Otsego County and those in surrounding counties are provided in the table below. During the fourth quarter of 2023, **private industry workers in Otsego County earned more on average than workers in all surrounding counties except Chenango and Delaware. In comparison, wages of local government employees in Otsego County only surpassed those in Herkimer and Schoharie counties.** In addition, an estimated 1,777 Otsego County residents are employed by the state and federal government. These workers had higher weekly average wages than workers in local government and the private sector. Weekly salaries for these sectors are \$1,7772 (State) and \$1,237 (Federal)<sup>29</sup>.

Average Weekly Wage: 2024 Fourth Quarter				
	Private Industry		Local Government	
	Total Employed	Average Week Wage	Total Employed	Average Week Wage
Otsego	17,468	\$1,136	2,958	\$938
Chenango	13,477	\$1,281	3,173	\$983
Delaware	10,212	\$1,263	2,976	\$989
Herkimer	11,153	\$978	3,635	\$908
Madison	16,488	\$1,029	3,407	\$1,047
Montgomery	16,660	\$1,063	2,616	\$1,022
Oneida	76,992	\$1,109	17,125	\$1,086
Schoharie	5,305	\$999	1,907	\$908
New York	8,333,273	\$1,906	1,102,207	\$1,546

**Benefit Cliff:** To improve worker wages, legislation was enacted in December 2016 to gradually increase the New York State minimum wage. As of January 2025, the minimum wage was set at \$15.50, with tipped workers ranging from \$12.90 - \$10.35 cash wage plus tip credits. Starting in 2027, annually increases will be tied to inflation through the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).

These mandated yearly bump in wages help to address the rising cost-of-living; however, has unintended consequences for workers receiving publicly-funded benefits such as food, childcare, housing assistance, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Eligibility for public benefits is often means-tested, therefore **small increases in earned income could cause low-income families to lose some or all of their essential public benefits, leaving them worse off despite earning more. This phenomenon, coined the “Benefit Cliff”, disproportionately impacts Black and Hispanic families and often traps families in poverty instead of lifting them out of it**<sup>30</sup>.

#### Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

*“Make too much for assistance and not enough to survive.”*

<sup>29</sup> <https://data.bls.gov/> Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Employment and Wages Data Viewer

<sup>30</sup> Koball, H., Growing Pains: How Benefit Cliffs Can Derail Government Support, 05.12.2021 (<https://spotlightonpoverty.org/spotlight-exclusives/growing-pains-how-benefit-cliffs-can-derail-government-support>)

**Living Wage:** A living wage is the hourly rate that an adult must earn to support their family if they are the sole provider and are working full-time. At the time of this report, the minimum wage for all workers in Upstate New York was \$15.50/hour. “In...2026 the minimum wage will increase by an additional \$0.50 in each year, after which the State's minimum wage would increase at a rate determined by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the Northeast Region<sup>31</sup>”. Despite these increases, minimum-wage workers in Otsego County cannot afford basic household expenses (e.g. food, childcare, healthcare, housing, transportation, broadband) plus all relevant taxes. According to the 2025 Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator, **no household types in Otsego County could sustain themselves on the current minimum wage.**

Household Composition	1 Adult, 0 Children	1 Adult, 1 Child	1 Adult, 2 Children	1 Adult, 3 Children	2 Adults (1 Working), 0 Children	2 Adults (1 Working), 1 Child	2 Adults (1 Working), 2 Children	2 Adults (1 Working), 3 Children	2 Working Adults, 0 Children	2 Working Adults, 1 Child	2 Working Adults, 2 Children	2 Working Adults, 3 Children
Living Wage	\$21.64	\$39.91	\$50.53	\$63.22	\$31.26	\$37.67	\$41.74	\$46.70	\$15.63	\$22.64	\$27.96	\$33.30
Poverty Wage*	\$7.52	\$10.17	\$12.81	\$15.46	\$10.17	\$12.81	\$15.46	\$18.10	\$5.08	\$6.41	\$7.73	\$9.05
* The poverty rate is typically quoted as gross annual income, but has been converted it to an hourly wage for the sake of comparison.												
Minimum Wage General Worker	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50	\$15.50

**Fourteen percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted area wages as low and not enough to maintain a normal standard of living.**

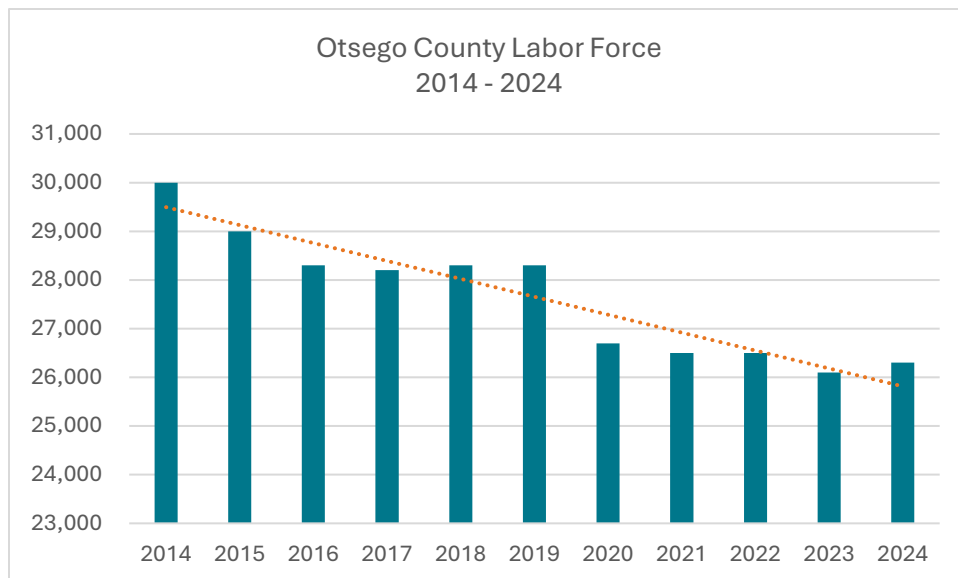
*“Working two or three jobs and still not making ends meet.”*

**Labor Force:** The civilian labor force (age 16 years or older) in Otsego County as of April 2025 was 25,700 people; a decrease of 600 persons from the same period just 5 years ago and 7% less than the average annual number of people in the labor force over the period 2014-2024. **The labor force in Otsego has been on a continual decline since 2006, with 5,700 people leaving the labor force.** Based on Census Bureau age estimates from 2010 to 2020, one would expect this trend to continue. The following table provides a comparison of the average number of persons in the labor force in Otsego County for the 10-year period 2014-2024<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-historic-agreement-increase-new-yorks-minimum-wage-and-index>

<sup>32</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/local-area-unemployment-statistics>

Of the estimated 5,886 Otsego County residents who work outside of Otsego County, 27.9% (n=1,648) work in another county in the Mohawk Valley Region (Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery, Oneida, and Schoharie) and 53% (n=3,118) are employed in the Southern Tier

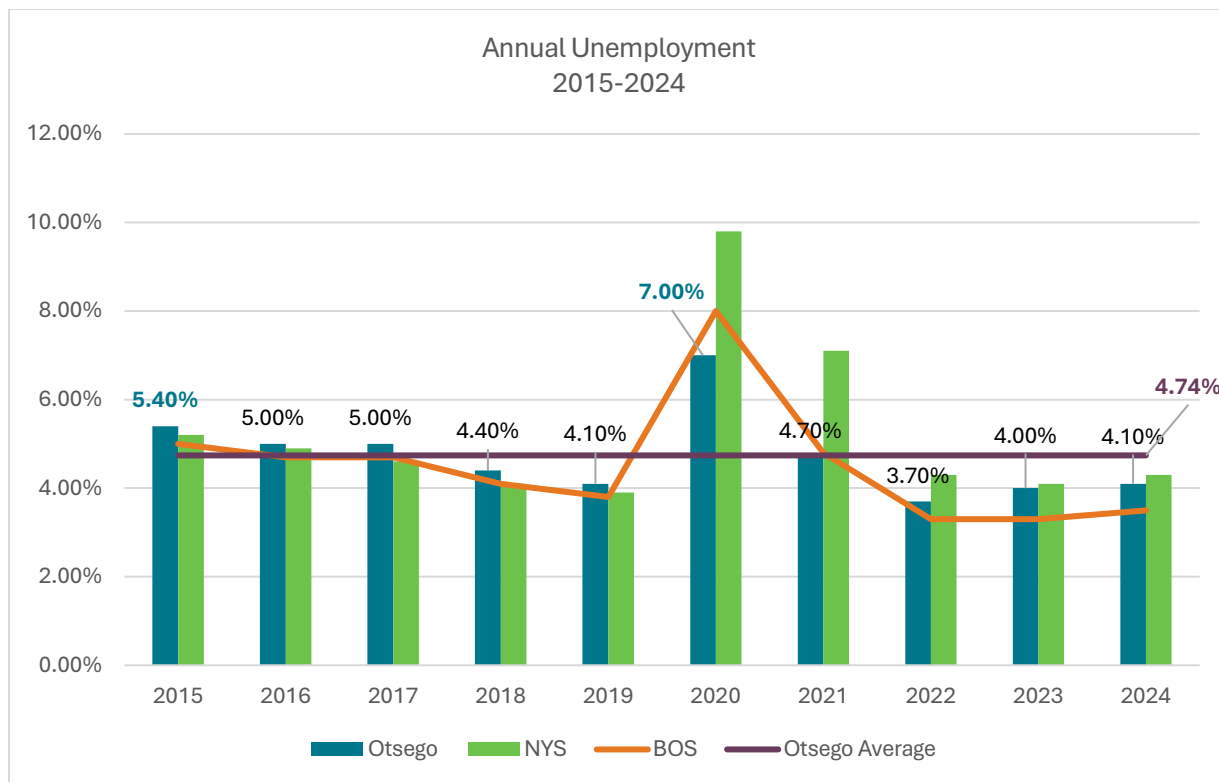


Economic Region, which encompasses Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, and Tioga Counties.

For residents commuting out of Otsego County for employment, 49.3% travel to Delaware County (n=1,753) and Chenango County (n=1,146). Other areas of high commuter outflow are Schoharie (n=717); Oneida (n=466); Herkimer (n=316); and Broome (n=157)<sup>33</sup>.

**Unemployment:** The April 2025 unemployment rate in Otsego County was 3.5%, equating to 900 people who are not working but are able, available, and actively looking for work or individuals waiting to be recalled from a layoff. The New York State unemployment rate during the same month was 3.6% and 3.9% nationally. **The 10-year average annual unemployment rate in Otsego County from the years 2015-2024 is 4.74%.** Disregarding the unemployment rate during the COVID-19 pandemic, the year with the greatest unemployment was 2015, with a rate of 5.4%. The lowest unemployment rate was in 2022 at 3.7%; the lowest annual rate since 1990. Until the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate in Otsego County was on a consistent downward trend since 2013.

<sup>33</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/commuting-flows>, <https://dol.ny.gov/jobs-demand-today>, [https://nysedc.org/southern\\_tier.php](https://nysedc.org/southern_tier.php), <https://dol.ny.gov/self-sufficiency-earnings-estimator>



**Business Closures/Layoffs:** The New York State Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act requires private businesses with more than 50 full-time employees to provide early warnings of closures and layoffs to all affected employees, their representatives, the Department of Labor and others. Per the NYS WARN Dashboard, **1,260 employees in the immediate Mohawk Valley-Southern Tier Economic Region were impacted by business closures and layoffs from January 2023 through May 2025. Additionally, Bassett Healthcare Network eliminated 101 administrative positions across its 8-county region in October 2024**<sup>34</sup>. These layoffs were not reported though WARN.



Industries of the workers affected as reported by WARN: Manufacturing (58.7%); Arts, Entertainment, Recreation (23.1%); Accommodation and Food Service (8.4%); Health Care and Social Assistance (3.4%); Transportation and Warehousing (3.3%); Finance and Insurance (2.8%); Other (<1%)<sup>35</sup>.

County	Business	Location	Layoff/Closure	Effective Date	Workers Affected
Otsego*	Durham School Services, LP	Oneonta	Closure	10/22/2024	35
Otsego*	Cygnus Home Service, LLC, d/b/a Yelloh	Oneonta	Layoff	5/28/2024	6
Delaware*	ACCO Brands USA, LLC.	Sidney	Closure	4/23/2024	206
Herkimer	RemArms LLC	Ilion	Closure	3/4/2024	309

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.allotsego.com/bassett-lays-off-101-employees-as-it-addresses-80m-shortfall/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/warn-dashboard> (05.2025)

Montgomery	Gem Rehab PT, OT, SLP, PLLC	Amsterdam	Closure	3/1/2024	10
Montgomery	Roses Confections, LP	Canajoharie	Layoff	4/17/2023	34
Oneida	Mid-State Raceway, Inc.	Vernon	Closure	8/7/2023	249
Oneida	CVS Health	New Hartford	Closure	8/17/2024	27
Oneida	Centerra Group, LLC (USMS 2nd Circuit Courts)	Utica	Closure	9/30/2023	3
Oneida	Bon Appetit	Clinton	Layoff	6/30/2023	76
Oneida	ECR International, Inc	Utica	Layoff	3/31/2024	40
Oneida	The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation	Oriskany	Layoff	3/25/2024	30
Oneida	Cygnus Home Service, LLC, d/b/a Yelloh	Westmoreland	Layoff	5/28/2024	8
Oneida	Semikron Danfoss, LLC.	Marcy	Layoff	2/13/2025	43
Oneida	Cayuga Home for Children	Utica	Layoff	5/14/2025	33
Oneida	Startek USA, Inc.	Utica	Layoff	5/19/2025	151

\*CDO Workforce Investment Board Region

**Industries:** Per New York State 2024 Annual Industry Employment data, the top industries with the greatest employment in 2024 in Otsego County are Health Care and Social Assistance; Retail Trade; Accommodation and Food Services; Public Administration; and Manufacturing. Combined, these industries represent 69.2% of all employment in Otsego County. Per the New York State Council on Nonprofits (NYCON) 2025 *State of the Sector Report*, **36.8% of workers in Otsego County (n=6,422) are employed by a 501(c)(3) organization.** The following table provides a list of industries in descending order by the percentage of residents employed and their average annual wage.

Industry Title	Average Employment	Percent of all Industries	Average Wage
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,435	28.3%	\$85,269
Retail Trade	2,788	14.5%	\$38,906
Accommodation and Food Services	2,363	12.3%	\$28,662
Public Administration	1,508	7.8%	\$57,756
Manufacturing	1,199	6.2%	\$59,743

**Jobs in Demand:** Otsego County is part of the NYS Mohawk Valley Economic Region, along with Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery, Oneida, and Schoharie Counties. The Economic Development Organizations representing this area are Empire State Development Regional Office - Mohawk Valley and locally, OtsegoNow. Per NYS Department of Labor, jobs in demand in the Mohawk Valley are noted below:

Jobs in Demand: Mohawk Valley Region	Median Wage
Accountants and Auditors	\$78,113
Cashiers	\$29,239
Construction Laborers	\$40,982
Cooks, Restaurant	\$32,525
Customer Service Representatives	\$38,570
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$67,342
Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$30,711
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$39,593
General and Operations Managers	\$86,574
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	\$66,856
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	\$30,995
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$31,562
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$38,607
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	\$46,412
Office Clerks, General	\$37,456
Retail Salespersons	\$30,218
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	\$39,816
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$32,371
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	\$29,876
Waiters and Waitresses	\$32,384



Of the estimated 5,886 Otsego County residents who work outside of Otsego County, 27.9% (n=1,648) work in another county in the Mohawk Valley Region and 53% (n=3,118) are employed in the Southern Tier Economic Region, which encompasses Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, and Tioga Counties.

**For residents commuting out of Otsego County for employment, 49.3% travel to Delaware County (n=1,753) and Chenango County (n=1,146).**



Other areas of high commuter outflow are Schoharie (n=717); Oneida (n=466); Herkimer (n=316); and Broome (n=157)<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/commuting-flows>, <https://dol.ny.gov/jobs-demand-today>, [https://nysedc.org/southern\\_tier.php](https://nysedc.org/southern_tier.php), <https://dol.ny.gov/self-employment>

**Thirteen percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted a lack of skills and/or education as a barrier to filling available job opportunities.**

*“From a small business perspective: another barrier [to employment] is the limited number of diversified employment opportunities in the Oneonta region to offer both skilled and professional employees opportunities to stay in the area and not go to more attractive employment centers.”*

Jobs in Demand: Southern Tier	Median Wages
Cashiers	\$29,563
Customer Service Representatives	\$39,427
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	\$31,926
Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$30,568
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$39,207
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	\$39,574
Food Service Managers	\$61,061
Glaziers	\$49,496
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$49,674
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	\$31,584
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$32,458
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$48,636
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	\$38,283
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	\$46,944
Medical Assistants	\$38,657
Nursing Assistants	\$31,885
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	\$49,526
Pharmacists	\$132,294
Radiologic Technologists	\$62,289
Registered Nurses	\$77,860
Retail Salespersons	\$30,335
Social and Human Service Assistants	\$39,445
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$31,646
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	\$29,595

Long-Term Industry Projections: Mohawk Valley (2020-2030) <sup>37</sup>				
Industry Title	Net Change	% Change	Annual Rate	Average Wage Otsego County
Accommodation and Food Services	10,880	94.4%	6.9%	\$28,662
Health Care and Social Assistance	9,920	24.2%	2.2%	\$85,269
Other Services (except Government)	5,480	77.8%	5.9%	\$39,731
Retail Trade	3,980	18.5%	1.7%	\$38,906

sufficiency-earnings-estimator

<sup>37</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/long-term-industry-projections>



Educational Services	3,390	12.8%	1.2%	\$51,407
Transportation and Warehousing	2,980	37.6%	3.2%	\$49,916
Manufacturing	2,700	17.1%	1.6%	\$59,743
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,100	124.3%	8.4%	\$31,292
Government	2,070	9.1%	0.9%	\$57,756
Professional and Business Services	2,040	20.0%	1.8%	\$59,510
Construction	1,090	21.7%	2.0%	\$62,489
Wholesale Trade	620	15.3%	1.4%	\$54,075
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	110	8.6%	0.8%	\$36,513
Mining	50	15.2%	1.4%	N/A
Utilities	-10	-1.9%	-0.2%	N/A
Information	-40	-2.8%	-0.3%	\$64,712

Long-Term Industry Projections: Southern Tier (2020-2030) <sup>38</sup>				
Industry Title	Net Change	% Change	Annual Rate	Average Wage Otsego County
Accommodation and Food Services	15,110	94.6%	6.9%	\$28,662
Health Care and Social Assistance	9,370	23.2%	2.1%	\$85,269
Other Services (except Government)	8,580	75.4%	5.8%	\$39,731
Educational Services	7,860	12.8%	1.2%	\$51,407
Manufacturing	5,300	17.1%	1.6%	\$59,743
Retail Trade	4,980	18.3%	1.7%	\$38,906
Professional and Business Services	3,660	18.0%	1.7%	\$59,510
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,400	126.3%	8.5%	\$31,292
Government	1,980	8.9%	0.9%	\$57,756
Transportation and Warehousing	1,940	34.3%	3.0%	\$49,916
Construction	1,370	17.8%	1.7%	\$62,489
Wholesale Trade	870	14.1%	1.3%	\$54,075
Financial Activities	220	2.5%	0.2%	\$82,307
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	210	9.1%	0.9%	\$36,513
Mining	130	18.3%	1.7%	N/A
Information	120	3.7%	0.4%	\$64,712
Utilities	-30	-2.4%	-0.2%	N/A

<sup>38</sup> <https://dol.ny.gov/long-term-industry-projections>

### Narrative Responses on Employment from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

*“We...have difficulty finding active, engaged, knowledgeable staff!”*

*“The area needs new opportunities that provide better jobs and security.”*

*“Currently Otsego County economic development is focused on tourism as the main driver which produces low wage, seasonal jobs rather than industrial development or trying to incubate early-stage R&D/technical new business formation.”*

*“The extremely high tax burden placed on small business owners to operate and hire employees makes it challenging to be successful.”*

**Child Care Costs:** The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) sets the fair market rate for childcare in each county. Like fair market rates for rent, childcare providers may choose to deviate from established rates and charge rates above or below NYS standard rates. **Per data collected via the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey, the primary issue in Otsego County as it pertains to childcare is “cost/affordability”, with 14% of respondents noting it as an issue.** Per the October 2024 Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) from OCFS, childcare costs for registered and licensed providers in Otsego County range from \$193-\$320 per week, up from \$184-\$295 per week only two years ago. Rates for non-regulated, informal childcare in Otsego County range from \$153-\$195 per week, up from \$158-\$186 per week in 2022. Childcare rates are established by surveying a random sampling of licensed and registered childcare providers across the state<sup>39</sup>.

Day Care Center	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	\$320	\$300	\$277	\$257
Daily	\$67	\$63	\$58	\$58
Part Day	\$45	\$42	\$39	\$39
School-Age Child Care	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	-	-	\$277	\$257
Daily	-	-	\$58	\$58
Part Day	-	-	\$39	\$39
Legally Exempt Group Child Care	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	-	-	\$208	\$193
Daily	-	-	\$44	\$44
Part Day	-	-	\$29	\$29
Family//Group Family Day Care Home	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	\$279	\$265	\$263	\$236
Daily	\$58	\$56	\$53	\$53
Part Day	\$39	\$37	\$35	\$35

<sup>39</sup> <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/2024/lcm/24-OCFS-LCM-22-Att-A-CCA-Market-Rates-2024.pdf>

Informal Child Care – Standard Rate	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	\$181	\$172	\$171	\$153
Daily	\$38	\$36	\$34	\$34
Part Day	\$25	\$24	\$23	\$23
Informal Child Care – Enhanced Rate	Under 1 ½	1 ½ - 2 yrs	3 – 5 yrs	6 – 12 yrs
Weekly	\$195	\$186	\$184	\$165
Daily	\$41	\$39	\$37	\$37
Part Day	\$27	\$26	\$25	\$25

Child Care: Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), New York State Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) collaborated with their respective Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) to analyze childcare availability. This study found, “the Mohawk Valley does not have enough childcare to meet the need of the region and desperately needs more childcare. There is not enough childcare to cover even a quarter of the child population within the region. In both rural and urban areas of the Mohawk Valley there are pockets where there is no childcare at all. There is a particular need for childcare for infants and school age children”. Needs specifically noted in Otsego County, *“parents often have to travel across county lines to access work and childcare, and infant care is particularly scarce. The recent closure of multiple Family Child Care sites has dwindled the childcare supply down even further.”*

**Fourteen percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted a lack of childcare providers and/or slots as a barrier across Otsego County.**

*“We are a young family and would really like to see more support in place. Programming outside of workday for young toddlers under 5. Summer camp options for school aged children that fit with work schedules.”*

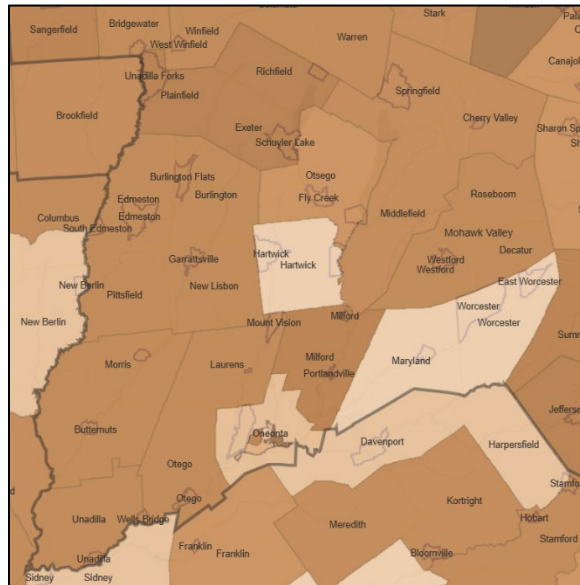
Child Care Deserts: Areas that do not have enough licensed/registered child day care slots to adequately serve the number of children in a specific geographic area are referred to as “Child Care Deserts”. According to the REDC Child Care Deserts mapping tool, **70% of census tracts in Otsego County are childcare deserts**<sup>40</sup>. As noted in the accompanying map, Census Tracts 5902.01 (Hartwick); 5907 (Maryland/Worcester); 5908 (Town of Oneonta); and 5913 and 5910 in the City of Oneonta are areas in which childcare is most accessible.

<sup>40</sup> [https://bit.ly/cc\\_deserts](https://bit.ly/cc_deserts)

**Child Care Providers:** Per the 2024 Otsego County Child Care Report published by Catholic Charities of Otsego and Schoharie Counties, there are 20 registered and licensed day care programs in Otsego County, with the capacity to serve 739 children. Of these facilities, 14 are Family/Group Family Day Care and 6 Day Care Centers. Additionally, there are seven (7) Head Start facilities which require families to meet income-eligibility requirements to enroll.

Capacity among these providers:

- Non-Head Start Day Care Centers: 63 Infant; 88 Toddler; 364 Preschool; 82 School Age children
- Head Start Day Care Centers: 16 Toddler; 176 Preschool
- Group/Family Day Care Homes: 132 Children (6 weeks-12 years); 44 School Age children



Comparatively, there are 2,401 children age birth-5 and 3,265 children in grades K-6<sup>41</sup> in Otsego County.

**Current licensed childcare providers only have the capacity to accommodate 17% of children across Otsego County.**

Of note, among Day Center Care capacity for toddlers and preschoolers, 29.8% of slots are operated by Head Start program. Per federal program standards, at least 90% of children enrolled in Head Start must be from families whose income is at or below 130% FPL or categorically eligible based on a status of homelessness, in foster care, or a recipient of public assistance (TANF, SSI, or SNAP). While facilities are licensed for 176 preschoolers and 16 toddlers, Head Start is only funded to serve 139 preschoolers and 16 toddlers.

### Day Care Centers

- Oneonta-Based: 353 Slots (39 Infant; 58 Toddler; 234 Preschool; 22 School Age)
- Northern Otsego: 244 Slots (24 Infant; 30 Toddler; 130 Preschool; 60 School Age)

### Group/Family Day Care Home

- Oneonta-Based: 40 Slots (30 6 Weeks-12 Years; 10 School Age)
- Worcester-Based: 40 Slots (30 6 Weeks-12 Years; 10 School Age)
- Other Locations: 96 Slots (72 6 Weeks-12 Years; 24 School Age)

Among all licensed providers in Otsego County, only three offer non-traditional hours: two Day Care Centers (Cooperstown and Oneonta) and a Group Family Day Care provider in Unadilla. Non-traditional hours are defined as any time outside Monday through Friday from 6:00AM to 7:00PM for Day Care

<sup>41</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/> (2023-2024)

## Centers and Family and Group Family Day Care.


Per NYS OTDA reports, there were an average of 116 children receiving subsidized childcare benefits under the New York State Child Care Block grant over the period July 2023 – June 2024. Of these children, 114 were considered “low income” and the households of 2 children were recipient of public assistance. Comparatively, from the period July 2022-June 2023, an average of 72 children benefitted from subsidized childcare, of which 68 were deemed “low income” and 4 in a household receiving public assistance<sup>42</sup>. This was a 61% increase in children receiving subsidized care over a one-year period.

School-Age Care: Through funding under the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, Otsego Northern Catskills BOCES operates the Creating Rural Opportunities Partnership (CROP) program in partnership with Otsego County school districts in Edmeston, Laurens, Milford, and Morris. CROP offers after-school and summer programs to students in grades K-8 focused on academics, youth development, and family engagement. CROP operates under a 5-year funding contract award with capacity based on individual districts. Program eligibility is based on need, including children whose families qualify for free and reduced lunch, children who may be academically at risk, children with disabilities, and children who may go home to an empty house after school. *At the time of this report, the operational status of summer CROP at area districts was in flux due to a federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-directed freeze on educational grants.*

Summer Childcare: Both anecdotal reports and data collected via the community needs assessments process report indicate a great need for full-day, affordable summer programming. **Per data collected via the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey, “lack of summer program/care options” was the third highest concern as it pertains to childcare in Otsego, with 9% of respondents noting it as an issue.**

Below is the list of available youth summer programs within Otsego County as of April 30, 2025. This list was compiled by a community member and posted on the “Oneonta For Kids” Facebook page as a resource to parents. This list is not inclusive. Local colleges and the Oneonta Boys and Girls Club often offer summer programs that differ from year to year. Sites include SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Delhi Continuing Education, and Hartwick College.

 Registration Open

 Dates Announced, Registration not Open

Camp Name	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17+
<b>Oneonta Area</b>														
Noah's World, Oneonta														
Otsego Christian Academy Day Camp														
Healthy Kids @ GMU														

<sup>42</sup> NYS OTDA, 2024 and 2023 Statistical Report on Public Assistance Programs, Table 17

CANO Summer Art Program for Kids															
Evan Sitts Junior Golf Camp			Anticipated – No 2025 Dates Announced												
Nike/Beestera Soccer Camp															
Mike Iannelli Soccer Camp															
O-State Hoops Basketball Camp															
Orpheus Summer Theatre Workshop															
Boys Volleyball Camp															
Girls Volleyball Camp															
Adidas Tennis Camp															
Avery-Burdick Stable Day Camp, Otego															
College United Field Hockey Camp															
SUNY Oneonta Women's Basketball Camp															
OSC Player Development Academy									Anticipated – No 2025 Dates Announced						
CANO Summer Arts Program for Teens															
OCA Science Camp (Otego)									Anticipated – No 2025 Dates Announced						
OCA Art Camp (Otego)									Anticipated – No 2025 Dates Announced						
Tri-Town Theatre Summer Workshop															
Oneonta All Skills Volleyball Camp															
<b>Cooperstown Area</b>															
Fenimore Farm Jr. STEAM Camps															
Oak Hill Summer Camp, Cooperstown															
Little Adventure (Clark)															
Fun with Dance (Clark)															
Gymnastics (Clark)															
Otsego Sailing School, Cooperstown															
Little Athletes (Clark)															
Fiction Fun & Reading (Clark)															
Kids Fun Fitness Sampler (Clark)															
Music & Movement (Clark)															
Pathfinder Lodge Day Camp															
Developmental Competitive Swim (Clark)															
Tennis (Clark)															
Science Camp (Clark)															
Themed Yoga Fun & More (Clark)															

Boys Basketball (Clark)														
Girls Basketball (Clark)														
Baseball (Clark)														
Soccer (Clark)														
Preseason Football Training (Clark)														
Science and Adventure (Clark)														
Volleyball (Clark)														
ADK Climbing Camp (Clark)														
Extreme Adventure (Clark)														
Golf Travel (Clark)														
Jr. Lifeguard (Clark)														
Fishing (Clark)														
Middle/High School Bowling (Clark)														
Elementary Bowling (Clark)														
Fenimore Farm STEAM Camps														
Advanced Competitive Swim (Clark)														

### Narrative Responses on Child Care from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

*“Things for young families to do during cold months that aren’t too expensive.”*

*“Lack of 3rd public spaces for families, teens, and entertainment that isn’t a bar.”*

*“More winter recreation that is fun and affordable. Tubing and beginning skiing.”*

*“We need more activities for teens. These kids have nothing to do unless they play sports.”*



# EDUCATION



## EDUCATION

- Nearly 8% of adults in Otsego County did not earn their High School Diploma/HSED, of which 37.5% live in poverty.
- High school graduation rates rose to 88% countywide since dropping during the 2020-21 school year.
- On average, 72 preschool-age children receive disability/special education services annually. Public school districts with the highest rate of children with disabilities include Richfield Springs (34%), Cherry Valley-Springfield (30%), and Morris (28%).
- In addition to career and technical training programs for young adults, there are 17 higher education institutions, offering professional certification and varying degrees, within 50-miles of Otsego County.

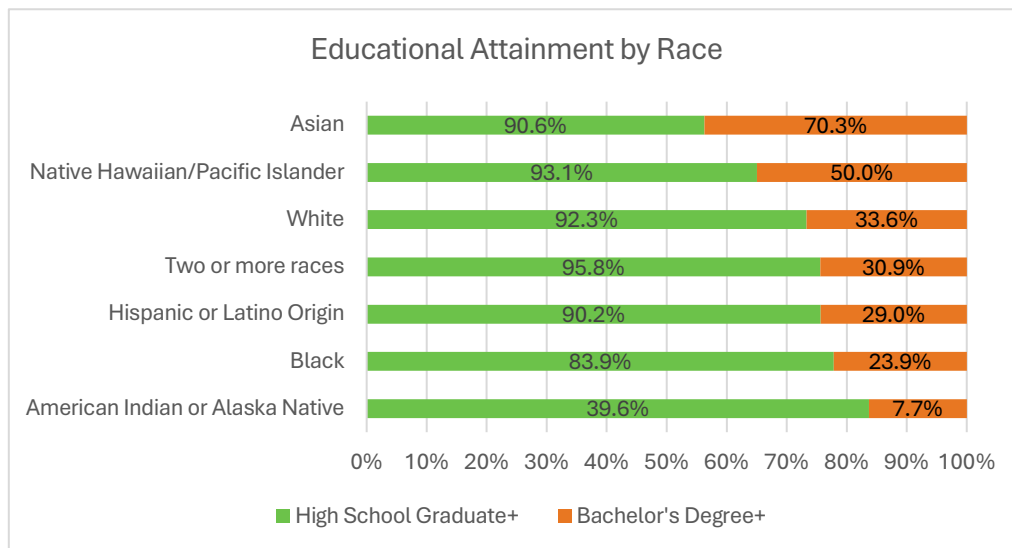
**Educational Attainment:** The table below illustrates the educational attainment of adults age 25+ in Otsego County. The largest group (30.7%) are adults who obtained their high school diploma or high school equivalency (HSED). Adults who earned a bachelor's degree are the second largest group, representing 18.6% of the population. Included in the following table are the educational attainment Opportunities for Otsego adult clients during PY 2021 through 2024.

	Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9-12, No Diploma	High School Diploma, HSED	Some College, No Degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate, Professional Degree
2023	2.4%	5.4%	30.7%	16.3%	11.2%	18.6%	15.3%
OFO Clients (Age 25+)	2.8%	13.8	49.2%	13.6%	19.6%		1.0%

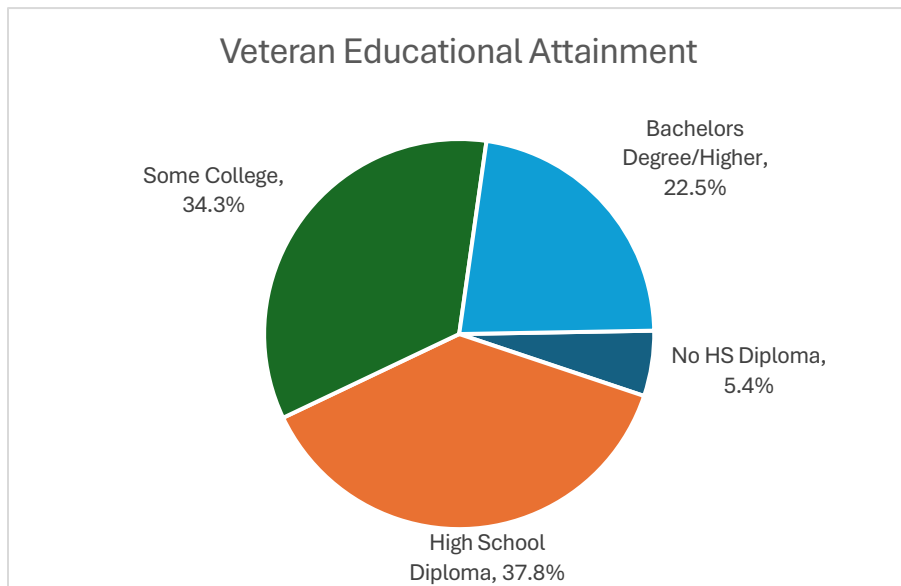
SOURCE: 2023 ACS, 5-Year Estimates; 2020 Decennial Census; Opportunities for Otsego CMS database.

According to the same data set, **37.5% of Otsego County adults in who did not earn a high school diploma or equivalency live in poverty**. Poverty rates for other groups are: High school graduate/HSED (12.9%); Some college/associate's degree (10.3%); and bachelor's degree or higher (4.2%).

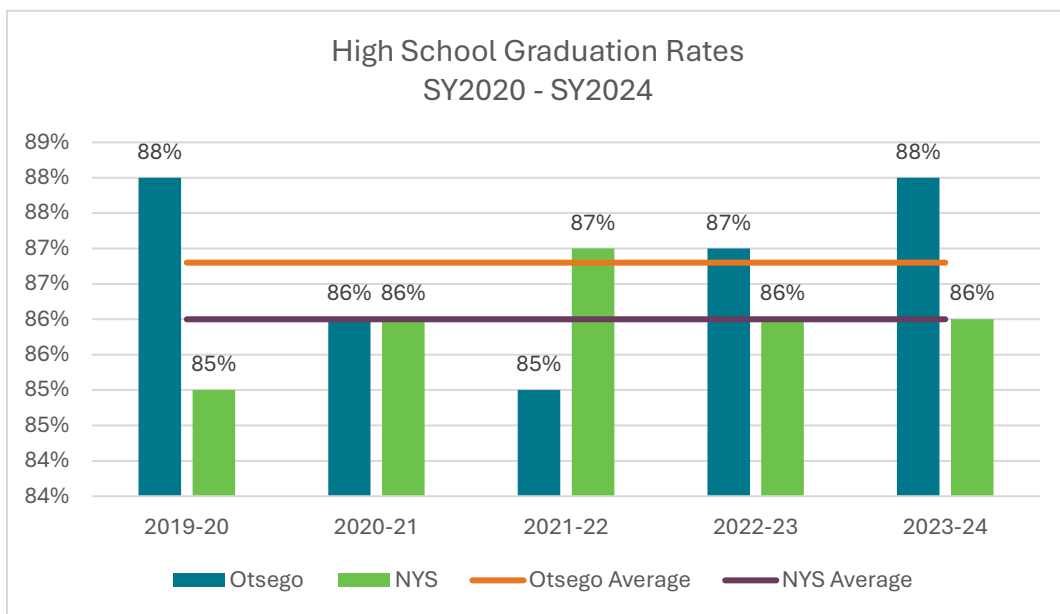
Among all races, Asian (n=418), Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (n=29), and White (n= 12,035) adults in Otsego County had the highest rate of educational attainment, earning a bachelor's degree or higher.



Veterans residing in Otsego County generally have higher rates of educational attainment than non-veterans in the region. In FY2023, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs distributed \$811,780 in Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment (EVRE) benefits to Otsego County veterans. This benefit includes automobile and adaptive equipment, specially adapted housing, Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35), Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans (Chapter 31), Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance (Chapter 32), Montgomery G.I. Bill for Selected Reserves (Chapter 1606), Reserve Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 1607), Montgomery G.I. Bill (Chapter 30), and Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance (Chapter 33)<sup>43</sup>.



High School Graduation Rates:  
Otsego County graduation rates for the school years spanning 2019-2020 through 2023-2024 are illustrated in the table



below. Over this period, the Otsego County graduation rates average exceeded the New York State average at 87% and 86% respectively. **The Otsego County graduation rate in 2023-24 elevated back to the 2019-20 level of 88% after a 3-year dip over the period 2020-2023.**

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>

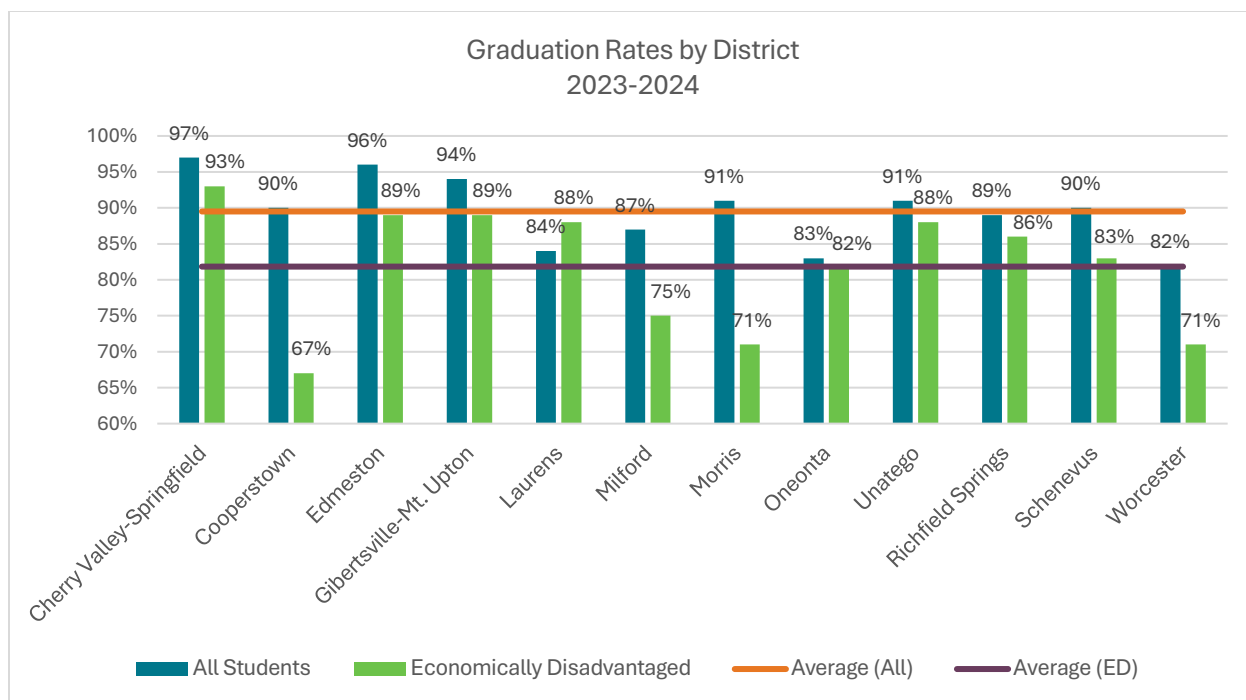
Additional graduation data from the NYS Department of Education by subgroups for the school year 2023-2024 is provided below. Subgroups with graduation rates below 80% and the highest dropout rates were students with disabilities and those identifying as Hispanic/Latino<sup>44</sup>.

High School Graduation Rates by Subgroups SY 2023-2024				
	Enrolled (Total)	Graduated (Number)	Graduated (Percentage)	Dropout Rate
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	231	209	90%	6%
Male	246	212	86%	7%
<b>Disability Status</b>				
General Education Students	384	357	93%	5%
Students with Disabilities	93	64	69%	12%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	19	18	95%	0%
Black or African American	19	16	84%	11%
Hispanic or Latino	24	18	75%	17%
White	407	361	89%	6%
Multiracial	8	8	100%	0%
<b>Income Status</b>				
Not Economically Disadvantaged	280	259	93%	5%
Economically Disadvantaged	197	162	82%	8%
Homeless	4	--	--	--

Of the 477 high school seniors enrolled in the twelve school districts in Otsego County during the 2023-2024 school year, 38% (n=180) received an Advanced Regents Diploma, 48% (n=228) a Regents Diploma, 3% (n=13) a Local Diploma, 1% (n=7) Non-Diploma Credentials, 6% (n=31), dropped out, and 4% (n=17) were still enrolled during the 2024-25 school year.

The table below compares individual district 2023-2024 graduation rates for all students, economically disadvantaged students, and the overall average for these groups across Otsego County. The graduation rates of all students at Laurens, Milford, Oneonta, Richfield Springs, and Worcester were below the countywide average of 90%. Graduation rates for economically disadvantaged students at Cooperstown, Milford, Morris, and Worcester were below the countywide average of 82% for this subgroup.

<sup>44</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php>



**Adult Literacy:** The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) produces estimates of adults with low-literacy levels based on educational attainment, poverty, race/ethnicity distributions, and other factors in each county. Based on these estimates, **11% of adults (age 16 and older) in Otsego County lack Basic Prose Literacy Skills (BPLS)** in 2003<sup>45</sup>. Per a longitudinal study conducted by NCES from 2012, 2014, and 2017, Otsego County adults, age 16 to 74, have higher than average rates of literacy and numeracy proficiency in comparison to New York State and Nation. Among these adults, an estimated 17% are considered functionally illiterate – only able to understand very basic vocabulary or find very specific information on a familiar topic – and 27% functionally innumerate – only able to count, sort, or do basic arithmetic operations with simple whole numbers<sup>46</sup>.

#### Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

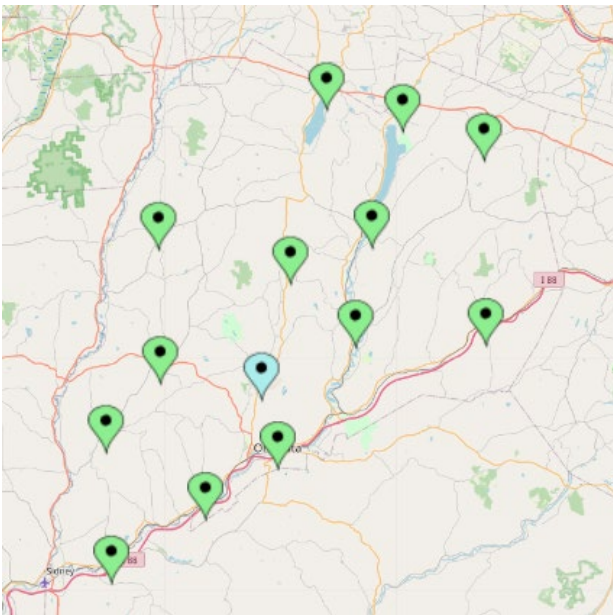
*"In my work, I encounter a lot of people of all ages who seem to read and write at a very low level. Definitely some widespread educational issues."*

**Public Libraries:** According to the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services FY2022 Public Libraries Survey, there are thirteen (13) public libraries in Otsego County. All libraries offer internet-connected computers for use by the public, with 61 computers available within the county library system. In total, these libraries recorded 12,489 uses of public internet computers for a total of 180,509

<sup>45</sup> <https://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/StateEstimates.aspx>

<sup>46</sup> <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/skillsmap/>

wireless sessions annually. This represents a 45% increase in uses and 560% jump in wireless sessions since 2020. The location of public libraries is mapped below. No libraries in Otsego County offer Bookmobile. Of note, the Town of Laurens public library was not included in the abovementioned data as the Laurens Village Library is operated by the local school district.



#### Public Libraries, Otsego County

- Cherry Valley
- Cooperstown
- Edmeston
- Gilbertsville
- Hartwick
- Laurens\*
- Milford
- Morris
- Oneonta
- Otsego
- Richfield Springs
- Unadilla
- Worcester
- Springfield Center

#### Early Childhood Education:

**Infant and Toddler Care:** Per the 2024 Otsego County Child Care Report published by Catholic Charities of Otsego and Schoharie Counties, there are 23 licensed early childcare providers in Otsego County that provide care to infants and toddlers. These providers include 15 group/family day care providers and 7 day care centers. In total, these providers have the capacity to serve 207 infants/toddlers. Of these slots, sixteen are designated for Head Start eligible children. *Head Start added an additional toddler classroom for 8 children after the publication of the Catholic Charities report.*

The cost of childcare varies by age group and facility type where offered. Average costs with a licensed provider in Otsego County range from \$193-\$320 per week. Non-regulated care range \$153-\$195 per week. A comprehensive breakdown of childcare costs by child age and childcare facility type is available under section Employment: Child Care Costs.

**Preschool:** Per the 2024 Otsego County Child Care Report published by Catholic Charities of Otsego and Schoharie Counties, there are 611 preschool slots for children ages 3-5 across Otsego County. Of this total, 30.9% preschool slots are designated for children from Head Start-eligible families (household income threshold is below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level or categorically eligible). Group/family day care providers may also serve preschool children; however, availability is based on the ratio of infants and toddlers to the total facility enrollment. The average cost of preschool care is listed under the section Employment; Child Care Costs. Head Start preschool services are free to eligible families.

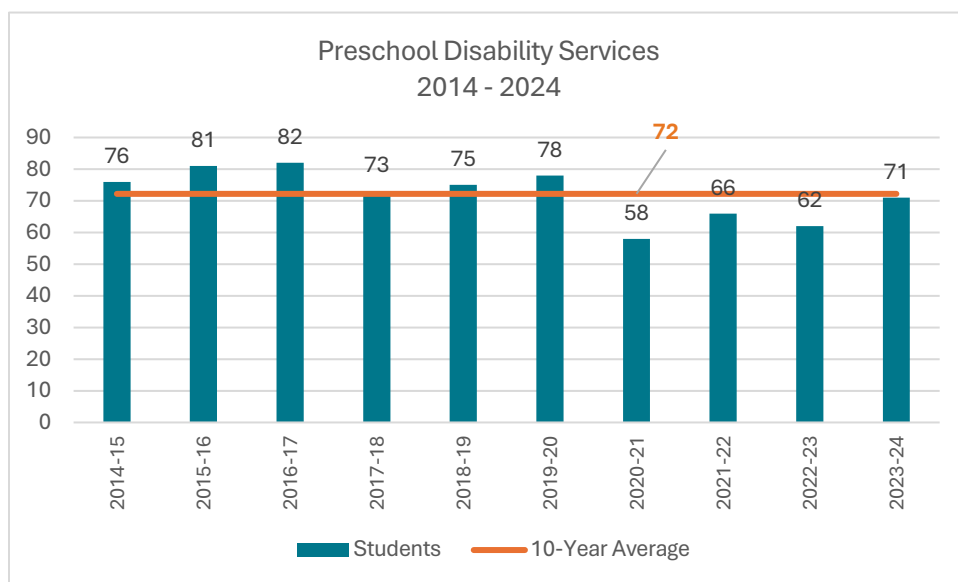
Head Start: Opportunities for Otsego is the sole provider of Head Start services in Otsego County. The agency is contracted to serve 139 children (age 3-5) in the preschool program, 16 toddlers through a center-based program, and 74 children (age birth-3) through the home visiting component. Per 2023 ACS data on age and poverty, there are approximately 560 children (ages 0-4) living in Otsego County that would be eligible for Early/Head Start services.

During program year 2023-2024, Head Start operated 11 classrooms in 7 communities throughout Otsego County and served 148 preschool-age children from 145 households. Early Head Start served 130 children and pregnant women from 106 families through the home-based program component.

Children Receiving Disabilities Services: The New York state Department of Education, Information and Reports Services collects and maintains data on children and youth receiving special education programs and disability services. Data is collected during the first quarter of each school year.

Preschool: Otsego County, through the Preschool Special Education Program, provides services to eligible children ages 3 to 5. Eligibility as a preschooler is based on the results of an individual evaluation conducted by a multidisciplinary team, which enables the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) in

each local school district to determine which preschool special education program and or services are appropriate. Data provided in the chart is the cumulative number of preschool-age children receiving special education programs and services by school

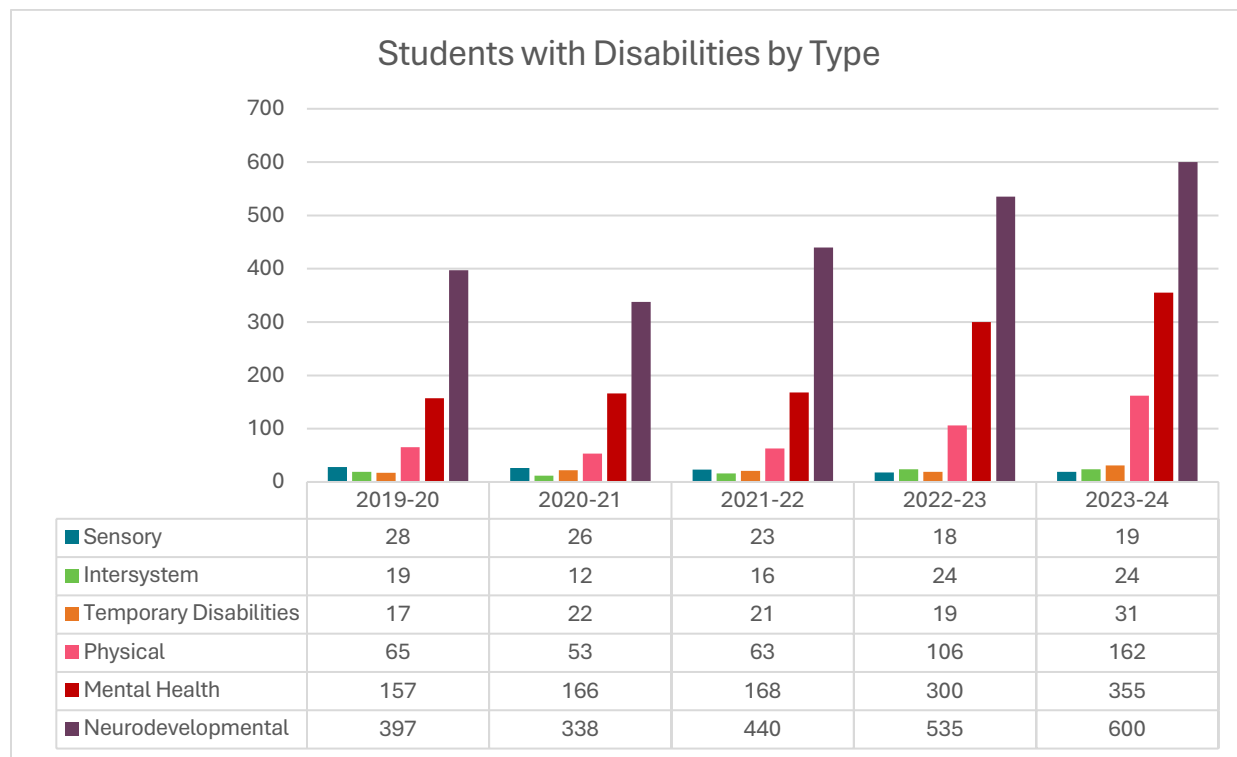


year across all public-school districts in Otsego County. Based on the past ten years of data, an average of 72 preschool-age children receive special education services annually<sup>47</sup>.

School Age: According to the New York State Department Education, 1,128 children enrolled in public school in Otsego County were identified as having at least one disability during the 2023-24 school year. Of these children 27% (n=304) had multiple disabilities. This total is double the number of students with an identified disability during the 2019-20 school year (n=566). The chart below provides the number of

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/sedcar/state.htm>

students receiving special education services by disability type among all districts in Otsego County. **“Neurodevelopmental” - ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Communication/Speech, Learning Disability, and Motor - was the most prevalent disability reported followed by “Mental Health” consistently over the past five school years<sup>48</sup>.**

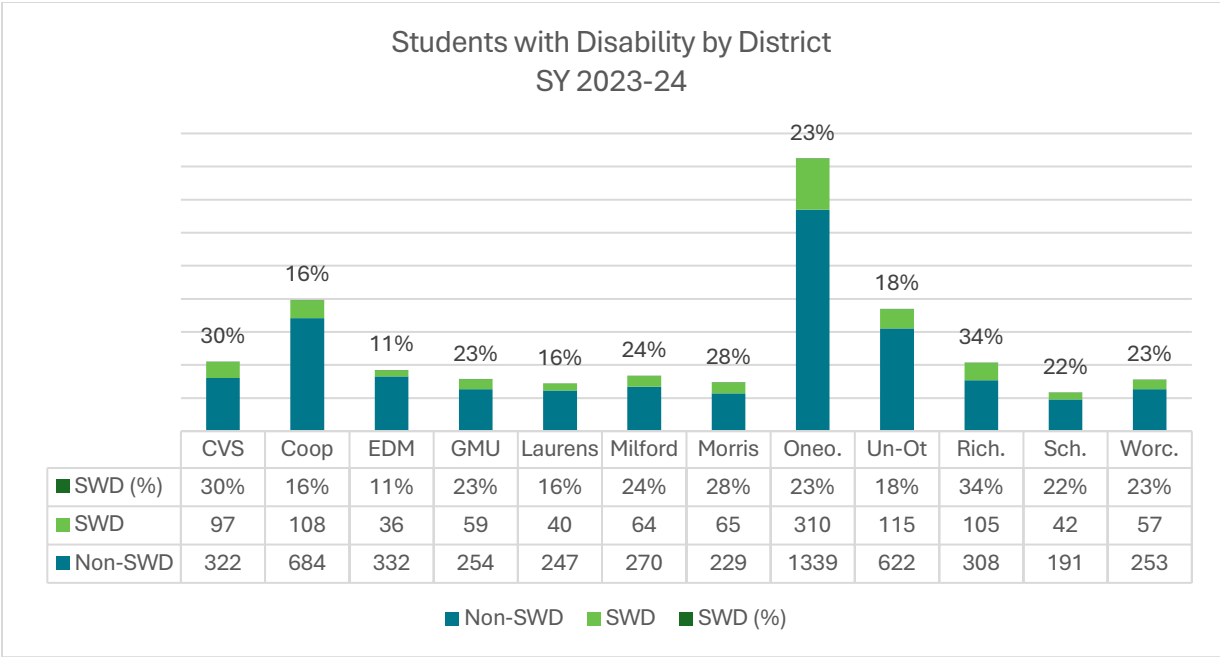


#### Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey

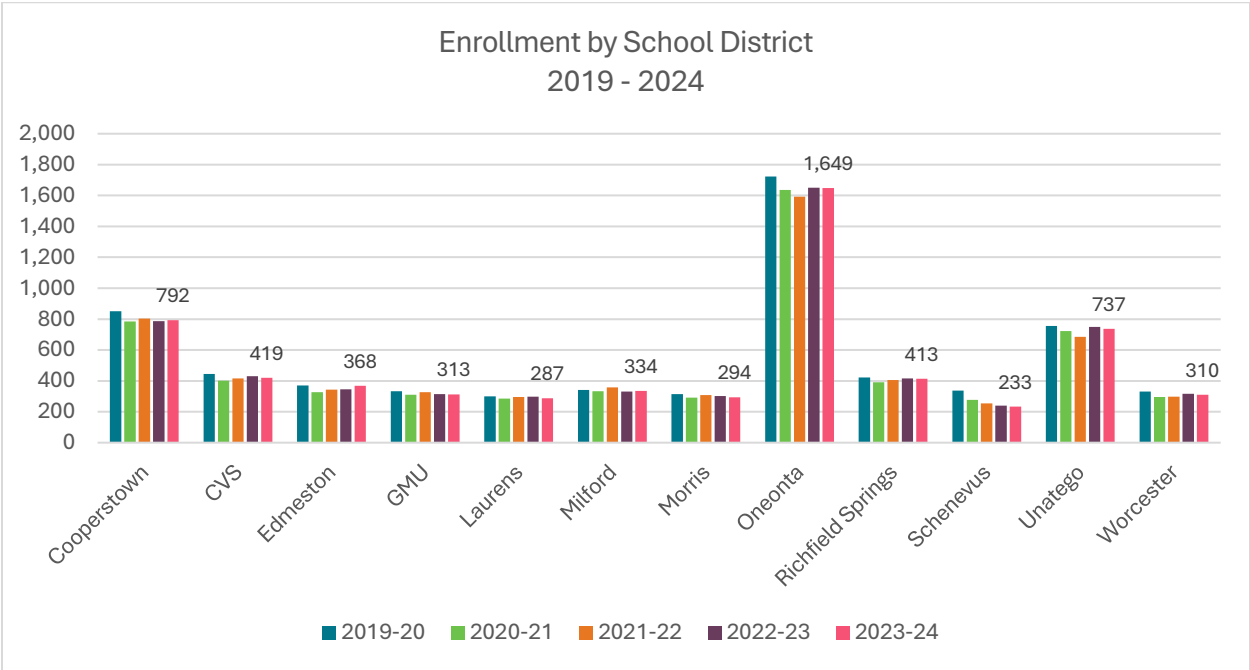
*"Special education services in schools [is a concern]. School staff are overworked and underpaid and there are many high needs students. Need more disability supports in schools."*

The next chart illustrates the number and percentage of students with a disability by district. The greatest number of students with an identified disability are in the City of Oneonta School District, encompassing 23% of the entire student body (n=310). **School districts with the greatest percentage of students with a disability in descending order are Richfield Springs (34%), Cherry Valley-Springfield (30%), and Morris (28%) with 105, 97, and 65 students respectively.**

<sup>48</sup> <https://data.nysed.gov/>



Elementary and Secondary Education: During the 2023-2024 school year, there were 6,149 students (grade PreK-12) enrolled in the twelve public school districts in Otsego County. **Overall public-school enrollment dropped 6.4% since the 2019-2020 school year, losing 374 students.** The greatest change in the percentage of total enrollment was in the Schenevus district with a 31.1% decrease in enrollment (n=105 students), followed by Cooperstown (-6.9%), and Morris (-6.7%) with losses of 59 and 21 students respectively. Schools with the least impact on enrollment as a percentage of total students are Edmeston (-0.5%), Richfield Springs (-2.1%), and Milford (-2.3%). Over the 10-year period since 2013, public school enrollment has dropped by 1,012 students at a rate of 14.1%.





In addition to the 12 school districts in Otsego County, there were two (2) private schools open during the 2023-2024 school year. Schools include the Otsego Christian Academy in Otego and The School at Springbrook in Oneonta. In total, these schools have the capacity to serve 272 children: 29 students in Pre-K; 154 students in grades K-12; and 89 Ungraded students at Springbrook. Profiles of students enrolled in all Otsego County schools is provided below<sup>49</sup>.

Public and Private School Demographic Profiles								
School/District	Total Enrollment	American Indian/Alaskan	Asian Includes Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	White	Multiple Race
<b>Public Schools (2023-2024)</b>								
Cherry Valley-Springfield	419	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	2.1%	-	92.8%	4.5%
Cooperstown	792	0.0%	5.6%	0.5%	3.0%	-	89.8%	1.1%
Edmeston	368	0.0%	1.6%	0.8%	1.9%	-	93.5%	2.2%
Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton	313	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	1.6%	-	96.2%	1.3%
Laurens	287	0.0%	0.3%	1.7%	9.1%	-	88.5%	0.0%
Milford	334	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	1.5%	-	95.8%	0.6%
Morris	294	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	2.7%	-	92.9%	3.1%
Oneonta	1649	0.0%	3.4%	7.2%	8.4%	-	77.2%	3.8%
Unatego	737	0.0%	0.5%	1.6%	5.3%	-	89.4%	2.7%
Richfield Springs	413	0.0%	0.7%	0.5%	3.4%	-	93.9%	1.5%
Schenevus	233	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	3.0%	-	91.4%	3.0%
Worcester	310	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	4.2%	-	94.5%	0.0%
<b>Private Schools (2021-2022)</b>								
Otsego Christian Academy	154	0.0%	0.7%	1.3%	0.7%	96.1%	0.7%	0.7%
The School at Springbrook	89	0.0%	2.2%	19.1%	9.0%	68.5%	0.0%	1.1%

**Career and Technical Education:** Otsego Northern Catskills Board of Cooperative Educational Services (ONC BOCES), based out of Milford, is a regional educational agency providing services in partnership with the majority of public school districts in Otsego County. ONC offers the following career and technical education (CTE) programs to students beginning in grade 11: Automotive Service Technician; Building Trades; Cosmetology; Culinary Arts; Health Occupations; Information Technologies; Mechatronics; Natural Resources Occupations; New Visions Health Care Professions; New Visions Engineering; Welding and Metal Fabrication; and Visual Arts. Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego

<sup>49</sup> National Center for Educational Statistics (<https://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/>)

(DCMO) BOCES only partners with Otsego County students in the Gilbertsville-Mount Upton and Unatego school districts. DCMO BOCES offers: Autobody Refinishing & Repair; Automotive Technology; Barbering; Business Foundations; Carpentry & Building Construction; Computer Technology; Conservation & Heavy Equipment; Cosmetology; Culinary Arts; Early Childhood Education; Human & Retail Services; New Vision Allied Health; New Vision Education Professions; New Vision Law & Government; Nurse Assisting; Security & Law Enforcement; Visual Communications; and Welding. Additional Secondary Education is available at the Oneonta Job Corps Academy. Job Corps provides academic training in pursuit of a high school diploma/equivalency and courses in independent living, employability skills, and social skills to help students, age 16 through 24, transition into the workplace. Career training at the Oneonta facility is available in: Advanced Electrical (overhead line; smart meter and instrumentation technician; underground residential distribution technician); Automotive and Machine Repair (collision repair and refinish; maintenance and light repair); Construction (cement masonry; electrical; tile setting); and Healthcare (certified nurse assistant; clinical medical assistant, medical administrative assistant).

*At the time of this report, the operational status of the Oneonta Job Corps Academy is in question after a nationwide "phased pause" was announced by the federal Department of Labor on May 29, 2025.*

Workforce training programs are also available to adults through SUNY Oneonta's Extended and Community Learning (ExCL) Center. Online career training programs focus on high-demand fields: Healthcare (Behavioral and Psychiatric Health Technician; Certified Healthcare Documentation Specialist; EKG Technician; Hemodialysis Technician; Medical Administrative Assistant; Medical Assistant; Medical Billing; Medical Coding and Billing Professional; Medical Office Manager; Medical Laboratory Assistant; Medical Records Specialist; Medical Scribe; Medical Transcription Editor; Mental Health Technician; Nutrition and Personal Trainer; Patient Care Technician; Pharmacy Technician; Phlebotomy Technician; Physical Therapy Aide; Sterile Processing Technician), Dental Care Programs (Dental Assistant), and Veterinary Office Programs (Veterinary Assistant).

**Higher Education:** Students seeking postsecondary education have several viable options within a 50-mile radius to Otsego County. The chart below provides a list of schools along with location, degrees offered, and tuition rates.

Name of Institution	Type of School	Location	Distance from 13820	Degrees Offered	Tuition and Fees (2024-25)
Less than 15 Miles					
Hartwick College	Private, not-for-profit 4-year or above	Oneonta	< 0.5 miles	Bachelor's and Master's degrees	\$6,315 (Otsego and regional students) <i>Conditional eligibility - \$54,962</i>
Otsego Area BOCES-School of Practical Nursing	Public, less-than-2-year	Oneonta	< 0.5 miles	Certificates	\$16,250

SUNY Oneonta	Public 4-year or above	Oneonta	< 0.5 miles	Bachelor's and Master's degrees; Post-master's Certificate	\$8,831 (In State) - \$19,781 (Out of State)
SUNY College of Technology at Delhi	Public, 4-year or above	Delhi	14.6 miles	Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's	\$8,772 (In State) - \$12,762 (Out of State)
15-50 Miles					
Delaware Chenango Madison Otsego BOCES- Practical Nursing	Public less-than-2- year	Norwich	23.7 miles	Certificates	\$14,500
SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	Public 4-year or above	Cobleskill	33.5 miles	Associate's and Bachelor's degrees	\$8,768 (In State) - \$18,678 (Out of State)
Colgate University	Private not-for-profit 4-year or above	Hamilton	34.8 miles	Bachelor's and Master's degrees	\$70,306
Herkimer County BOCES-Practical Nursing Program	Public less-than-2- year	Ilion	38.4 miles	Certificates	\$17,115
Herkimer County Community College	Public 2-year	Herkimer	39.7 miles	Associate's degree	\$5,776
SUNY Morrisville	Public 4-year or above	Morrisville	43.7 miles	Associate's and Bachelor's degrees	\$8,825 (In State) - \$19,245 (Out of State)
Mohawk Valley Community College	Public 2-year	Utica	44.1 miles	Associate's degree	\$6,218 (In State) - \$8,851 (Out of State)
Saint Elizabeth College of Nursing	Private not-for- profit, 2-year	Utica	44.1 miles	Associate's degree	\$20,180 (In State) - \$30,000 (Out of State)
Hamilton College	Private not-for-profit 4-year or above	Clinton	44.3 miles	Bachelor's	\$68,960
SUNY Polytechnic Institute	Public 4-year or above	Utica	45.7 Miles	Postbaccalaureate and Post-master's Certificates; Bachelor's, Master's, Doctor's- research- scholarship, Doctor's professional practice degrees	\$8,625 (In State) - \$21,215 (Out of State)
Utica College	Private not- for-profit, 4- year or above	Utica	45.7 miles	Postbaccalaureate Certificate; Associate's,	\$26,930

				Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor's- professional practice degrees	
SUNY Broome Community College	Public, 2- year	Binghamton	46.8 miles	Certificates; Associate's degree	\$8,624 (In State) - \$14,288 (out of State)
Broome, Delaware, Tioga BOCES – Practical Nursing Program	Public, less- than-2-year	Binghamton	49.7 miles	Certificates	\$15,380

**Fourteen percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted the cost/affordability of higher education as a barrier to education.**



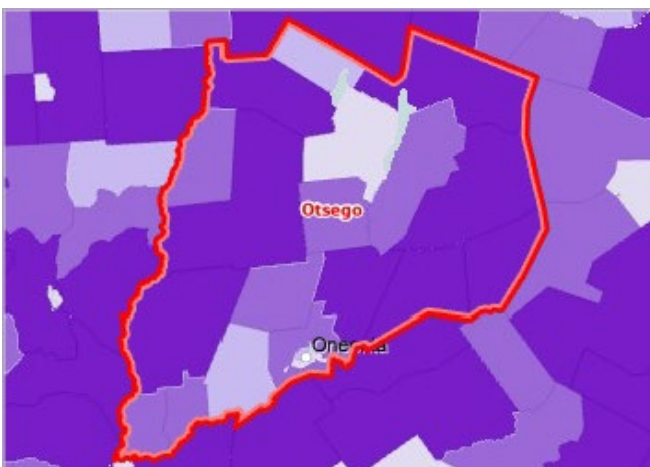
# HOUSING

## HOUSING

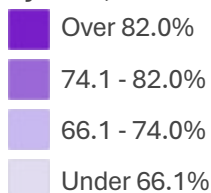
- Over the past 10 years, Otsego County lost 2.5% of its housing units. Of the estimated 30,011 units, nearly one-quarter are vacant with 80% deemed seasonal or for recreational use.
- The median year housing was built in Otsego County was 1954. An estimated 11% of housing units were built after 2000 and 70.4% were built before the 1978 lead paint ban.
- Fair Market rate for rental housing has increased 18.1% - 45.7% over the past seven years, while median home sales prices have increased 32.9% since 2020. As such 42.7% of renters and 26.8% of renters in Otsego County are “cost burdened”.
- Over a third of households in Otsego County heat their homes with oil/kerosene, which is a lower energy burden than electricity for all households regardless of income level.
- The most recent Point-in-Time(PIT) Count of homeless identified 74 homeless people; 49 unsheltered and 25 people in shelter. During the 2023-24 school year, public school districts across Otsego County educated 64 homeless students (grades K-12) and Head Start Homeless accepted applications for 22 homelessness children (age 0-5).

**Housing Units:** Since 2015, Otsego County has had a -2.53% (n=785) reduction in housing units compared to a 5.27% increase statewide. Of the 30,011 estimated units in Otsego County, 75.3% are occupied (n=22,608) and 24.7% are vacant (n=7,403).

**Occupied Units:** Per 2023 ACS data, 74.3% of occupied housing units are owner-occupied (n= 16,807), while 25.7% (n= 5,801) are renter-occupied units. Per the accompanying map, it appears that there is a higher rate of owner-occupied housing on the eastern and western borders of Otsego County, with higher rates if rental properties centralized in the county. The centralization of rental properties may be attributed to student housing in the City of Oneonta; seasonal rentals associated with the Cooperstown All Star Village (Town of Oneonta) and Dreams Park (Town of Hartwick); and Bassett Healthcare in Cooperstown.



**Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**



Vacant Units: Most vacant housing units in Otsego County (n=5,908) are used for seasonal, recreational, occasional use, as used for migrant workers. The remaining vacant units are rental housing units (n=1,101) including those rented but not occupied and non-rental units (n=394) that are for sale or sold but not occupied. **The Otsego County vacancy rate for “other” housing (units that are vacant but not for rent or for sale) is nearly three-times the state and national rate at 19.7% compared to 7.1% and 7.2% respectively.**

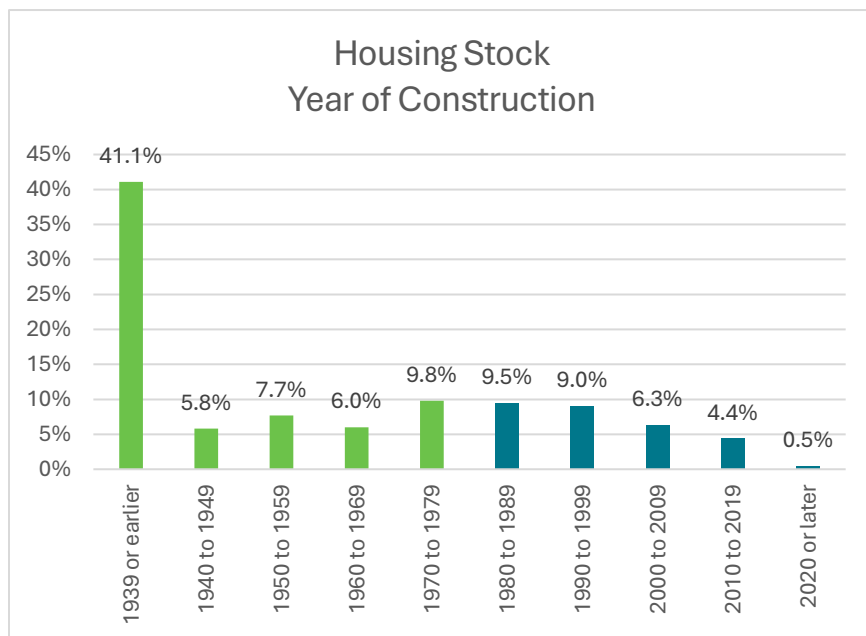
**Ten percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted limited year-round housing as concern in Otsego County.**

*“Housing being seasonal is a problem for local volunteer fire companies. Memberships are low because families are not finding long term housing...This affects response times and put those that need 911 services at risk as well as the first responders.”*

*"Too many SUCO kids live off campus – need housing for adults/families instead."*

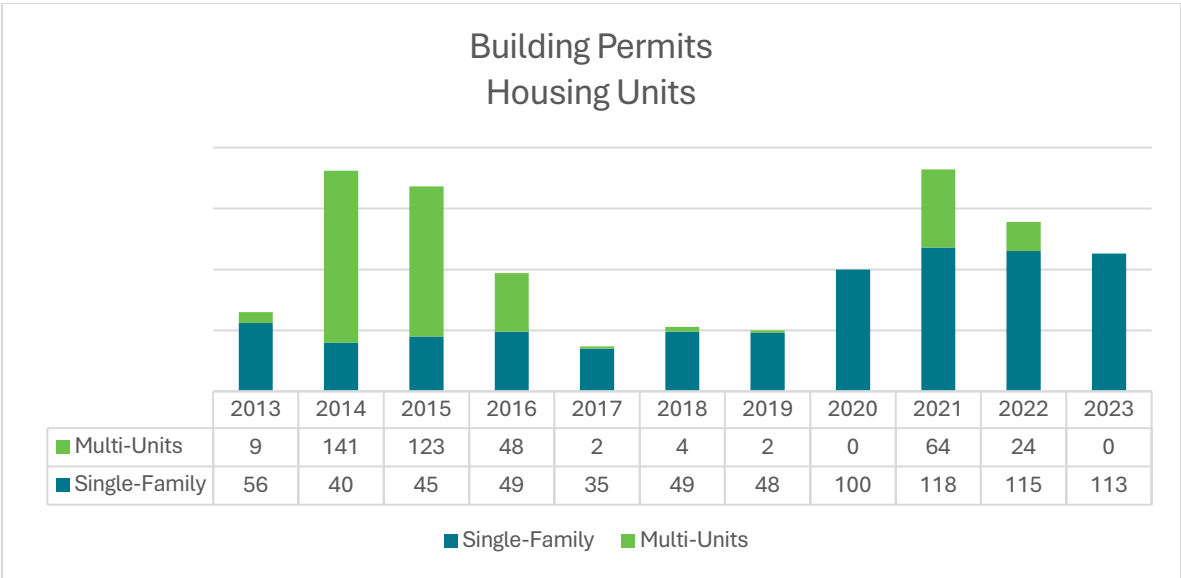
*"'Baseball people' and 'opera people'...causes housing problems for year-round residents, chaos while they are here, and high prices during the summer."*

**Housing Age:** According to the 2023 ACS Estimates, 11% of the housing stock in Otsego County was built after 2000. In contrast, 41.9% of all housing units in Otsego County were built before 1939. Of all housing units in Otsego County, approximately 70.4% were built before 1978; prior to the federal ban on consumer use of lead-containing paint. The median year housing was built was 1954.



**As a community, the City of Oneonta has the oldest housing stock within Otsego County**, with Census Tract 5910 - fondly referred to as “Center City” - having the largest percentage of housing units built prior to 1939 at 61.5% (n= 1,124). Other areas with a great percentage of homes built prior to 1939 include Census Tract 5911 (58.7%) and Census Tract 5909 (52.2%) in the City of Oneonta; Worcester Census Tract 5907.02 (52.6%); Fly Creek-Cooperstown Census Tract 5902.02 (57.6%); and Cherry Valley Census Tract 5901.01 (51.7%).

Since 2020, an additional 534 housing units have been requested through building permits. Communities where these units have been added include Milford (6); Oneonta (88); Oneonta Town (19); Otego Town (12); Otsego County Parts Unincorporated (401); and Worcester (8). Data from the US Census Bureau Building Permit Survey estimates an average of 72 building permits for single- and multi-family units were authorized annually over the period 2013-2023.



**Housing Problems:** Per HUD, there are four categories of housing problems: housing units that lack complete kitchen facilities; housing units that lack complete plumbing facilities; overcrowded households; and cost burdened households. A household is said to have a “housing problem” if they have any one or more of these conditions.

Homes lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities are considered as the most severe housing problems, followed by “overcrowding” and then “cost burden”. The number and percentage of occupied housing units without plumbing, kitchen facilities, or phone service in Otsego County for the years 2015, 2020, and 2023 are shown below. Most recent data is based on an estimate of 22,608 occupied housing units<sup>50</sup>.

No Plumbing Units (2015)	Percent 2015	No Plumbing Units (2020)	Percent 2020	No Plumbing Units (2023)	Percent 2023	Rate of Change 2000-2023
122	0.5%	147	0.6%	172	0.8%	+0.3%

No Kitchen Units (2015)	Percent 2015	No Kitchen Units (2020)	Percent 2020	No Kitchen Units (2023)	Percent 2023	Rate of Change 2000-2015
192	0.8%	238	1.0%	267	1.2%	+0.4%

<sup>50</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2000, 2015, 2021 – Table DP04



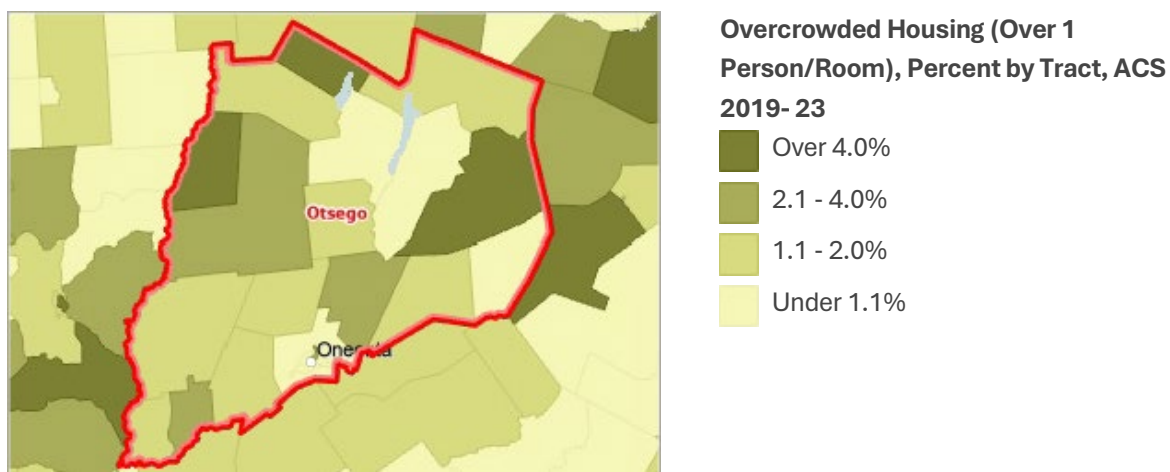
No Phone (2015)	Percent 2015	No Phone (2020)	Percent 2020	No Phone (2023)	Percent 2023	Rate of Change 2000-2023
389	1.6%	412	1.7%	363	0.7%	-0.9%

Per the 2024 Otsego County Housing Needs Assessment Update prepared by the Otsego County Planning Department and Otsego Rural Housing Assistance (ORHA), 11-15% of households in census blocks in Maryland and Worcester lack complete plumbing facilities. Furthermore, there are 18 census blocks in Otsego County in which at least 5% of households lack complete kitchen facilities, with a higher concentration in the Town of Unadilla (9.73%) and areas in the Town of Otsego and Hartwick (14.37%). A lack of these facilities may indicate increased risk of human health issues, such as malnutrition or poor diet<sup>51</sup>.

The Census Bureau defines an overcrowded unit as one occupied by 1.01 persons or more per room. Units with more than 1.5 people per room are considered severely overcrowded. Per 2023 ACS data, there are 325 overcrowded housing units in Otsego County. These units account for 1.4% of all occupied housing units. The number of overcrowded housing units, and the percentage of overcrowded units for the years 2015, 2020, and 2023 in Otsego County are noted below.

Overcrowded Units (2015)	Percent 2015	Overcrowded Units (2020)	Percent 2020	Overcrowded Units (2023)	Percent 2023	Rate of Change 2000-2015
713	3.0%	318	1.4%%	322	1.4%	-1.6%

**Communities with the highest rates of overcrowding are Richfield Springs (6.1%); Westford-Decatur (4.8%), and Edmeston (4.1%).** These communities also have higher than average rates of poverty in Otsego County at 21.3%, 28.1%, and 14.0% respectively.



<sup>51</sup> [https://www.otsegocountyny.gov/Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20FINAL\\_11-01-2024.pdf](https://www.otsegocountyny.gov/Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20FINAL_11-01-2024.pdf) – Page 11

**Fair Market Rent:** The 2025 Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment in Otsego County is \$1,184; up \$352 from 2019. To afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn approximately \$3,947 monthly or \$47,360 annually<sup>52</sup>. The greatest increase in FMR as a percentage change is a one-bedroom rental. These rates increased 45.7% over the past seven (7) years<sup>53</sup>.

Year	Efficiency	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
<b>Final FY 2025 FMR</b>	<b>\$812</b>	<b>\$957</b>	<b>\$1,184</b>	<b>\$1,426</b>	<b>\$1,570</b>
Final FY 2024 FMR	\$719	\$879	\$1,061	\$1,304	\$1,413
Final FY 2023 FMR	\$720	\$827	\$990	\$1,254	\$1,381
Final FY 2022 FMR	\$723	\$734	\$892	\$1,151	\$1,307
Final FY 2021 FMR	\$732	\$737	\$916	\$1,182	\$1,425
Final FY 2020 FMR	\$692	\$696	\$873	\$1,095	\$1,404
Final FY 2019 FMR	\$652	\$657	\$832	\$1,042	\$1,329
Percentage Change	24.5%	45.7%	42.3%	36.9%	18.1%

**Home Values:** Over the past 5 years, the median value and sale price of homes have increased in Otsego County. Per 2023 ACS data, the median home value of owner-occupied housing is \$175,900; a 20.2% increase (\$29,500) from 5 years prior when values were estimated at \$146,400. Per the 2024 Annual Report on the New York State Market, **median home sale prices in Otsego County increased 32.9% since 2020 to an average of \$206,000.**

Area Historical Median Sale Price						
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change From 2023	Change From 2020
\$155,000	\$165,000	\$195,000	\$192,500	\$206,000	+ 7.0%	+ 32.9%

During 2024, 598 homes were placed on the market for sale in Otsego County, with an average inventory of 131 homes available at any given time. In total 428 homes sales were closed on. Home sales in 2024 were down 2.7% from 2023 and down 25.2% from 2020. On average, homes were sold at 96.1% of the listing price<sup>54</sup>.

**Housing Affordability:** According to HUD, the generally accepted definition of “affordability” is for a household to pay no more than 30% of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered “cost burdened” and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports each year on the amount of money a household must earn to afford a rental unit based on Fair Market Rents in the area and an accepted limit of 30% of

<sup>52</sup> <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/ny>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/fmr.html#year2025>

<sup>54</sup> [https://www.nysar.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NYSAR\\_ANN\\_2024.pdf](https://www.nysar.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NYSAR_ANN_2024.pdf)

income for housing costs. The chart below summarizes the minimum hourly wage workers must earn to afford each housing type. Considering the median household income in Otsego for 2023 was \$67,086, a family would pay up to \$20,125 annually or \$1,677 month on housing costs to be “affordable”.

Average Renter Hourly Wage	Efficiency	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
\$17.57	\$13.83	\$16.90	\$20.40	\$25.08	\$27.17

According to 2023 ACS data, 26.8% of homeowners with a mortgage and 42.7% of renters in Otsego County are “cost burdened”. These rates have declined since 2019 by 0.3% and 7.3% respectively. According to US Census and ACS data, the most affordable communities for renters in Otsego County are Edmeston, the village of Morris, and Burlington. Communities with the highest rent burden are the village and town of Cherry Valley, the village of Milford, and the village of Unadilla<sup>55</sup>.

Township	Housing Stock		Tenure Type		Rent Burden	
	Vacant	Occupied	Owner	Renter	Average Rent	Rent Burden
Burlington	63	444	379	65	\$773	16.7%
Butternuts	226	741	626	115	\$688	26.0%
Gilberstville (V)	24	174	122	52	\$658	23.1%
Cherry Valley (T)	148	514	410	104	\$804	61.5%
Cherry Valley (V)	59	218	165	53	\$746	71.2%
Decatur	95	147	132	15	--	28.6%
Edmeston	168	701	589	112	\$642	10.8%
Exeter	206	355	298	57	\$813	34.0%
Hartwick	325	827	666	161	\$821	37.2%
Laurens (T)	193	1010	779	231	\$895	33.0%
Laurens (V)	14	102	52	50	\$577	22.9%
Maryland	245	772	619	153	\$670	38.5%
Middlefield	331	837	680	157	\$956	26.3%
Milford (T)	406	1225	926	299	\$773	49.1%
Milford (V)	54	179	115	64	\$623	68.7%
Morris (T)	177	732	544	188	\$542	30.3%
Morris (V)	38	232	133	99	\$807	12.0%
New Lisbon	147	469	410	59	\$1,286	54.3%
Oneonta (City)	849	4,031	1,732	2,299	\$901	47.8%
Oneonta (Town)	188	2,022	1,596	426	\$696	49.0%
Otego (T)	223	1,188	944	244	\$648	55.3%
Otego (V)	44	393	291	102	\$768	28.4%
Otsego (T)	657	1,689	1,142	547	\$862	23.8%
Cooperstown (V)	244	923	454	469	\$1,081	23.9%

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.governor.ny.gov/new-york-state-housing-statistics> - 2020 Data

Pittsfield	147	517	431	86	\$647	26.7%
Plainfield	50	371	307	64	\$773	58.3%
Richfield (T)	402	928	669	259	\$665	43.2%
Richfield Springs (V)	113	506	310	196	\$636	59.2%
Roseboom	140	305	268	37	\$695	26.2%
Springfield	225	533	420	113	\$627	23.2%
Unadilla (T)	327	1,785	1,408	377	\$667	31.8%
Unadilla (V)	107	451	305	146	\$595	60.7%
Westford	150	352	315	37	\$916	37.8%
Worcester	336	919	731	188	\$946	40.7%

**During PY 2021-2024, forty-five percent of households accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego identified as renters and 30% were homeowners. Of the remaining households, 5% had other permanent housing arrangements and 20% were homeless.**

**Thirteen percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted monthly housing costs as concern for Otsego County residents.**

*"Housing inventory is limited, and rent is very high for older houses. We share a room with our kindergartener because of lack of options for rent [or] purchase."*

*"Not enough housing that [families] can afford."*

*"Lack of affordable housing for seniors."*

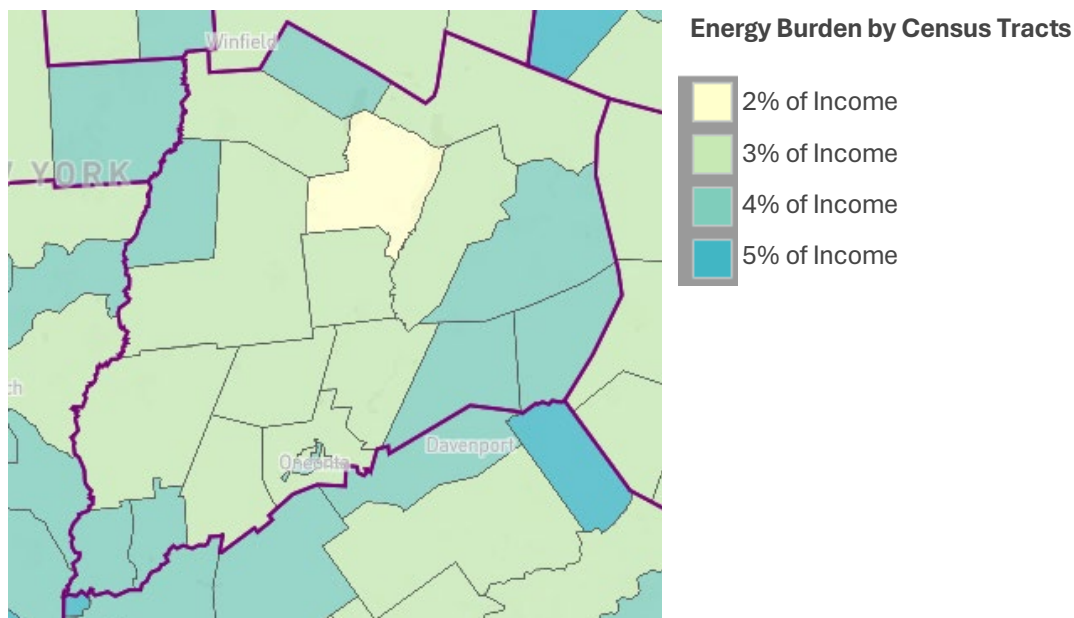
*"Housing for retired senior citizens. There is nothing in the Cooperstown area and many other towns in Otsego County. People who have lived in Cooperstown their entire life must relocate to find a home they can afford following retirement."*

*"Reasonable Senior Housing and Assisted living is definitely a concern...reasonably priced 55 and up living areas would be a huge asset especially since 42% of the population is age 55 and up."*

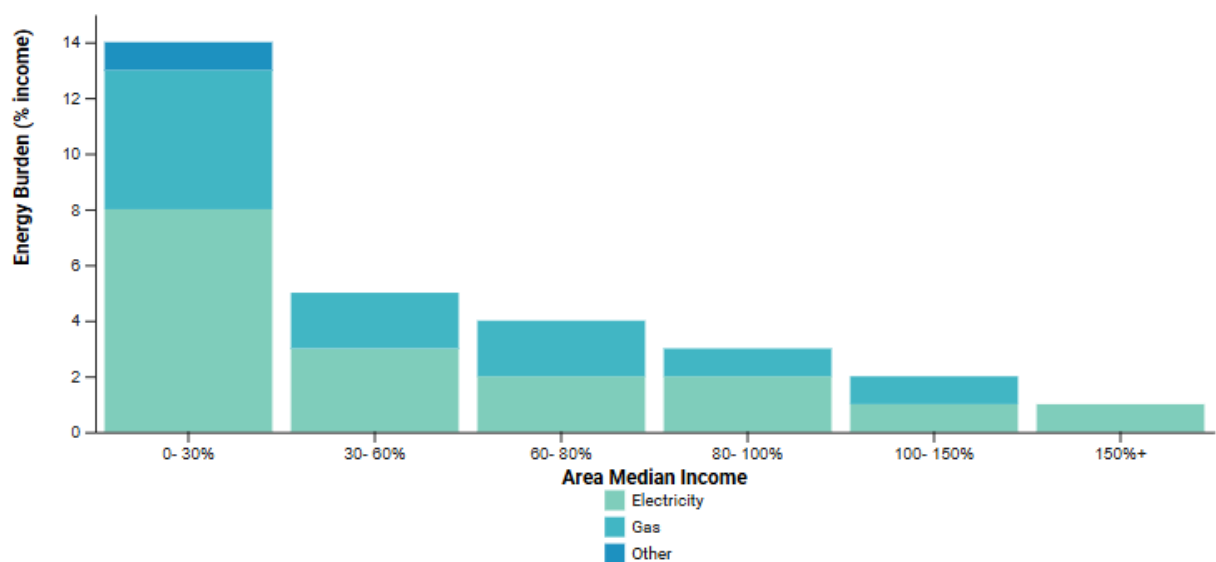
**Foreclosures:** According to RealtyTrac, there were 83 homes in foreclosure status in Otsego County in June 2025 of these: Pre-Foreclosure (n=77), Bank-Owned (n=2), and up for Auction (n=6).

**Home Heating Costs:** Energy burden is defined as the percentage of gross household income spent on energy. According to the U.S. Department of Energy Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) tool, the average household energy burden in Otsego County is 3%, the same as New York State as a whole. Regardless of income level, energy burden rates are higher for owner-occupied households verse renter-occupied households. **"High energy burdens are correlated with greater risk for respiratory**

diseases, increased stress and economic hardship, and difficulty in moving out of poverty.” Energy burden by Census Tract is noted in the map below<sup>56</sup>.



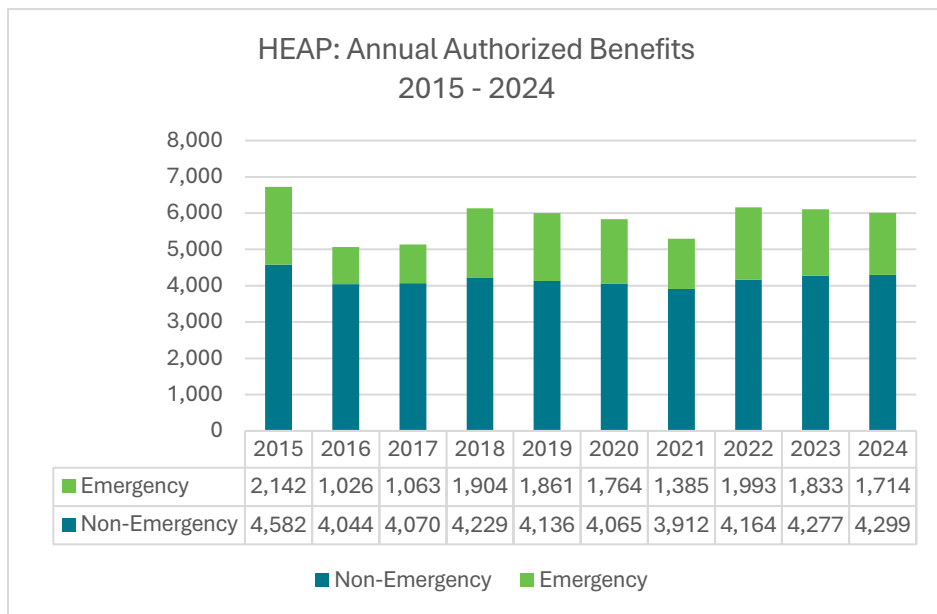
According to US Census Bureau 2023 ACS data, 33% of Otsego County households rely on fuel oil/kerosene to heat their homes. The remaining households utilize natural gas (20.7%); LP or bottled gas (17.3%); electricity (13.7%); wood (12.1%); coal (0.8%); and other or no fuel options (2.2%). Only 0.2% of households (n=46) in Otsego County utilize solar for home energy<sup>57</sup>. **Regardless of income level, electricity poses the highest energy burden on all households, while LP or bottled gas have the lowest energy burden.**



<sup>56</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/slsc/maps/lead-tool>

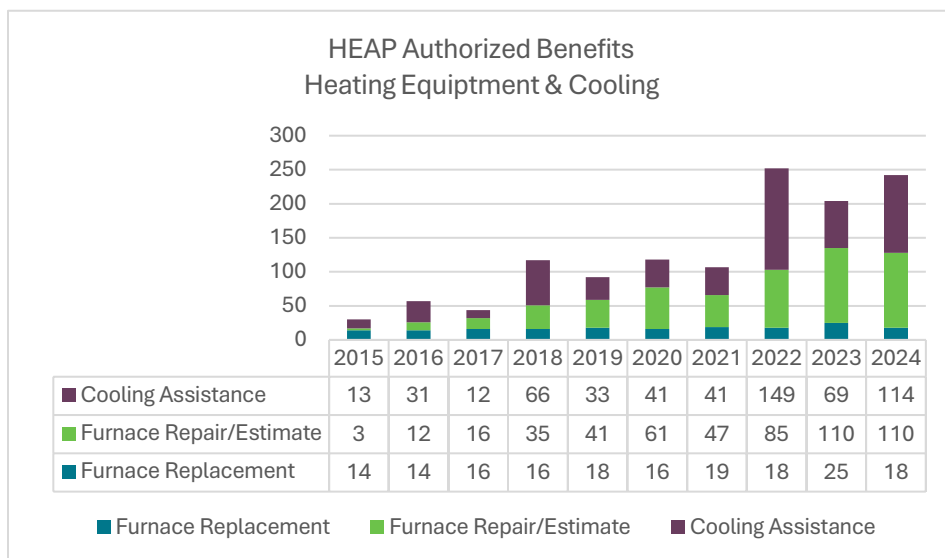
<sup>57</sup> US Census Bureau, 2023 ACS, Table DP04

**Home Energy Assistance Program:** The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that issues heating benefits to low-income households to supplement annual energy cost. HEAP issues one “regular” benefit per household annually to assist with heating costs and can provide an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat-related energy emergency. Benefits can help pay for oil, kerosene, natural gas, heating propane, electricity, wood/wood pellets, coal, and corn. Additional benefits are Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement benefit to repair or replace an inoperable furnace, boiler and other direct heating equipment; Clean and Tune benefit to ensure the safe, proper and efficient operation of heating equipment; and Cooling Assistance benefit for the purchase and installation of an air conditioner or a fan. The Cooling Assistance benefit was added to the HEAP program in 2013.



Over the 10-year period from 2015 to 2024, Otsego County authorized an average of 4,178 regular HEAP benefits and 1,669 emergency HEAP benefits annually. Over the same period, the Regular HEAP benefit (autopay) increased 43% from an average of \$551 in 2015 to \$790 in 2024; non-autopay rose 48.6% from \$362 to \$538; and the average Emergency HEAP benefit increased 42% from \$530 to \$753. On average there were 5,846 benefits issued though HEAP in Otsego County during the 2024 season.

The first notable increase in households benefitting from additional HEAP benefits (Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement Clean and Tune; Cooling



Assistance) was in 2018. This rate rose exponentially again in 2022 with the number of households benefiting more than doubling. During this year, 252 households benefited from non-fuel HEAP benefits, with a significant jump in households receiving Cooling Assistance benefits (n=149). After a slight dip in 2023, non-fuel HEAP benefits were ten benefits shy of the 10-year high recorded in 2022.

Weatherization: To support low-to-moderate income households in reducing energy and utility costs, Opportunities for Otsego operates a Weatherization home energy conservation program. **Over the period 6/1/2021 – 5/31/2025, Opportunities for Otsego weatherized 170 housing units, reducing the energy burden for 238 households.** As of June 2025, 299 households are on the waiting list: 17 have approved applications and 282 are on the preliminary waitlist.

**Ten percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted heat, utility, water, and sewer costs as a concern for households across Otsego County.**

*"Electricity bills keep going up. Not enough competition for rural areas for services like electricity, phone, fuel etc."*

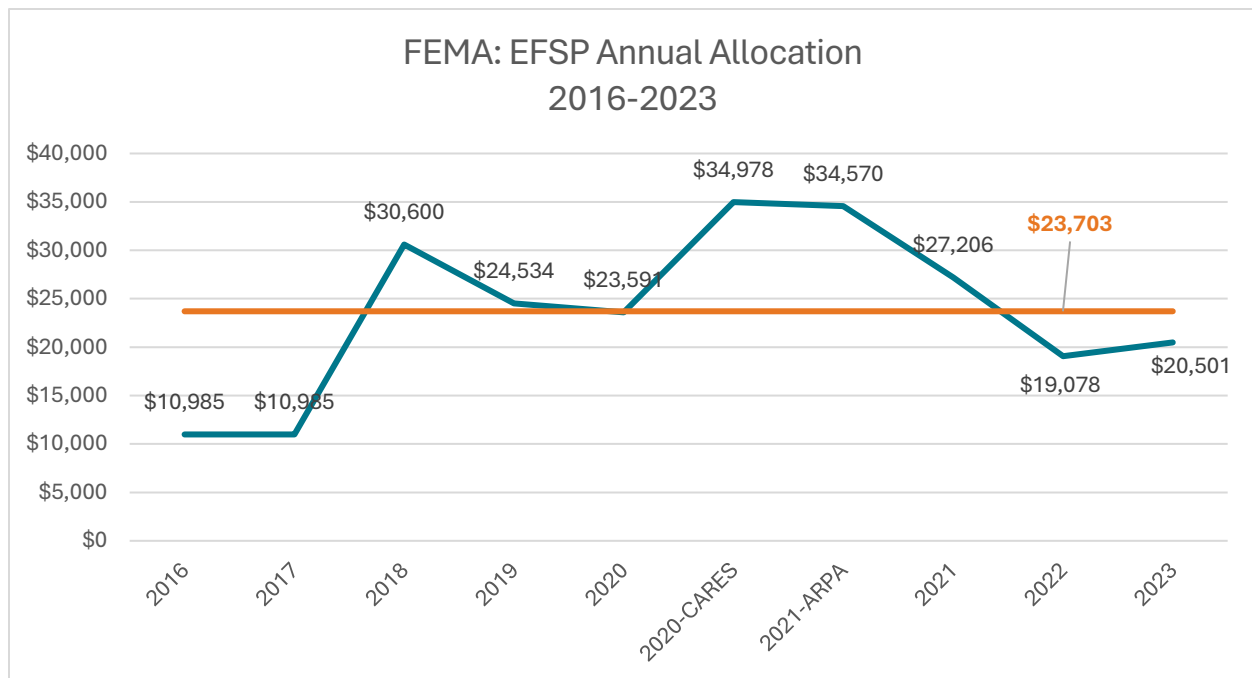
*"As a leader in a church, people ask me for help for all kinds of things. We are not able to do full on housing, fuel bills, phone bills."*

FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter: Since 1991, the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) has supported Otsego County in addressing the needs of the hungry and homeless by allocating federal funds for the food and shelter services. Funds may be used to provide emergency food, shelter, housing, and utility assistance to households in crisis. Local FEMA-EFSP allocations to Otsego County from 2016-2023 are illustrated in the chart below. The largest regular allocation in recent history was \$30,600 in 2018. On average, Otsego County receives \$23,703 in FEMA EFSP funds; this average includes special allocations released through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) in 2020 and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA-R) in 2021<sup>58</sup>.

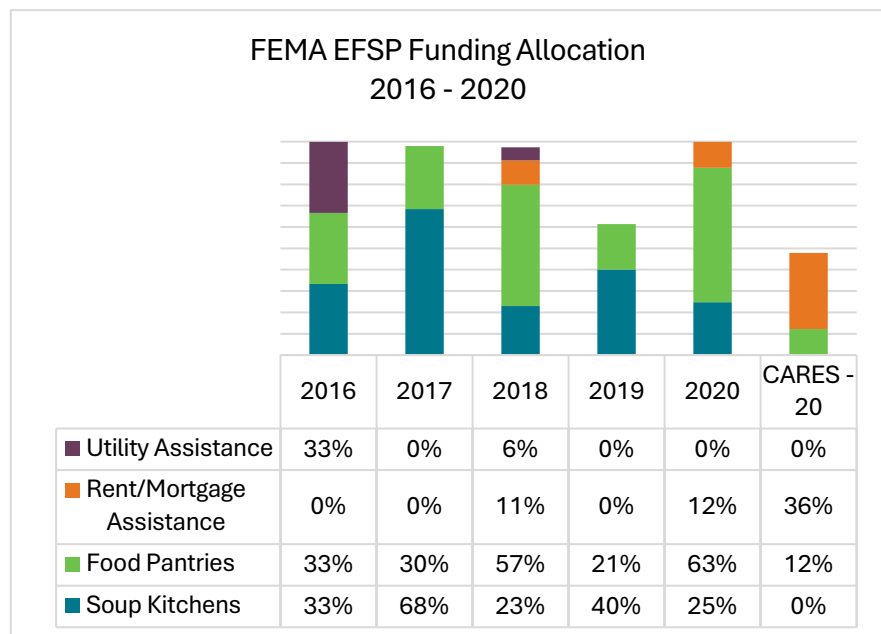
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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.efsp.unitedway.org/efsp/>





On average, the greatest allocation of local FEMA ESFP funds is for food pantries (36%), followed by soup kitchens (32%), utility assistance (14%), rent/mortgage assistance (10%), and utility assistance (7%). The remaining allocations are administrative expenses. *Of note, funding allocations reported in Phase 37 (2019) and CARES (2020) did not total 100%. No data available past 2020-CARES.*



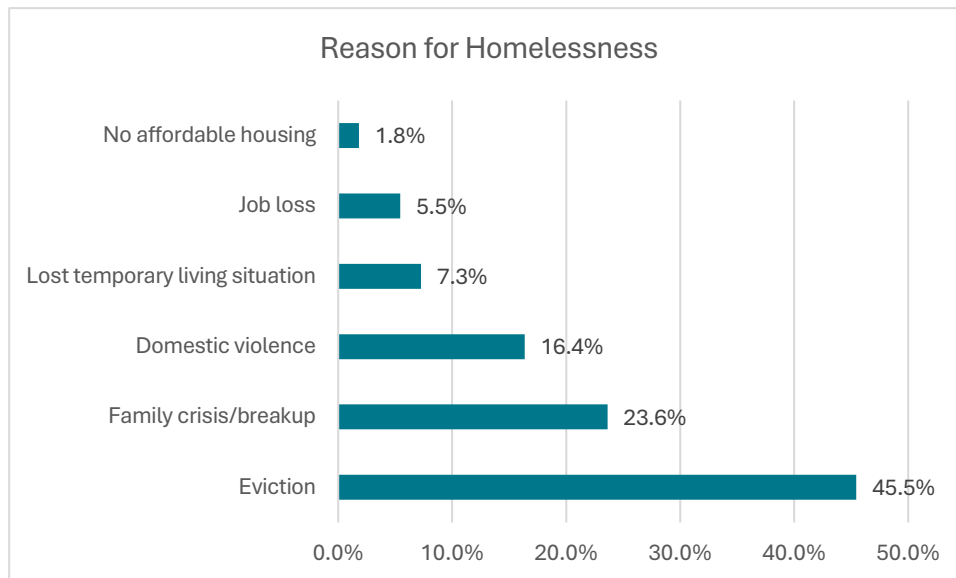
FEMA-ESFP funds are distributed to Otsego County through the United Way of Mid Rural New York. Awardees as of the date of this report are Catholic Charities of Delaware and Otsego Counties and The Salvation Army.

Homelessness: As required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), regional Continuum of Cares are required to complete an annual Point in Time (PIT) Count of sheltered and unsheltered persons within their region. The Southern Tier Homeless Coalition (NY-511 CoC), which included housing organizations from Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, and Tioga



Counties, conducted its PIT count in January 2025. The Otsego County PIT count totaled 74 homeless people, of which 49 were unsheltered/street homeless and 25 family members housed within community shelters<sup>59</sup>.

Emergency Shelter: Over the period 10/2021 – 9/2024, Opportunities for Otsego housed 77 homeless households at its emergency housing shelter. Another 63 victims were sheltered at the domestic violence safehouse. The presenting issue for the people housed at the domestic violence shelter was family violence/safety issues. The most prevalent reasons for homelessness for people housed at Opportunities for Otsego’s emergency housing shelter are eviction (45.5%); family crisis/break up (23.6%); domestic violence (16.4%); loss of a temporary living situation (7.3%); job loss (5.5%); and no affordable housing (1.8%). As of August 2023, Opportunities for Otsego’s emergency homeless shelter transitioned to “family-only” and no longer houses single adults, unless pregnant.



In addition to emergency shelter services provided by Opportunities for Otsego, the Otsego County Department of Social Services (DSS) offers housing placement assistance for homeless at other facilities throughout Otsego County. Per Otsego County DSS 2023 Annual Report, the county placed 28 families and 245 individuals in emergency housing and assisted 29 individuals through its tiny homes project, fondly named *Phoenix Orchard*. Per September 4, 2024 Otsego County Board Meeting minutes, a total of 10 tiny homes will be erected by November 31, 2025.

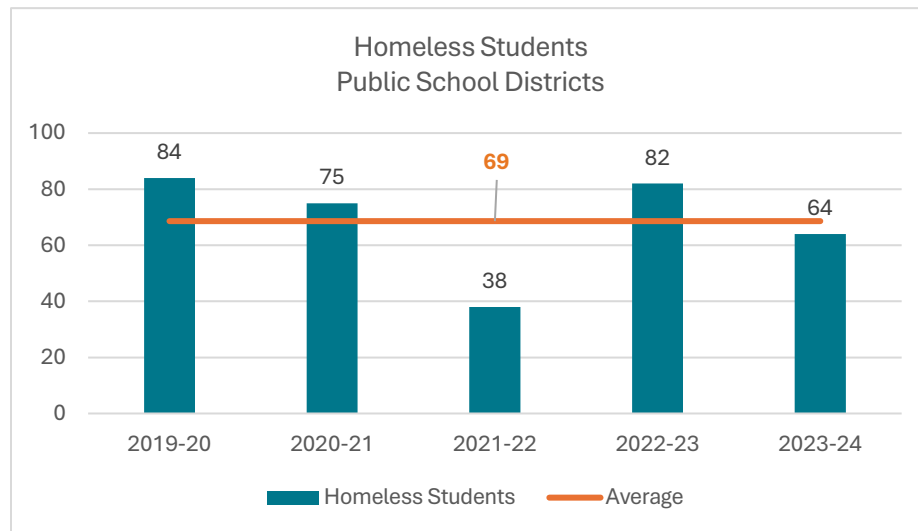
Code Blue: Under New York State law Code Blue, social service districts are required to shelter the homeless when winter temperatures drop to 32° or below, including wind-chill, between 4:00PM and 8:00AM. The Oneonta Warming Station, operated by Catholic Charities of Delaware and Otsego Counties, offers drop-in emergency shelter to provide overnight respite from winter weather. During the 2025 season, the Warming Station was open 151 nights and housed 125 unduplicated individuals; of which 85% identified as male, 14% female; and 1% “other”. On average, 13 people were sheltered each night at the facility. During the season, the Warming Station was over capacity on 36 nights, which

<sup>59</sup> Data provided by NY-511 Representative

required Catholic Charities to offer alternate arrangements for unsheltered persons including the Oneonta City Police Station vestibule, Motel 88, and the Super 8 Motel.

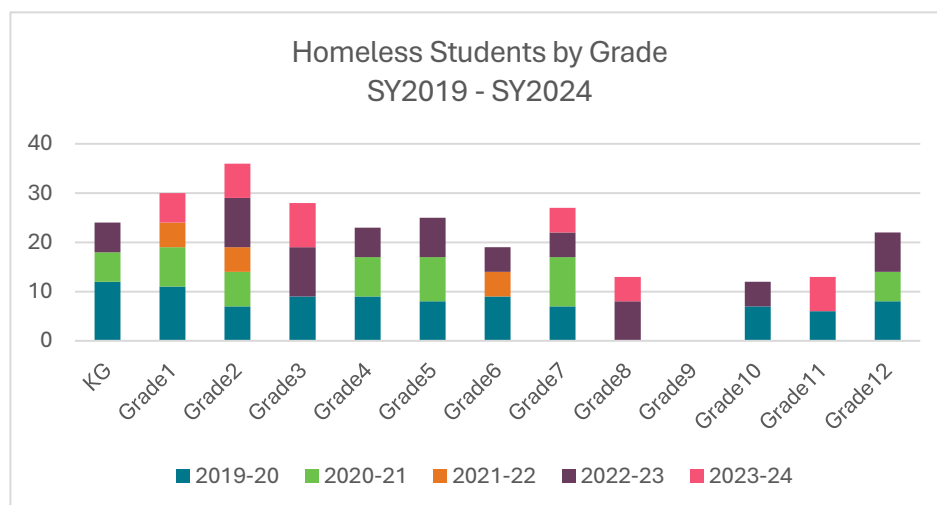
Homeless Children: According to the New York State Education Department, Student Information Repository System (SIRS), **64 unduplicated school age children were homeless and attending public school in Otsego County during the 2023-2024 school year**; down from 82 children reported during the previous school year. Approximately 67% (n=43) of these students were “doubled-up” – living with family friends, relatives, or others. Primary nighttime residence of the remaining students was hotel/motel (n=9) or a

congregate shelter (n=12). In comparison, during the 2022-2023 school year, 55% of students were living in a “doubled-up” situation; 21% were living in a hotel/motel, and 24% were in a congregate shelter. On average, Otsego County public school



districts educate 69 homeless students each year<sup>60</sup>. *Of note: These numbers may be an underrepresentation of the actual count to protect confidentiality. Individual counts are suppressed for districts reporting less than four (4) students.*

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Oneonta City School District had the highest number of homeless students (n=25), followed by Unatego (n=17), Richfield Springs (n=6), and Laurens (n=5). All other remaining school districts either reported zero students, or the data was suppressed to protect confidentiality.



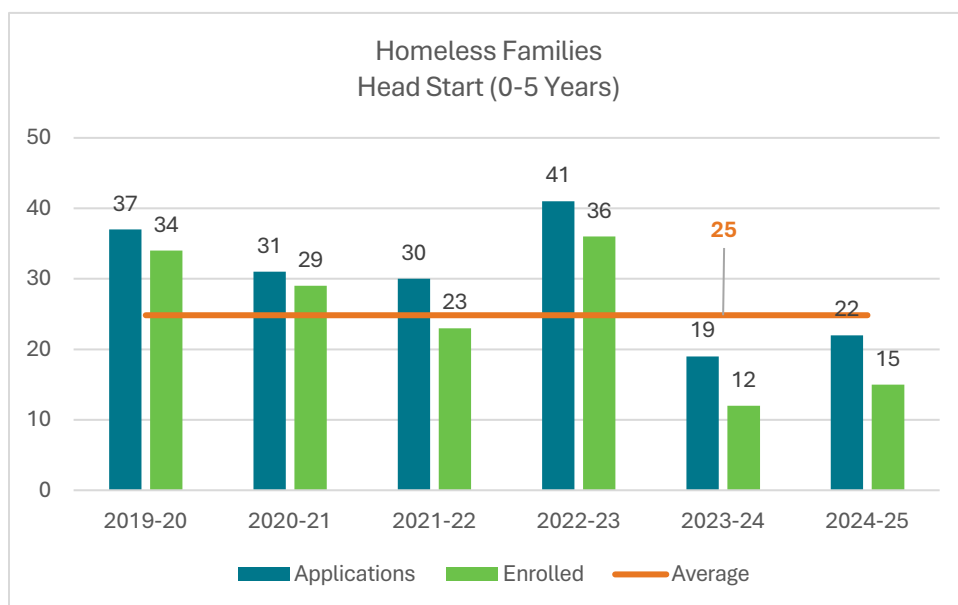
<sup>60</sup> <https://www.nysteachs.org/data-on-student-homelessness>

As a three-year average (2021-22 to 2023-2024), Oneonta educates an average of 26 homeless students a year, followed by Unatego (n=11), Richfield Springs (n=8), Laurens (n=5), and Milford (n=3).

**Elementary students (grades K-6) are the largest homeless student population in Otsego County at 68%.** Comparing rates of homelessness to total enrollment, Richfield Springs Central School has consistently ranked as one of the top three districts for the last five consecutive years<sup>61</sup>.

School District	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School District	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Cooperstown Central School District	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Edmeston Central School District	4.2%	2.8%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%
Gilbertsville-Mount Upton Central School District	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Laurens Central School District	3.0%	0.7%	0.0%	2.0%	1.7%
Milford Central School District	1.8%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Morris Central School District	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Oneonta City School District	2.2%	1.4%	1.4%	1.7%	1.5%
Otego-Unadilla Central School District	2.0%	0.6%	0.0%	2.1%	2.3%
Richfield Springs Central School District	4.2%	3.8%	2.3%	2.2%	1.5%
Schenevus Central School District	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Worcester Central School District	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

In addition to homeless children enrolled in public schools are children, aged birth to five, enrolled in Head Start. Like children enrolled in public schools, children in Head Start are considered “homeless” per the federal definition set forth by the McKinney-Vento Act;



living in a doubled-up situations; in a hotel/motel or congregate shelter; or unsheltered (e.g. car, park, campground, abandoned building). During the last program year, Opportunities for Otsego completed

<sup>61</sup> <https://nysteachs.org/topic-resource/data-on-student-homelessness-nys/> and <https://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php>

Head Start applications with 22 homeless families with 15 successfully enrolling. **On average, homeless families comprise 9.6% of all enrolled families in the Otsego County Head Start program.** Per federal guidelines, homeless children are categorically eligible for Head Start 0-5 programming and do not have to provide income documentation to qualify.



# NUTRITION

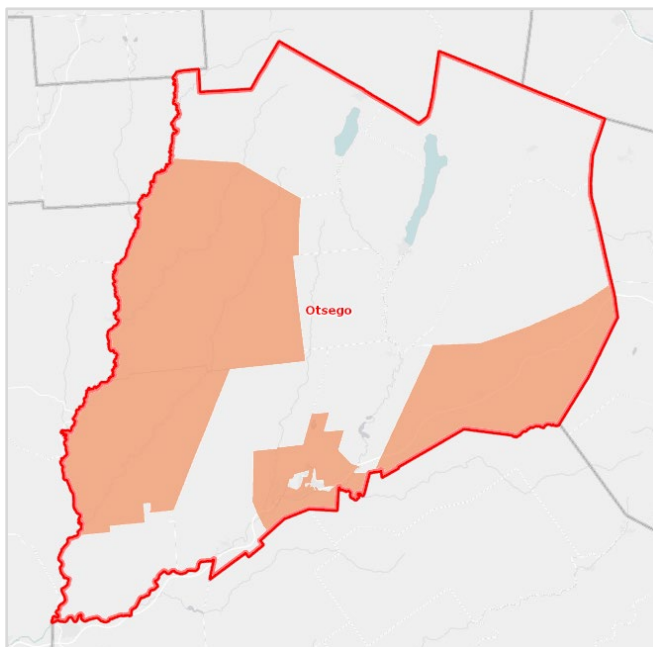
## NUTRITION

- Over 7,600 people in Otsego County - nearly 13% - are food insecure, of which 33% live above the income threshold to be eligible for supplemental nutrition programs.
- Over 66% of students enrolled in public schools across Otsego County are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Schools with the highest rate were Milford, Morris, and Unatego.
- The number of households benefiting from SNAP benefits increased 27.4% since 2019, with 3,756 households benefiting in 2024.
- On average, 2,114 meals are provided daily to those in need across Otsego County: 204 through Otsego County Office for the Aging congregate senior meals sites and deliveries; and 1,910 through HPNAP-sponsored meal sites, food pantries, and congregate shelters.

**Food Insecurity:** Food insecurity refers to the USDA’s measure of the lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food-insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time, rather it may indicate a household’s need to make trade-offs between important basic needs (e.g. housing costs, medical bills) and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods.

Per Feeding America 2023 estimates, **12.8% of Otsego County residents (n=7,670) are food insecure**. This number is up from the estimated 9.2% (n=5,440) of food insecure people in 2021. Of those considered food insecure in 2023, 33% live above the income threshold (200% FPL) to be eligible for SNAP and other nutrition programs<sup>62</sup>.

**Food Deserts:** A contributor to food insecurity is proximity to vendors that offer fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods. Food deserts are defined as census tracts where a substantial number or share of residents have low access to a supermarket or large grocery store. Low food access may be compounded by income and vehicle access. Within Otsego County, there are six census tracts considered a “food desert”. These tracts include the communities of Edmeston/Burlington (5904); Morris (5915); Schenevus/Worcester (5907); the Town of Oneonta (5908); and Census Tracts 5910 and 5911 in the City of Oneonta. Among all communities in Otsego County, three Census Tracts in the City of Oneonta have the highest rates of limited food access due to no vehicle: Census Tract 5910 (52.4%); Census Tract 5911 (26%); and Census Tract 5909 (12.6%)<sup>63</sup>.

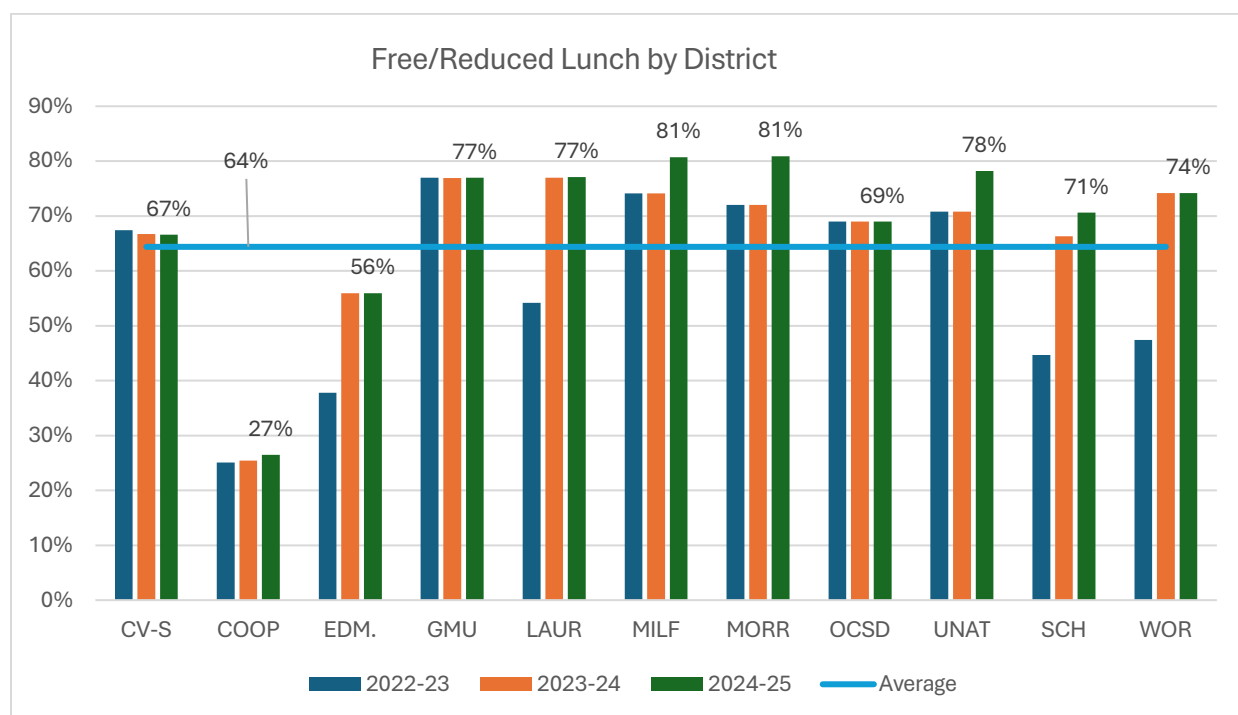


<sup>62</sup> <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2023/overall/new-york/county/otsego>

<sup>63</sup> US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, [USDA - Food Access Research Atlas](#): 2019

**Free and Reduced Lunch Program:** The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

Eligibility for the free/reduced school lunch program is based on household income. The income eligibility threshold for free meals is up to 130% of the federal poverty level (\$41,795 for a family of 4 annually). Eligibility for reduced lunch is between 131-185% of the federal poverty level (\$59,477 for a family of 4 annually). Per the New York State Department of Education, **66.2% of students enrolled in Otsego County public schools during 2024-2025 (n=3,731) are eligible for free/reduced lunch, with an average of 64% over the past three school years.** The table below illustrates the comparative rate of students participating in the free/reduced lunch program by district for school years 2022-23 through 2024-25. The school districts with the highest rates of free/reduced lunch during school year 2024-25 were Milford (81%), Morris (81%), and Unatego (78%). *NOTE: Data on Richfield Springs CSD free/reduced lunch participation was not available through public data sources.*



**Backpack Program:** To supplement student nutritional needs, all public schools in Otsego County offer a Backpack program, including Cherry Valley-Springfield; Cooperstown Elementary and Middle/High School; Edmeston; Gilbertsville-Mt Upton; Laurens, Milford; Morris; Oneonta City School District Elementary, Middle, and High Schools; Unatego; Richfield Springs; Schenevus; and Worcester. In addition, resources are available to students through CROP.

Through collaborations with SUNY Oneonta and the Community Foundation of Unadilla, Head Start students enrolled at these respective centers benefitted from a Backpack program during the 2024-25 program year.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP): SFSP is a summer feeding program sponsored by the USDA, which ensures low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. Approved organizations offer free meals to children under 18 years of age. Several approved SFSP programs operated across, and near, Otsego County during the summer of 2025. Sites may choose to serve breakfast, lunch, snacks, dinner, or a combination of meals<sup>64</sup>.

Summer Food Service Program (2025)					
Site Name	Town	Days	Breakfast Time	Lunch Time	Meal
Sidney Elementary School	Sidney	MTWTH	7:30AM-8:30AM	10:45AM-12:30PM	Served
Sidney High School	Sidney	MTWTH	7:30AM-8:30AM	10:45AM-12:15PM	Served
Unadilla Elementary School	Unadilla	MTWTH	7:45AM - 8:45AM	10:45AM - 12:15PM	Served
Unatego Church	Otego	MTWTHF	8:00AM - 8:45AM	11:00AM-12:30PM	Served
Morris Central School	Morris	MTWTHF	8:00AM - 8:30AM	11:00AM-11:30AM	Served
New Berlin Library	New Berlin	MTWTHF	9:00AM- 9:30AM	12:00PM – 12:30PM	Served
Unadilla Valley CSD	New Berlin	MTWTH	8:00AM - 8:30AM	10:30AM – 11:00AM	Served
Richfield Springs Elementary School	Richfield Springs	MTWTHF	8:00AM - 8:25AM	11:20AM-11:50AM	Served
Springfield Community Center	Springfield	MTWTHF		11:45AM-12:15PM 2:00PM-2:15PM <small>(snack)</small>	Served
Greater Plains Elementary School	Oneonta	MTWTHF		11:00AM - 11:30AM	To-Go
Wilber Park	Oneonta	MTWTHF		11:00AM - 11:30AM	To-Go

**Over ten percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted the cost of meeting dietary needs, acquiring health food, and paying for “basics” is a concern within Otsego County.**

*"Difficulty accessing healthy and diverse food options."*

*"Meals on Wheels daily delivery helps to check on how people are doing."*

*"Also have more flexibility with the income guidelines for people over 62 to help with...food stamps. Get Chobani to come to Cooperstown area. There are a lot of low-income people here in this area too. Cooperstown has its head in the sand when it comes to low-income people here."*

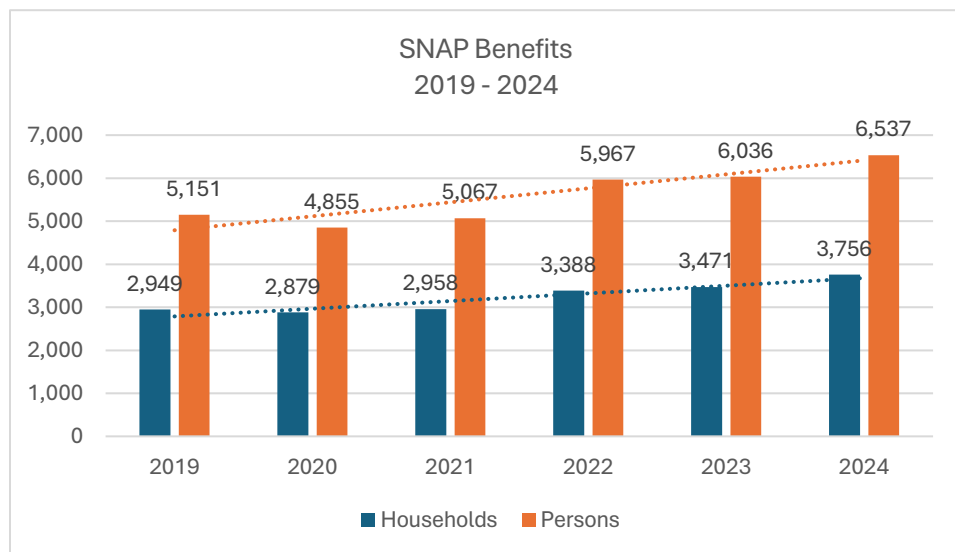
<sup>64</sup> <https://hungersolutionsny.org/federal-nutrition-programs/summer-food-service-program/>



**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** The SNAP caseload in Otsego County, including number of households, individual beneficiaries, and the average benefit amount, has gradually risen since 2019. Over the 5-year period from 2019 to 2024, the number of households increased by 27.4% and beneficiaries by 26.9%. The average monthly SNAP benefit for Otsego County households since 2019 increased \$114.22 to \$311.19/month as of September 2024<sup>65</sup>.

**During PY 2021-2024, an estimated 612 households enrolled in Opportunities for**

**Otsego programs received SNAP benefits; approximately 38.6%% of all households served.**



The average number of households and individuals receiving SNAP benefits annually in Otsego County for the past five years is shown in the accompanying chart. Data indicates a continual upward trend in SNAP benefits. *A proxy benefit to SNAP is categorically eligibility for other benefits and programs including Head Start and WIC.*

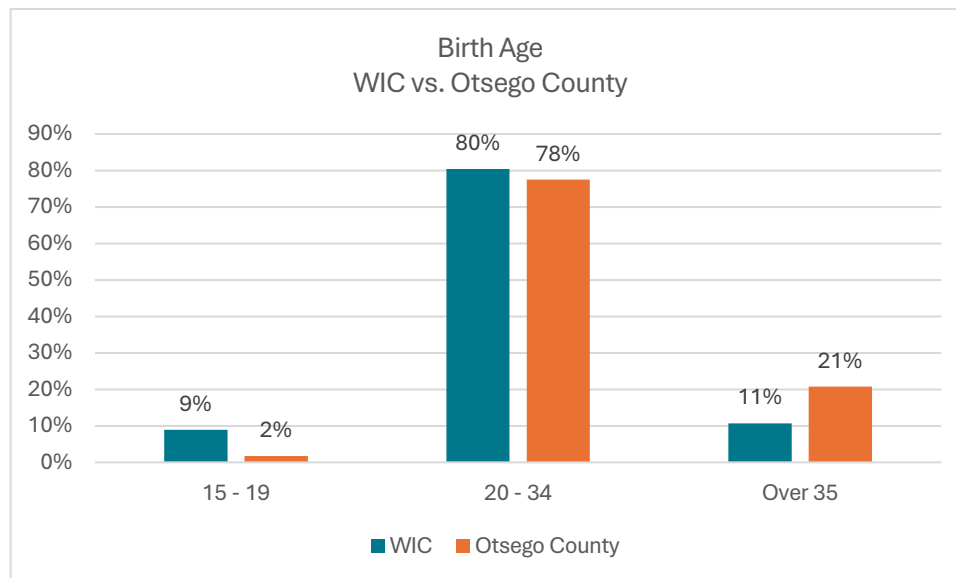
**Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program:** WIC provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. During 2025 YTD, **an average of 622 prenatal and postpartum women, infants, and children receive benefits monthly from the Otsego County WIC program.** Among the 40 prenatal mothers served by WIC, the majority are aged 20-34 (80%).

Below is a comparative analysis of the age of all women who gave birth in Otsego County (2022) and prenatal mothers benefitting from WIC (2025). Among the 458 birthing mothers, 78% were aged 20-34 (n=355). Of the 95 women over age 35 giving birth in 2022, 80% were age 35-39 (n=75) and 20% (n=20) age 40+. Note, there were no births to mothers under age 15 during 2022 in Otsego County.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/>

<sup>66</sup> WIC program report (2024) and NYSDOH Vital Statistics (2022)

In addition to supplemental nutrition, WIC, in recognizing the long-term health benefits for mother and baby, provides breastfeeding support to mothers. Breastfeeding goals have been established for WIC programs by the USDA and are



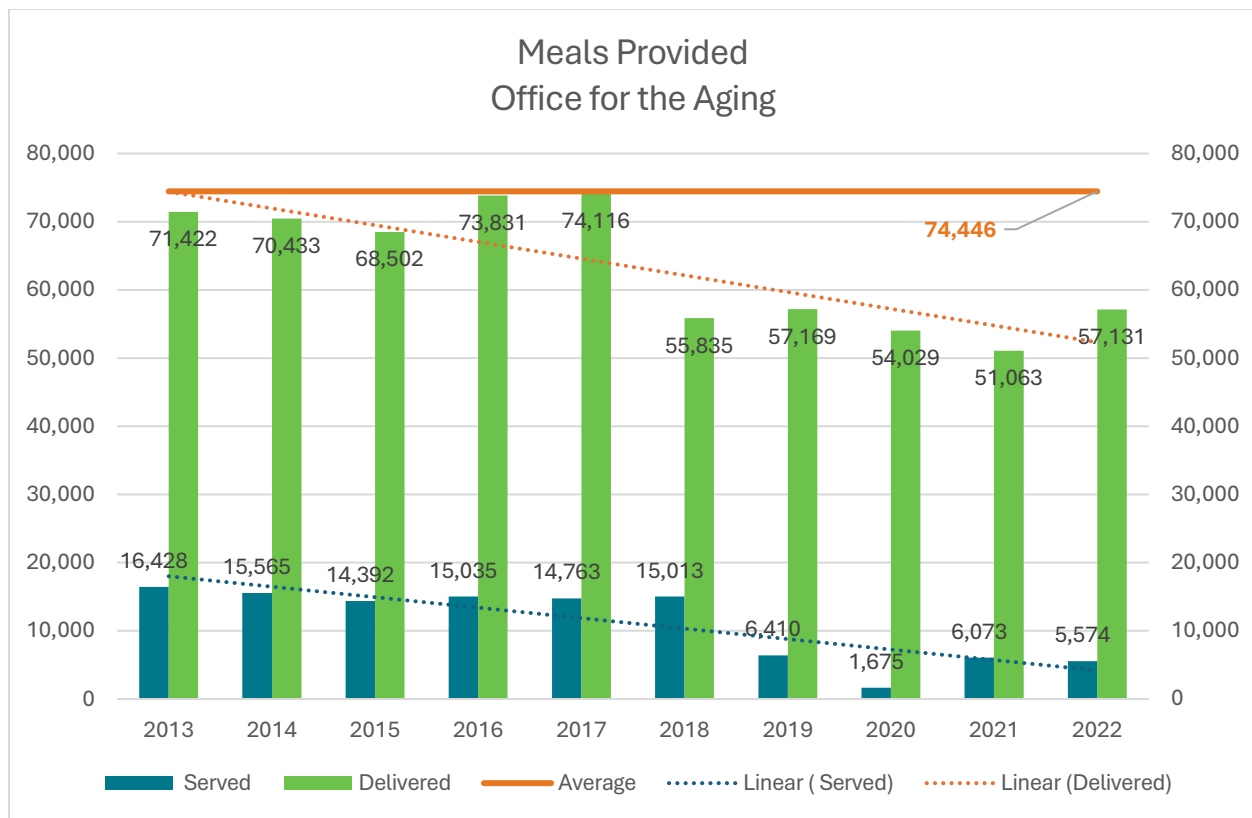
included in Healthy People 2030 as a social determinant of health indicator. Historically, “mothers with lower rates of breastfeeding tend to be young, low-income, African American, unmarried, less educated, participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), overweight or obese before pregnancy, and more likely to report their pregnancy was unintended.” Data on rates of breastfeeding for WIC participants across that nation is summarized in an annual report published by the USDA. Data from FY2023 is provided below for Opportunities for Otsego’s WIC program<sup>67</sup>.

Total Infants	Fully Breastfed	Partially Breastfed	Total Breastfed	Fully Formula Fed
140	31 (13%)	19 (25%)	50 (38%)	90 (62%)

**Senior Nutrition:** According to the Otsego County Office for the Aging website, there are three congregate senior dining centers located across Otsego County that provide nutritious meals and socialization to residents age 60 and older. Those seeking meals must make reservations 24 hours in advance of the established mealtime and are asked to make a small donation to eat. For those who cannot make it to a congregate meal site, home delivered frozen meals are an option. **On average, the Otsego County Office for the Aging provides 74,446 meals annually, or roughly 204 meals daily, through congregate meals sites and delivery programs.** A notable decrease in served meals was observed beginning in 2019, which may be attributed to COVID-related meal site closures<sup>68</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/wic-fy23-bfdla-report.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> <https://data.ny.gov/Human-Services/Home-Delivered-Meals-Served-by-County-by-the-Office/5y5b-3gix> AND <https://data.ny.gov/Human-Services/Congregate-Meals-Served-by-County-by-the-Office-fo/ytzm-8tkg>



The chart below lists each meal site, with the location, and days of operation.

Otsego County Senior Meal Sites (2025)			
Dining Location	Town	Days	Time
Cherry Valley Community Center	Cherry Valley	Monday/Wednesday	Noon
Nader Towers	Oneonta	Monday - Friday	11:30AM
Richfield Springs Community Center	Richfield Springs	Tuesday/Thursday	11:30AM

Additional nutrition support offered to people age 60 and older through the Office for the Aging are Farmers Market Coupons, a Senior Restaurant dining program, and Nutrition Education and Counseling. Farmer's Market coupons are provided to income-eligible seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at area Farmers' Markets. Recipients must either receive or be eligible to receive SSI, public assistance or Section 8 housing subsidy or have monthly household income at or below \$2,322 (1-person household), \$3,152 (2-person household), or \$3,981 (3-person household). Coupons books are valued at \$25 and can be used from July through November. The Senior Dining program offers seniors the opportunity to eat at local restaurants at a reduced cost.

**Feeding Programs and Food Pantries:** Per NYS Department of Health data on Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Programs (HPNAP), there are nineteen (19) HPNAP supported sites in Otsego County. These sites may include soup kitchens, food pantries and congregate shelters. Over the period July 2023-June 2024, these nineteen separate sites received 115,082 requests for assistance from

individuals and provided 697,130 meals at an average of 1,910 meals provided daily. Of those served, 28.7% were under 18 years of age; 53.3% were between 18-64 years old; and 18% were 65+<sup>69</sup>.

The following charts summarize community feeding programs and pantries operating in Otsego County<sup>70</sup>. Additional sites not open to the public include A. O. Fox Memorial Hospital Employee Pantry, Bassett Healthcare Network, ARC Otsego (employees and clients), Opportunities for Otsego emergency shelters, Oneonta Vets Outreach Center, and campus-based food pantries for students attending Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta<sup>71</sup>. Seasonal nutrition assistance is available through a variety of holiday food basket programs in Otsego County. Organizations providing seasonal assistance include The Family Service Association, the Salvation Army, as well as community pantries and groups (e.g. Rotary Clubs, churches).

Otsego County "Soup Kitchen" and Feeding Programs			
Town	Location	Hours of Operation	HPNAP
Year-Round Sites			
Oneonta	Your Safe Haven at St. James Episcopal Church	Mon - Fri 4:00- 5:30PM	✓
Oneonta	Saturday's Bread at First United Methodist Church	Saturday 11:00AM- 1:00PM	✓
Oneonta	Meal with a Message at Salvation Army	Sunday 4:00PM-5:00PM	✓
Seasonal Programs			
Oneonta	Soup-To-Go at Elm Park United Methodist	Wednesday (Jan-March) 4:00PM-5:00PM	
Oneonta	Thanksgiving Community Dinner sponsored by St. Mary's Parish and The Lord's Table	Thanksgiving Day Delivery: 10:30 AM Take Out: 12:00 - 1:00PM	
Oneonta	Friends of Christmas (Dinner for Community) at First United Methodist	Christmas Day 12:30PM - 2:30 PM Delivery too	
Oneonta	Summer Food Program, Catholic Charities	July-August 11 AM - 1 PM	

Otsego County Community Food Pantries			
Town	Location	Hours of Operation	HPNAP
Cherry Valley	Daily Bread Food Pantry at the Community Center	Tuesday, 9:00am-Noon Saturday, 10:00am – 1:00pm	
Cherry Valley	Mobile Pantry, Cherry Valley Springfield Central School	1st Monday of the month	✓
Cooperstown	Ecumenical Food Pantry at the First	Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri 10AM - 4PM; Thu. 1-5PM	

<sup>69</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/nutrition/hpnaps/services\\_provided.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/nutrition/hpnaps/services_provided.htm)

<sup>70</sup> Hunger Coalition of Otsego County

<sup>71</sup> <https://regionalfoodbank.net/agency-list-by-county/otsego/>

	Presbyterian Church	; Sat 10-Noon	
Edmeston	Community Cupboard	Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri - 12 -6PM ; Sat 9am-12pm	
Edmeston	Community Cupboard Mobile Food Pantry	Days, Times, and Locations vary	
Gilbertsville	Butternut Valley Food Pantry at Christ Church Episcopal	Thursdays 3 - 5PM; Saturdays 10AM-12PM	✓
Hartwick	United Methodist Food Pantry	Mon/Weds/Thurs 10am- Noon	✓
Laurens	St. Matthew's Lutheran Church	The 3rd Thursday 4PM	
Maryland	FDT's Food Pantry	Last Saturday of month 12 - 2 PM	✓
Milford	Milford Food Pantry at the American Legion	Saturday, 9:30AM–11:30AM	✓
Mt. Upton	United Methodist Church	Saturdays 11 AM - 1 PM	
New Berlin	First United Methodist Church	Mondays 3 - 5 PM	
South New Berlin	Southtown Food Pantry, 3294 State Route 8	Monday 11am-2 pm Thursday 2-5 pm	
Oneonta	Helping Hands Food Pantry, 7th Day Adventist Church	By appointment	
Oneonta	Your Safe Haven at St. James' Episcopal Church	Tue/Wed/Thurs/Fri/ 11:15 AM – 1:45 PM	✓
Oneonta	St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church	Mon,Wed & Fri, 11AM-3PM	✓
Oneonta	Salvation Army	Mon/Tue/Wed/Thurs/Fri 11:30am-2pm	✓
Otego	Otego Community Food Pantry	Thursday, 3:15pm-5:15pm; Saturday, 11:00am-1:00pm	✓
Richfield Springs	Church of Christ Uniting	Tues/Thur 10 AM–12 PM 2nd/4th Sat 11 AM–12 PM	✓
Schenevus	Tri-Valley Food Pantry at the Methodist Church	3rd Thursday 11am-12:30pm	✓
Schuyler Lake	Schuyler Lake Food Cupboard, 128 Church St	3rd Saturday 11AM - 1PM	
Unadilla	Unadilla Community Food Pantry	Mon/Fri/Sat 11AM–12:30PM	✓
Worcester	First Presbyterian Church	Appointment only	✓

**Farmer's Markets:** There are six established Farmer's Markets in Otsego County that offer fresh, local, seasonally grown fruits, vegetables, and meats. The benefits of Farmer's Markets are that consumers get to buy direct from the farmer/producer, profit loss is minimized by circumventing the middleman, and more capital remains in the community. Few markets accept Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards (SNAP), which increase access to nutritious food for low-income households, FreshConnect Checks, and Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons typically distributed by WIC and Office for the Aging<sup>72</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> <https://agriculture.ny.gov/farmers-markets-county>

Otsego County Farmers Markets (2025)						
Market Name	Location	Days	Season	FMNP	FCC	SNAP
Richfield Springs Area Farmers' Market	Spring Park Main St. (Rt. 20) Richfield Springs	Saturdays 9AM-1PM	June 21-October 25	✓	✓	
Morris Farmers' Market	Guy Rathbon Park 117 Main Street	Thu 2:30PM- 5:30PM		✓	✓	
Middlefield Orchard Farm Stand	2274 State Hwy 166 Cooperstown	Mon-Sat 9AM-5PM	June 14-November 22	✓	✓	
Cooperstown Tuesday Farmers' Market	101 Main Street in Pioneer Alley Cooperstown	Tue 12PM- 4PM	May 1-December 31	✓	✓	✓
Cooperstown Saturday Farmers' Market	101 Main Street in Pioneer Alley Cooperstown	Sat 10AM- 2PM	Year-round	✓	✓	✓
Oneonta Farmers' Market	Dietz Street	Sat 9AM- Noon	Year-round	✓	✓	

Additional fresh produce is available through the Pathfinder Produce program of Pathfinder Village. This weekly market offers a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables for pick-up at its Edmeston location or by delivery within a 20-mile radius of Edmeston.

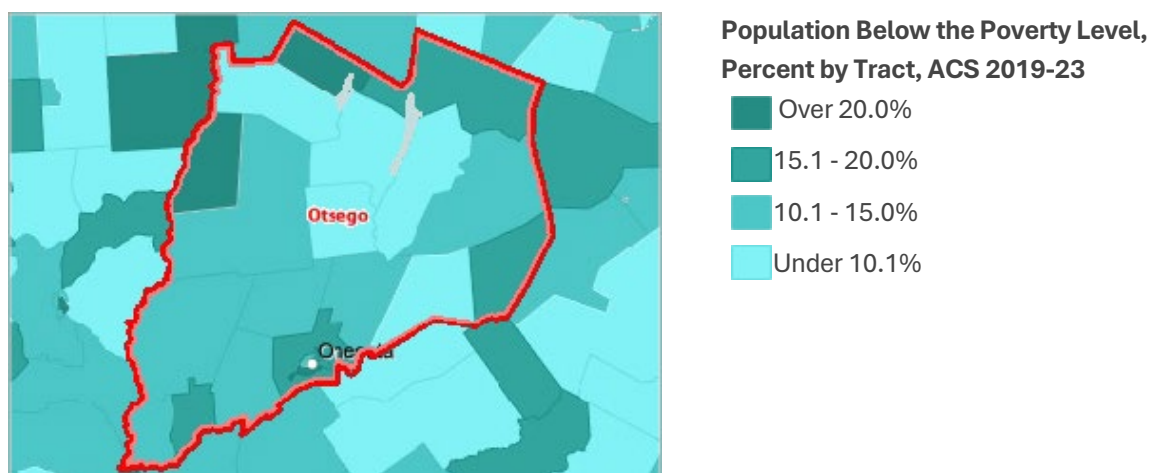


**INCOME**

## INCOME

- An estimated 14.3% of people living in poverty in Otsego County, with the highest concentrations in the towns of Edmeston, Richfield Springs, and Census Tract 5911 in the City of Oneonta.
- Over 10,225 people in Otsego County – nearly 46% - are considered “working poor” .
- During 2024, Otsego County managed 352 public assistance cases: 176 TANF; 54 Family Assistance; and 122 Safety Net Assistance.

**Income Levels:** The median household income in Otsego County during 2023 was \$67,086; \$17,492 below the New York State median income of \$84,578. According to the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 14.5% of Otsego County residents live below the poverty level, of which 18.6% are under 18 years of age (n=1,607) and 9.4% over 65 years of age (n=1,173). **The highest rates of poverty within Otsego County are within the townships of Edmeston (28.1%), Richfield Springs (21.3%); and the City of Oneonta (Census Tract 5911) at a rate of 21.72%.** People living below 100% of FPL in these communities represent approximately 1,752 people.



**ALICE:** Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) households have incomes above the Federal Poverty Level but below the basic cost of living; also referred to as “working poor”. Per 2022 ACS Census data, of the 22,305 estimated households in Otsego County, 12.1% (n= 2,707) live below or at the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and 33.7% (n=7,518) live above the FPL but still struggle to meet a minimum household budget. The percentage of households deemed below the ALICE threshold in 2022 (45.8%) was the second highest rate over going back to 2014. **On average, 45.3% of Otsego County households were considered “working poor” over the period 2014 to 2022.**

Below ALICE Threshold (Otsego County)				
2014	2016	2018	2021	2022
10,896 (45.8%)	10,440 (44.4%)	10,278 (43.6%)	10,501 (46.8%)	10,225 (45.8%)

**Over PY 2021-2024, 47.6% of households accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego earned income through employment or employment and other sources; 23.5% receive income from a**



**pension, Social Security retirement, SSI, SSDI, unemployment benefits, or other income sources; and 16.6% reported no income.**

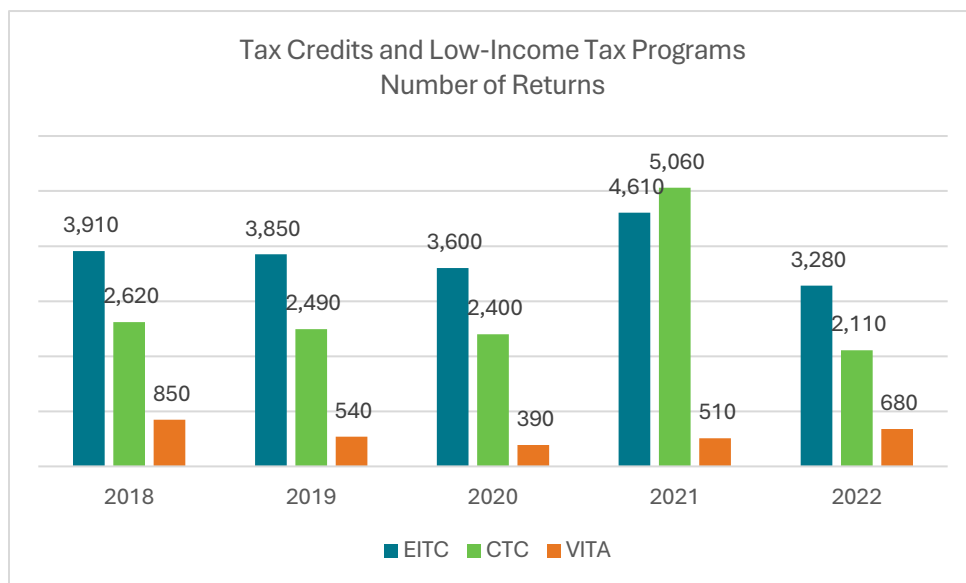
Tax Credits and Programs: There are several income tax credits intended to benefit low-income earners and families with children. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a tax credit for certain people who work and have low wages. This tax credit reduces the amount of taxes taken out each pay period and the amount of tax owed at the end of the fiscal year. People who file for the EITC may also receive a refund. **The number of EITC filed for tax year 2022 in Otsego County was 3,280. In total, \$6,844,000 was received in EITC.**

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) helps families with children through tax breaks. **In tax year 2022, a total of 2,110 returns claimed the CTC with \$3,878,000 in credits earned.**

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals; generally, households that make between \$60,000-\$67,000 or less annually, persons with disabilities; and limited English-speaking taxpayers. TCE offers free tax help to people over 60 years of age. Of all 2022 tax returns, 680 were prepared by volunteer income tax assistance (VITA) preparers; 270 through the VITA program and 410 through tax counseling for the elderly (TCE). Of these returns, 50 were EITC tax returns. VITA sites available to Otsego County residents are Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta.

Debt Delinquency: Debt from credit or unpaid bills often burdens family financial well-being and hinders opportunities for advanced education and homeownership. Per data from the Urban Institute, approximately 16% of Otsego County residents are delinquent on accrued debt with an average of \$2,231 in collections. Among all categories, student loans represent 1% of all debt in collections; 1% medical debt; 4% credit cards; and 3% auto/retail loans<sup>73</sup>.



<sup>73</sup> [https://apps.urban.org/features/debt-interactive-map/?type=overall&variable=household\\_income\\_avg&state=36&county=36077](https://apps.urban.org/features/debt-interactive-map/?type=overall&variable=household_income_avg&state=36&county=36077)

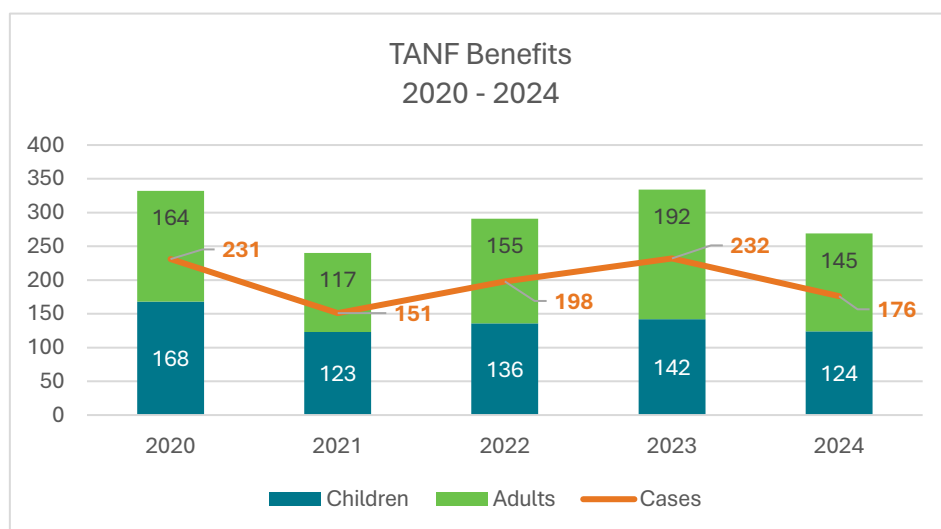
**To make sure they had enough money on hand for basic needs:**

**Up to 21% of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted they've cut back on expenses - recreation, food, paying bills, and child support**

**Up to 11% of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey have taken on additional debt – using credit cards, borrowing from friends/family, and securing personal loans**

#### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):

TANF is a federal assistance program that provides cash assistance to low-income families with dependent children. The accompanying chart provides the average number of TANF cases/households and recipients in Otsego County from 2020-2024 based on

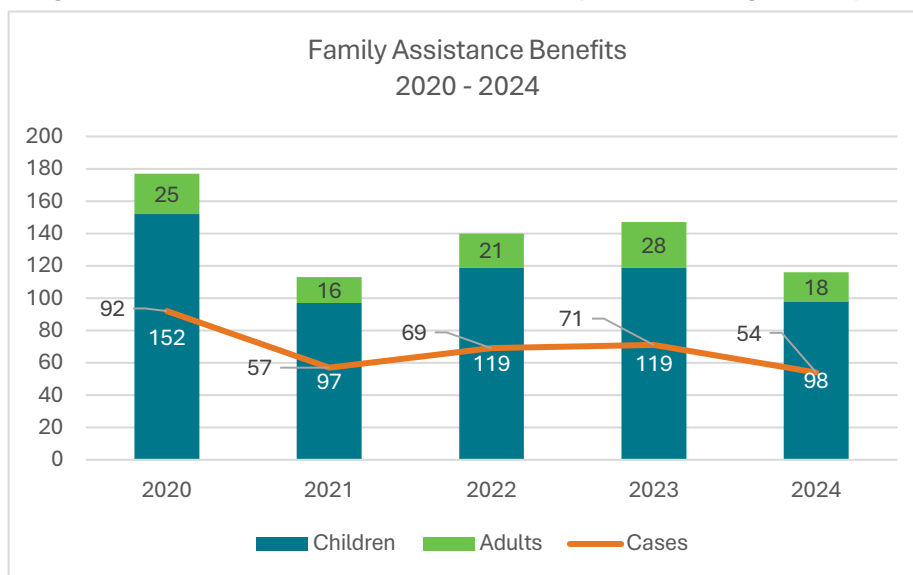


September caseload data. The year with the greatest average number of recipients was 2023 at 334 recipients. Over the 5-year period, there was an average of 198 active cases each month benefitting 293 people. In March 2025, Otsego County reported 219 active TANF cases benefitting 304 recipients (115 children and 189 adults) at a cost of \$211,020 or \$694 per recipient<sup>74</sup>.

Family Assistance: Family Assistance (FA) provides cash assistance to eligible needy families that include a minor child living with a parent or a caretaker relative. FA operates under federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) guidelines. Under FA, eligible adults are limited to receiving benefits for a total of 60 months in their lifetime, including months of TANF-funded assistance granted in other states. Adults receiving FA who are determined to be able to work must comply with federal work requirements to receive FA benefits.

<sup>74</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/>

The table below provides the average number of FA cases/households and recipients in Otsego County from 2020-2024 as of September each year. The year with the greatest average number of recipients and cases was 2020 with 177 people and 92 cases. Over the 5-year period, on average 117 children and 22 adults benefitted from FA. As of March 2025, there were 56 active FA cases in Otsego County encompassing 121 persons (99 children, 22 adults)<sup>75</sup>.



Over the period July 2023 - June 2024, Otsego County denied 166 applications for Family Assistance Program. Reasons for denial included financial issues (n=9); residence issues (n=2), compliance issue with employment (n=13); compliance issue “other” (n=141); and other reason (n=1)<sup>76</sup>. Over the same period, Otsego County closed 61 Family Assistance cases. Reason for closure include client request (n=5); financial issues (n=5); residence issues (n=2); compliance issue “other” (n=48); and other reason (n=1)<sup>77</sup>.

**Safety Net Assistance:** Safety Net Assistance (SNA) provides cash assistance to needy individuals and families who are not eligible for Family Assistance cash benefits through the local Department of Social Services. SNA is for: Single adults; Childless couples; Children living apart from any adult relative; Families of persons found to be abusing drugs or alcohol; Families of persons refusing drug/alcohol screening, assessment or treatment; or non-citizens who are eligible for TA, but who are not eligible for federal reimbursement. Recipients of SNA who are determined to be able to work must also comply with work requirements to receive SNA benefits.

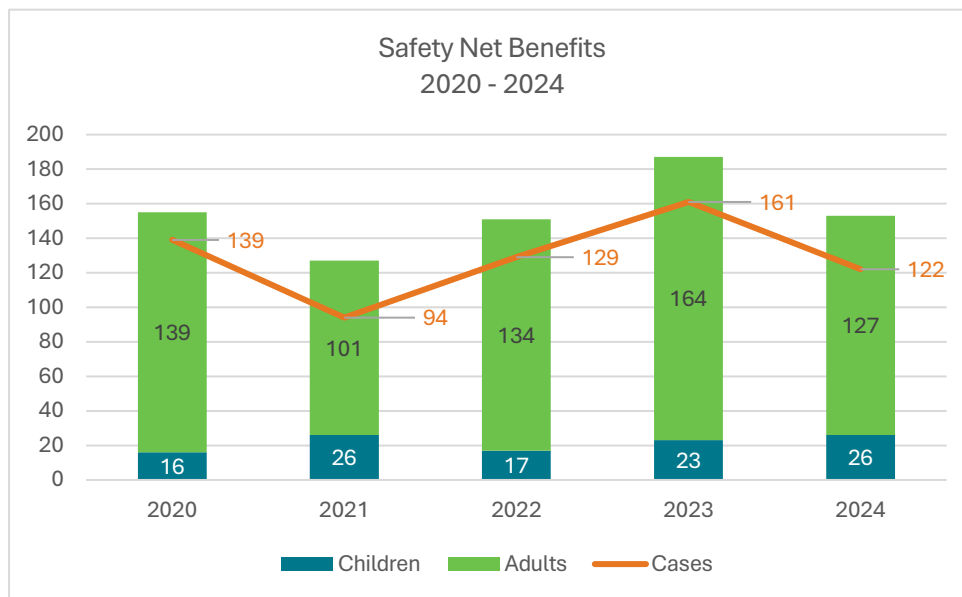
<sup>75</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/>

<sup>76</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/legislative-report/2024-Legislative-Report.pdf> - Table 3

<sup>77</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/legislative-report/2024-Legislative-Report.pdf> - Table 6

The table below provides the average number of SNA cases and recipients in Otsego County from 2020-2024. The year with the greatest average number of recipients and cases was 2023 with 187 persons and 161 cases. Over the five-year period, 22 children and 133 adults on average benefitted from SNA monthly. During March 2025, there were 163 active SNA cases in Otsego County encompassing 183 persons (16 children, 167 adults).

Over the period July 2023 - June 2024, Otsego County denied 627 applications for



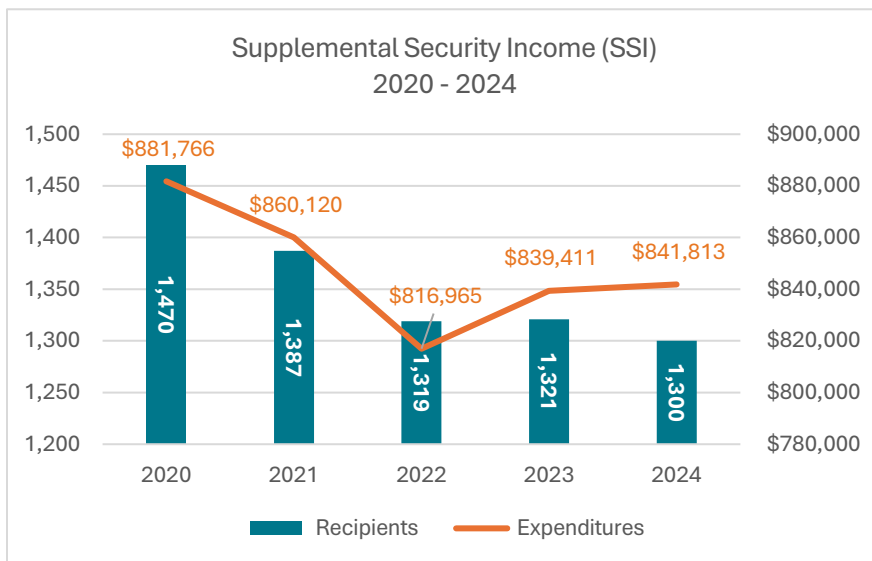
Safety Net Assistance. Reasons for denial included financial issues (n=46); residence issues (n=28), compliance issue with employment (n=66); compliance issue “other” (n=474); and other reason (n=13)<sup>78</sup>. Over the same period, Otsego County closed 150 Family Assistance cases. Reason for closure include client request (n=11); financial issues (n=30); residence issues (n=11); compliance issue with employment (n=8); compliance issue “other” (n=86); and other reason (n=4)<sup>79</sup>.

**Social Security Income:** SSI, or Supplemental Security Income, is a federal program that provides monthly cash payments to people aged 65+, as well blind or disabled people of any age, including children. To qualify, individuals also must have little or no income and few resources (value of the things owned must be less than \$2,000 if single or less than \$3,000 if married).

<sup>78</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/legislative-report/2024-Legislative-Report.pdf> - Table 4

<sup>79</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/legislative-report/2024-Legislative-Report.pdf> - Table 7

The accompanying table illustrates the average monthly number of SSI recipients in Otsego County for the years 2020 through 2024 and the average monthly expenditures for the same years. The year with the greatest average number of recipients and cases was 2020 with 1,470 people. Over the five-year period, an average of 1,359 people received SSI benefits



monthly. During March 2025, there were 1,259 recipients of SSI in Otsego County<sup>80</sup>. **Over the program years 2021-2024, 11.7% of households (n=185) households accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego reported Social Security, SSI, or SSDI as an income source.**

Child Support Collections: Local social service districts can assist custodial parents in obtaining financial support and medical insurance coverage for their children by locating noncustodial parents; establishing parentage; establishing, modifying, and enforcing support orders; and collecting and distributing child support payments.

Per data from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), \$383,823.81 was collected on behalf of custodial parents and their children in Otsego County during March 2025. Of the funds collected, 1.7% was collected on behalf of children currently receiving public assistance; 67.2% collected on former public assistance cases; and 31.1% on behalf of children that have never received public assistance<sup>81</sup>. **Over the program years 2021-2024, 3% percent of households (n=49) accessing support from Opportunities for Otsego reported child support as an income source.**

<sup>80</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/> - Table 17

<sup>81</sup> <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/> - Table 20

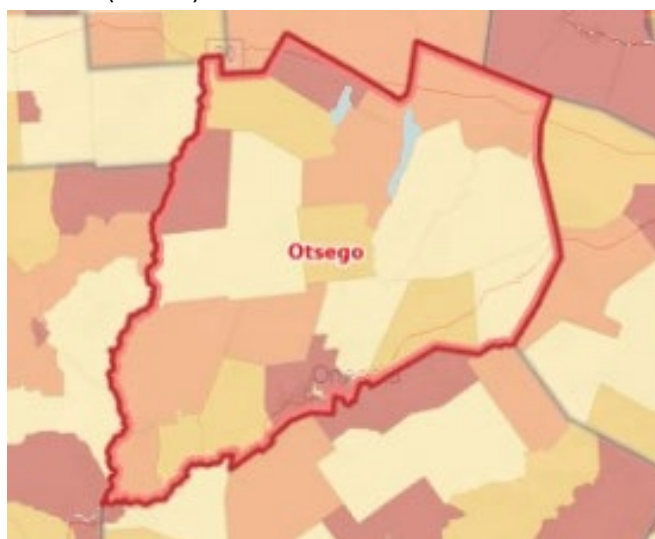


# TRANSPORTATION

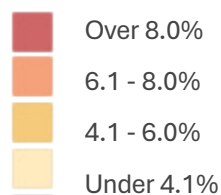
## TRANSPORTATION

- Over 1,600 households in Otsego County (7.1%) do not own a vehicle. The highest concentrations are in the City of Oneonta where public transportation is readily available; Richfield Springs; and Edmeston.
  - Ninety-two percent of registered vehicles in Otsego County are gas powered.
  - The average work commute time is 23.4 minutes with nearly one-quarter of workers traveling between 9AM – midnight.
  - Among working adults, people employed in sales and office occupations comprise the largest population using public transportation
- 

Households with No Motor Vehicle: There are 1,610 households (7.1%) in Otsego County that do not own a vehicle. Census Tracts 5910 and 5911 in the City of Oneonta have the highest rate of households without a vehicle at 22% (n=84) and 12.2% (n=194) respectively. Additional areas with a high rate of households without a vehicle are Richfield Springs (10.3%, n=78) and Edmeston (9.9%, n=63), Census Tract 5917 in the City of Oneonta (8.4%, n=49), and the Town of Oneonta (8.2%, n=170). Overall, households in the City of Oneonta represent 34.6% of the total county-wide population who do not own a vehicle (n=527).



**Households with No Vehicle, Percent by Tract, ACS 2019-23**

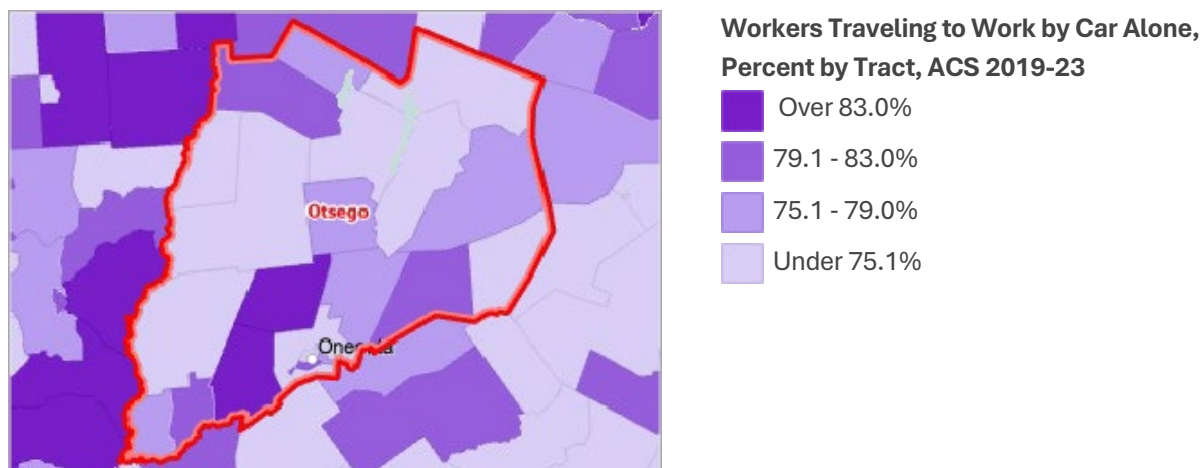


**Eleven percent of respondents to the 2025 Otsego County Community Needs Assessment survey noted the cost of purchasing and maintaining a personal vehicle as a challenge.**

*“[Road conditions] are to the point of damaging shocks and suspensions.”*

Commuter Trends: Of the estimated 26,101 workers age 16 and older in Otsego County, 73% drive to work alone compared to 49.7% of workers across New York State and 70.2% of workers in the nation. Alternate means of commuting by Otsego County workers are carpool (8.6%); walking or ride a bicycle (7.4%); some form of public transportation (0.8%); and taxicabs (0.7%). An estimated 9.5% of workers

work from home. Areas with the highest rate of solo commuters are Laurens 87.9% (n=804); Otsego 84% (n=917), 82.6% Schenevus (n=601), Unadilla 81.3% (n=708), and Exeter 81% (n=624).



**The average commute time for Otsego County workers is 23.4 minutes**, which is quicker than the national average of 26.8 minutes. Among all workers working outside the home, 37.6% commute less than 15 minutes; 31.5% drive between 15-30 minutes; 24% drive between 30-60 minutes; and 6.9% are considered "super commuters", driving more than 60 minutes to get to their place of work.

**Workers with the longest average commute time in Otsego County live in the town of Schenevus at 32 minutes.** Workers from both Worcester and the Burlington/Pittsfield/New Lisbon area travel an average of 28 minutes; Cherry Valley commuters travel an average of 27 minutes and those living in the western areas of Unadilla travel an average of 24 minutes to get to work. Data on other Census Tracts was unavailable.

As an average, among all townships and all modes of transportation, **24.6% of workers living in Otsego County commute to work between the hours of 9:00AM - Midnight**; 16.9% between 7:00AM - 7:29AM; 14.1% between 7:30AM - 7:59AM; and 11% between 6:30AM-6:59AM<sup>82</sup>.

**Vehicle Fuel Types:** Per New York State Department of Motor Vehicle data, of the 49,214 vehicles registered in Otsego County, 92% are fueled by gas; 6.7% by diesel; and 0.9% are flex fuel or electric<sup>83</sup>.

**EV Charging Stations:** For drivers with electric vehicles, there are 85 public charging locations at 20 locations across Otsego County.

<sup>82</sup> 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S0802 – Means of Transportation to Work by Selected Characteristics

<sup>83</sup> NYS Open Data - Vehicle and Boat Registrations by Fuel Type per County



Public EV Charging Stations <sup>84</sup>					
Location	Level 2	DC Fast	Network	Connector Types	EV Pricing
<b>Cherry Valley</b>					
Village of Cherry Valley	2	0	Non-Networked	J1772	Free
<b>Cooperstown</b>					
The Inn at Cooperstown	2	0	Tesla Destination	J1772 TESLA	Free
Glen Avenue Suites	1	0	Non-Networked	J1772	Free for guests only
Doubleday EV	2	0	ChargePoint Network	J1772	
OMG EV Charger 656 Co Hwy 33	8	0	ChargePoint Network	J1772	
Best Western Cooperstown	10	0	CHARGESMART_EV	J1772	
<b>Richfield Springs</b>					
The Village Motel	4	0	CHARGESMART_EV	J1772	
Banklofts	4	0	ChargePoint Network	J1772	
<b>Winfield</b>					
Town of Winfield Garage	2	0	Non-Networked	J1772	
West Winfield - Parking Lot	3	0	EVOKE	J1772	\$0.25 per kWh
<b>Milford</b>					
Comfort Inn & Suites Milford Cooperstown	10	0	CHARGESMART_EV	J1772	
<b>Oneonta</b>					
Country Club Imports 55 Oneida Street	2	2	Non-Networked	CHADEMO; J1772; J1772COMBO	Free
SUNY Oneonta 24-26 Ravine Pkwy N.	2	0	ChargePoint Network	J1772	
SUNY Oneonta 108 Ravine Parkway	4	0	Blink Network	J1772	
SUNY Oneonta Alumni Hall	4	0	Blink Network	J1772	
Hampton Inn 225 River Street	2	0	Tesla Destination	Tesla	Free
Mirabito Convenience Store #69 4968 NY-23	0	8	Tesla	Tesla	
Mirabito Convenience Store	0	4	Electrify America	CHADEMO	

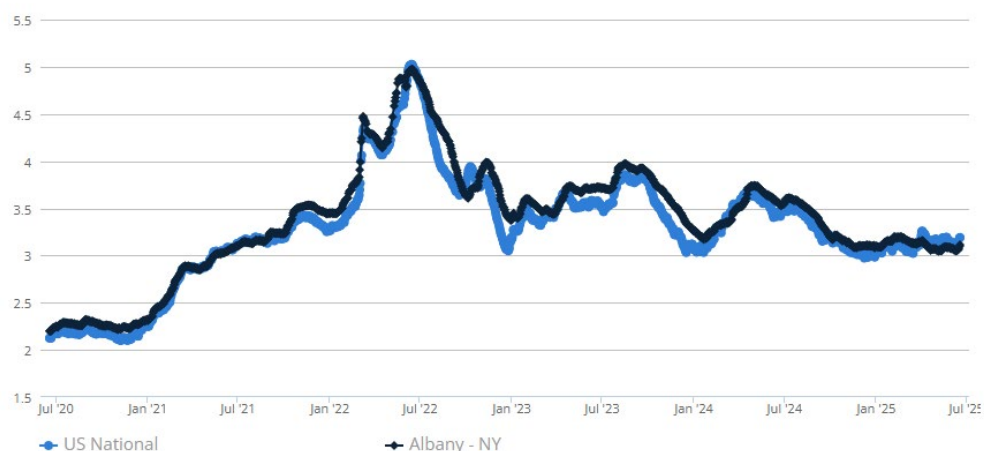
<sup>84</sup> <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Drive-Clean-Rebate-For-Electric-Cars-Program/Charging-Options/Electric-Vehicle-Station-Locator#/find>

#69 4968 NY-23				J1772COMBO	
City of Oneonta, Dietz Street	2	0	ChargePoint Network	J1772	
Brooks BBQ	4	0	VIALYNK	J1772	

Vehicle Fuel Prices: Vehicle fuel prices have fluctuated dramatically from 2020 to current. Gas prices in Albany, New York ranged from a low of \$2.19 in July 2020 to a high of \$4.97 in June 2022. On average, fuel costs in the Albany area are higher than national averages. **Fluctuations in gas prices add an additional financial burden**

**for households as they not only impact daily commutes, but the cost of everyday items such as delivery fees, groceries, and postage.** The

accompanying below illustrates gas prices over a 5-year time span for Albany, New York<sup>85</sup>.



Public Transportation: There are two public transportation providers in Otsego County. Oneonta Public Transit (OPT) is run by the City of Oneonta and operates routes within the city, town, and one route to Cooperstown. OPT provides service for the general fare paying public. Otsego Express is operated by Otsego County. The County's contracted operator is Birnie Bus. Otsego Express provides nine routes throughout the area. Otsego Express provides service for the general fare-paying public and for clients of the county Department of Social Services Medicaid program. The majority of OPT routes run Monday through Saturday; two routes have additional service on Sunday. Otsego Express operates Monday through Friday. All routes run for five days; however, only provide mid-day service on four routes.

Oneonta Public Transit (OPT) Route Schedule							
Route	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Commuter Route (6:00AM-6:55AM)	X	X	X	X	X		
Southside	X	X	X	X	X	X	12-6 only
West End	X	X	X	X	X		
East End						X	

<sup>85</sup> <https://fuelinsights.gasbuddy.com/charts>

Cooperstown	X	X	X	X	X	limited hours	
River Street	X	X	X	X	X		
SUNY Oneonta	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hartwick College/Southside Night		X	X	X	X	X	
Hillside	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Otsego Express Route Schedule					
Route	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Richfield Springs - Oneonta – Cooperstown (#1) <i>Service along Route 11 and 205 into Laurens, Mt. Vision and Hartwick</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Richfield Springs - Edmeston – Cooperstown (#2) <i>Service along Route 51 and 20 into West Winfield, Exeter, Burlington, Schuyler Lake, and Fly Creek</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Richfield Springs - Cooperstown - Cherry Valley (#3-4) <i>Service along Route 80 and 33 into Schuyler Lake, Fly Creek, Springfield Center, and East Springfield</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Oneonta - East Worcester (#5) <i>Service along Route 7 into Maryland, Schenevus, Worcester, and East Worcester</i>		X	X	X	
Oneonta – Sidney (#6) <i>Service along Route 7 into Otego, Wells Bridge, and Unadilla</i>	X	X	X	X	X
Richfield Springs - Edmeston – Cooperstown (#12) <i>Service along Route 51 and 20 into Schuyler Lake, Burlington, and Fly Creek</i>	X	X	X	X	X

Oneonta Public Transportation (OPT) fixed route fares range from \$0.75 for students (age 5-18) to \$2.25 for commuters. The standard adult fare is \$1.50 and seniors (65+) are \$1.00. Additional charges range from \$0.75 to \$1.00 for transfers and off-route service. The standard OPT Cooperstown fare for students and seniors is \$2.25; adults aged 18-62 years pay \$3.75 one-way. ADA-eligible people who are unable to access regular fixed route bus service must submit an application to OPT, with medical verification, for transportation service. Applicants will be notified of a determination within 21 calendar days of a request. Otsego Express rates are \$0.50 for senior citizens (age 60+), \$1.00 for adults, and up to \$2.00 for route deviations. Otsego Express transfers are \$0.50 and transfers to OPT are \$1.00. Children under age 6 ride free.

**Up to 12% of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey noted public transportation routes and schedules do not meet their needs**

*"Seniors need rides to programs, daily meals, more...get together like used to be years ago. Carpooling for seniors. Buses to bring and drop off at get togethers."*

*"It is a pretty place to live, but so many people can't access the recreation or benefit."*

Per ACS 2023 5-year estimates, 0.8% (n=204) of the working population age 16 and older use public transportation (excluding taxi) as their primary means of commuting to work. **Persons employed in sales and office occupations comprise the largest sector to utilize public transportation at 34.8% (n=71),** followed by management, business, science, and arts occupations 30.9% (n=63), service occupations 22.5% (n=46), production, transportation, and material moving occupations 10.3% (n=21), and natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations 1.5% (n=3)<sup>86</sup>.

**Private Transportation:** Alternate transportation options available for personal and medical appointments are summarized below. This list was compiled by the Otsego County Planning Department and summarized in their 2025 Coordinated Transportation Plan.

Private Transportation			
Provider Name	Hours	Payment Method	Service Notes
1-2-3 Taxi	24/7	Variable pricing	Taxi and Airport service serving Oneonta and Surrounding Areas as Needed.
A&D Transport Services	24/7	Medicaid, Cash, Card Variable pricing	Private transportation and Medicaid transportation service across the service area
Absolute Taxi	24/7	Variable pricing	Taxi and Airport Transportation to/from Oneonta and Cooperstown to major local destinations as well as nearby airports
Allstar Taxi	24/7	Medicaid and Cash	Private driving service serving Broome, Montgomery, Schoharie, Delaware, Herkimer, Otsego, and Chenango Counties
ABC Taxi & Airport Transportation	24/7	Cash or card Variable pricing	Taxicab service provided in Oneonta, NY and the surrounding region. Transport to work, airports, shopping, and medical appointments.
Bassett Healthcare Patient Shuttle Service	4:00AM - 12:30AM, Weekdays	Free to Bassett Patients and Staff	Bus transport for Bassett patients to and from parking lots.
S&G Transport	Monday-Saturday 4:30am-7:00pm Sunday by Request	Variable pricing	Non-emergency medical transport serving Herkimer, Fulton, Madison, Otsego, Montgomery, Hamilton, Albany, Oneida, and

<sup>86</sup> 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table B08124 – Means of Transportation to Work by Occupation

			Onondaga Counties
Medical Answering Services	24/7	Medicaid Payment	Transportation to and from appointments for Medicaid Enrollees
Trailways	Variable Times	Cash, Card & Check	Scheduled bus rides serving multiple municipalities in New York State, leaving at multiple times daily
Pathfinder Village	24/7	None	Private residential facility transportation for Pathfinder Village residents
<b>Mobility Management</b>			
GetThere	24/7	Free or minimal cost-share	Get There Call Center Connection to Care Trip planning, education, and referral services
<b>Paratransit</b>			
Circle of Life	Monday-Friday 8am-4pm	Cash, Card, Insurance, Medicaid. Variable Pricing	Herkimer, Otsego, Schoharie, and Delaware Counties
Mobile Life Transport	6:00AM - 5:00PM, Monday-Friday (Weekends by request)	Medicaid, Cash, Card, Check	Paratransit providing door to door care and will assist from inside the home or facility to the vehicle
Oneonta Public Transit (OPT)	Monday-Friday 6:00am-6:00pm	\$2.25	For individuals who cannot access regular fixed route buses via OPT and who meet eligibility criteria. The service is always within a ¾ mile radius from its fixed route service.
<b>Other Services</b>			
Otsego County Office for the Aging	Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm	Suggested contributions	First come, first serve transportation for medical appointments for NEMT and shopping for those 60+. Staff person has additional functions such as assess for HDM and providing assistance accessing benefits and services to those being transported
Office for the Aging Bus-Delaware	Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm	\$5 Suggested Donation	Two fixed-routes transporting to Oneonta, Albany, Kingston, Sidney, and Binghamton
Otsego County Veteran's Affairs	Tuesday-Thursday 8:30am-4:30pm	N/A	Transportation for Veterans only from locations east of Route 205 in Otsego County to the Albany VA Medical

			Center
Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie	Variable	N/A	Provides transportation vouchers in the form of gas cards and bus passes to low-income individuals to access employment and other necessary services
Family Service Association	Monday to Friday 9:00am-4:00pm	N/A	Provides transportation vouchers in the form of gas cards and bus passes to low-income individuals to access employment and other necessary services
Cooperstown Trolley	May-September Daytime	\$2.50 All Day Pass \$5.00 Special Event Day Pass Free Parking Lots	Summer seasonal loop between three lots in the Village of Cooperstown with stops at several local attractions
Cooperstown Dreams Park	Seasonal	N/A	Shuttle for tournament families only between the Dreams Park and downtown Cooperstown



# **HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY**

## HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY

- Medicare enrollment has increased by 6% in Otsego County since 2020 to an average of 14,754 people benefiting annually. Among this group, 22.6% are eligible for the low-income subsidy.
- Over the period 2020-2025, Otsego County has averaged 14,025 people enrolled in Medicaid.
- Except for 2021, diseases of the heart was the leading cause of death in Otsego County over the period 201-2022. Deaths from opioids average 13 annually, with 2023 reaching 21 incidents.
- Otsego County meets the New York State standard for early prenatal care.
- Otsego County is deemed a Health Professional Shortage Area, as it has an inadequate number of providers to ensure timely preventive, primary and specialized healthcare.
- Child Protective Services investigates an average of 638 reports of suspected abuse/neglect annually. While the Child Advocacy Center handles approximately 140 cases each year.
- Violent crimes, property crime, and domestic violence by an intimate partner have been on a downward trend since 2021. Conversely, domestic violence by “other” family members have been on the rise.

**Medicare Enrollment:** Medicare is a social insurance program administered by the U.S. government, providing health insurance coverage to people ages 65 and over; those under 65 and permanently physically disabled or who have a congenital physical disability; or to those who meet other special criteria.

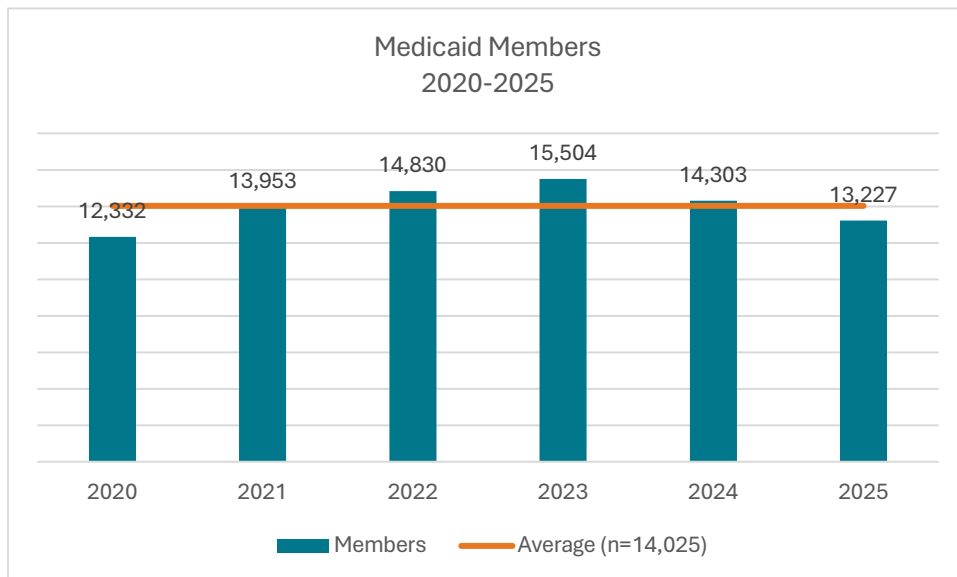
Over the period 2020-2024, an average of 14,754 persons living in Otsego County received Medicare benefits annually, of which 13% (n=1,921) are deemed disabled. From 2020 to 2024, enrollment has increased 6.3% alongside an aging population within the County. Among all Medicare beneficiaries, over 20% are deemed automatically eligible for the low-income prescription subsidy based on dual enrollment in Medicare and Medicaid benefits; receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI); or participation in the Medicare Savings Programs (MSP). The rate of **Medicare Members automatically deemed eligible for the low-income subsidy has risen 3.6% since 2020**<sup>87</sup>.

Medicare Enrollment: Otsego County				
Year	Total	Aged	Disabled	Low-Income Subsidy
2024	15,267	13,412	1,855	22.6%
2023	14,930	13,047	1,883	21.0%
2022	14,701	12,798	1,903	19.4%
2021	14,507	12,557	1,950	18.8%
2020	14,366	12,351	2,014	19.0%

<sup>87</sup> <https://data.cms.gov/>

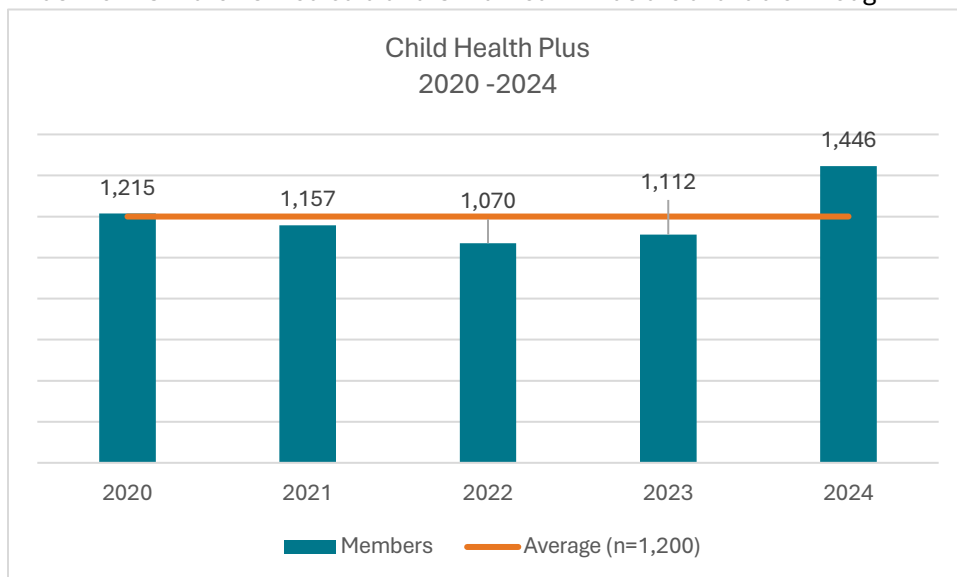


**Medicaid Enrollment:** Medicaid is a government administered health program for certain people and families with low incomes and resources. Medicaid is a means-tested program that is jointly funded by the state and federal governments and is managed by the states. People served include low-income adults, their children, and people with certain disabilities. Medicaid is the largest source of funding for medical and health-related services for people with limited income in the United States.

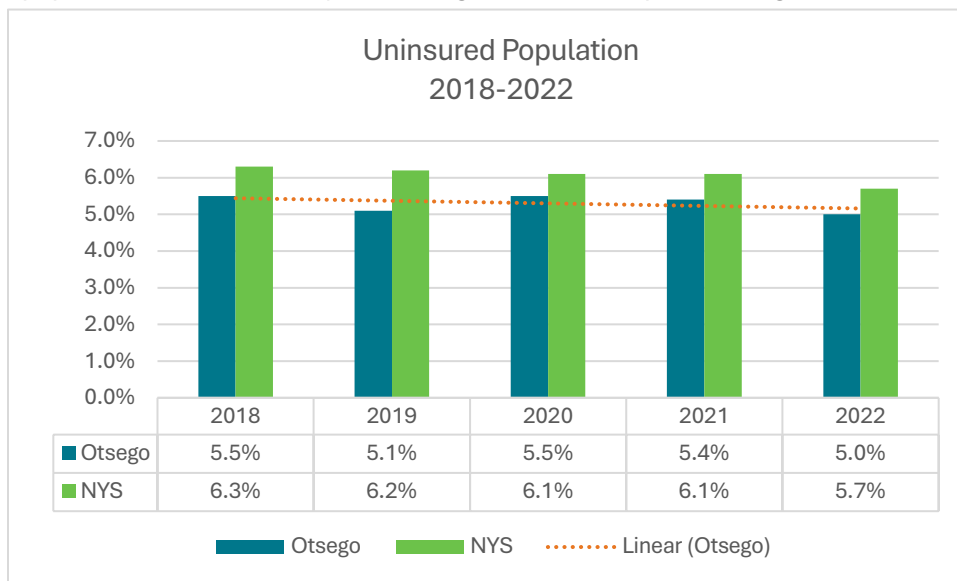


**Over the period 2020-2025, an average of 14,025 people were enrolled in Medicaid in Otsego County.** Enrollment has remained relatively consistent over this 5-year period.

**Child Health Plus:** Child Health Plus (CHP) is the New York State administered health insurance plan for children under 19 years of age. Depending on family income, children may be eligible for either Children's Medicaid or Child Health Plus. Both Children's Medicaid and Child Health Plus are available through CDPHP, Excellus, or Fidelis Healthcare of New York. The data below provides actual enrollment numbers for years 2020-2024 as reported by the NYS Department of Health. Among 2024 enrollees, 41% are enrolled in Excellus and 60% in Fidelis Care.



**Uninsured Population:** “Uninsured” is defined as having no kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as health maintenance organizations, or government plans such as Medicare. The uninsured population is calculated by estimating the number of persons eligible for insurance of persons under 65 of age minus the estimated number of insured people. Over the period 2018-2022, an average of 2,203 people, or 5.3% of the under 65 population, in Otsego County were uninsured. Over the 5-year period, Otsego County rate of uninsured people was less than New York State<sup>88</sup>.



Per 2023 ACS data, Edmeston and Cherry Valley area have the highest rates of uninsured people at 18.1% (n=370) and 11.9% (n=258) respectively.

**Per Opportunities for Otsego client records from program years 2021-2024, an estimated 13.3% of persons were uninsured upon intake.**

**Four percent of respondents to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey indicated they do not have Insurance or Medicaid/Medicare**

*Of those who do have insurance*

**Up to 9% of respondents noted providers – physicians and dentists – do not accept their insurance**

**Causes of Death:** According to the New York State Department of Health , there were 715 deaths in Otsego County during 2022. The leading individually specified causes of death during this year were Diseases of the Heart and Malignant Neoplasms/Cancer. Death by “All Other Causes” not specifically identified has ranked first as cause of death for Otsego County residents dating back to 2010. “Other” causes may include Alzheimer disease; Assault (homicide); Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis; COVID-

<sup>88</sup> [www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/sahie/](https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/sahie/)

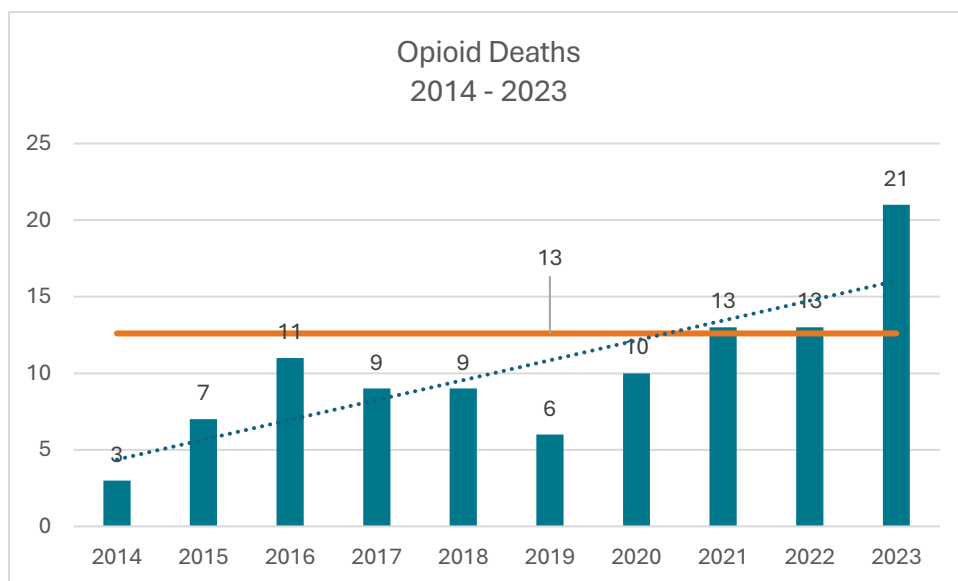
19; Intentional self-harm (suicide); Parkinson disease; or Septicemia<sup>89</sup>. Per April 2025 NYS Department of Health data, 193 persons died due to COVID-19 in Otsego County since March 2020<sup>90</sup>. As of 4/16/25, the COVID dataset is no longer being updated.

Leading Causes of Death: Otsego County 2017-2022								
	Diseases of the Heart	Malignant Neoplasms	Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	Cerebrovascular Disease	Accidents	Diabetes Mellitus	Pneumonia	All Other Causes
2022	23.6%	17.9%	3.9%	2.4%	5.2%	1.3%	1.1%	44.6%
2021	17.9%	18.1%	3.7%	4.4%	5.5%	3.1%	1.2%	46.1%
2020	25.4%	21.2%	5.9%	4.5%	3.0%	1.6%	0.6%	37.8%
2019	24.1%	20.7%	6.1%	3.4%	3.9%	1.9%	3.0%	36.8%
2018	24.8%	21.5%	5.8%	3.7%	3.1%	1.9%	1.5%	37.7%
2017	26.4%	22.1%	7.0%	2.5%	4.6%	1.9%	1.5%	33.9%

The first Opioid-related death recorded in Otsego County by the NYS Department of Health was in 2005.

Since, opioid-related deaths have been on the rise. **Over the five-year period from 2019-2023, Otsego County averaged 13 opioid-related deaths annually<sup>91</sup>.**

Preliminary data gathered via New York State County Opioid Quarterly Reports recorded 7 opioid deaths as of September 2024<sup>92</sup>.



<sup>89</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital\\_statistics/2021/table38.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital_statistics/2021/table38.htm)

<sup>90</sup> <https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/New-York-State-Statewide-COVID-19-Fatalities-by-Co/>

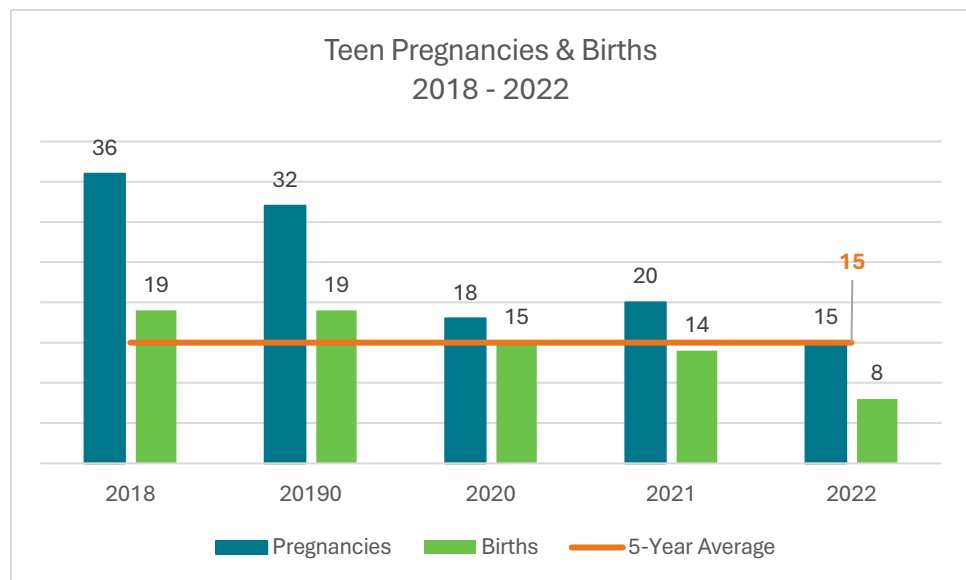
<sup>91</sup> <https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Vital-Statistics-Opioid-Related-Deaths-by-County>

<sup>92</sup> [https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG\\_Public/opioid-quarterly/#reports](https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/opioid-quarterly/#reports)

**Teen Births:** Since 2018, both the number of pregnancies and births to females age 19 and under in Otsego County have trended downward.

The teen pregnancy rate in Otsego County during 2022 was 4.2 per 1,000 teens, well below the New York State rate of 18.4. The total number of pregnancies during this year was 15 with 8 live births: the lowest rate on record for the past 5 years.

The highest rate of teen pregnancies and births was in 2018, with 36 teen pregnancies and 19 live births at a rate of 12.9 per 1,000 pregnancies<sup>93</sup>.



**Maternal and Infant Health:** Infant, neonatal, and post neonatal mortality and low birth weight are two of the most widely used health indicators to measure the well-being of population as it reflects the general state of maternal health and the effectiveness of primary health care systems. The table below reports the most recent maternal and infant health indicators for Otsego County compared to New York State established targets. Maternal and Child Health Indicators targets not met in Otsego County are post neonatal mortality rates and the percentage of preterm births<sup>94</sup>.

Maternal and Child Health Indicators	Number	County Rate	NYS Target
Percentage of births with early (first trimester) prenatal care	355	79.2	79.2
Newborns with neonatal withdrawal symptoms per 1,000 newborn discharges (2020)	s*	s*	89.1
Mortality Rates (per 1,000 births)			
Infant (<1 year)	2	4.4	5
Neonatal (<28 days)	1	2.2	3.3
Post neonatal (1 month to 1 year)	2	1.4	1.3
Perinatal mortality rate plus fetal deaths	2	4.4	5.5
Percentage of preterm births (less than 37 weeks gestation)	43	9.6	9.4
* Fewer than 10 events in the numerator, therefore the rate is unstable			

<sup>93</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital\\_statistics/](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/vital_statistics/) - Years 2011-2020, Tables 7, 26, and 30

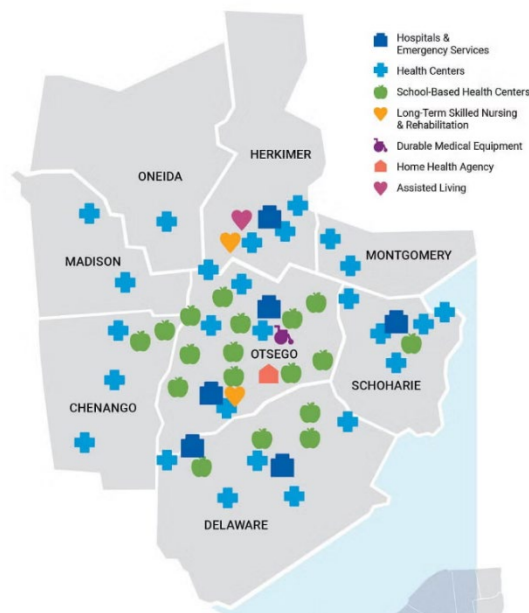
<sup>94</sup> [https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG\\_Public/mch/reports/#county](https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/mch/reports/#county)

**Health Care:** Per the Rural Health Information Hub, all areas in Otsego County have a shortage of primary care providers, mental health providers, and dentists<sup>95</sup>. It is estimated there is one primary care physician per 730 people; one mental health provider per 440 people; and one dentist per 2,250 people in Otsego County<sup>96</sup>.

#### Responses collected via Opportunities for Otsego 2025 Community Needs Assessment survey

**support quantitative data on the lack of available medical providers in Otsego County:** 11% of respondents indicated “Providers Leaving/Continuity of Care”; 10% “Specialists: Fe Locally/Need to Travel”; and 10% noted “Appointments: Wait time to be seen” as barriers to obtaining health care. Similarly, under Mental Health, 14% noted “Lack of Providers/Turnover”; 11% “Inadequate Crisis Services; and 10% “Appointments: Wait time to be seen” as barriers to obtaining care.

Bassett Healthcare Network provides care and services to people living in a 5,600 square mile region in upstate New York and is the primary medical provider in Otsego County. The hub of the network is Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown. In addition, the network has a community hospital in Oneonta (A.O. Fox Hospital) that provides acute inpatient care and 24/7 emergency care and 7 primary care facilities in Otsego County<sup>97</sup>. These services are supplemented through School Based Health Centers (SBHC) at ten school districts across Otsego County plus the School at Springbrook. These clinics provide comprehensive healthcare, preventive dental care,



#### Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey about Healthcare concerns

*“Wait times of 6-9 months [with Fox/Bassett Medical Care] just to ESTABLISH with provider. Then another 4-6months to get a Specialty appointment. We try to go to Albany, Binghamton or Utica instead. Then you wind up at Urgent Care or ER because there are no sick appointment.”*

*“Accessing QUALITY health care.”*

*“Access to Healthcare”*

*“Barriers:...dental care (adult and pediatric);a need for skilled nursing professionals to consistently staff nursing facilities/assisted living.”*

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/data-explorer>

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/new-york/otsego?year=2025>

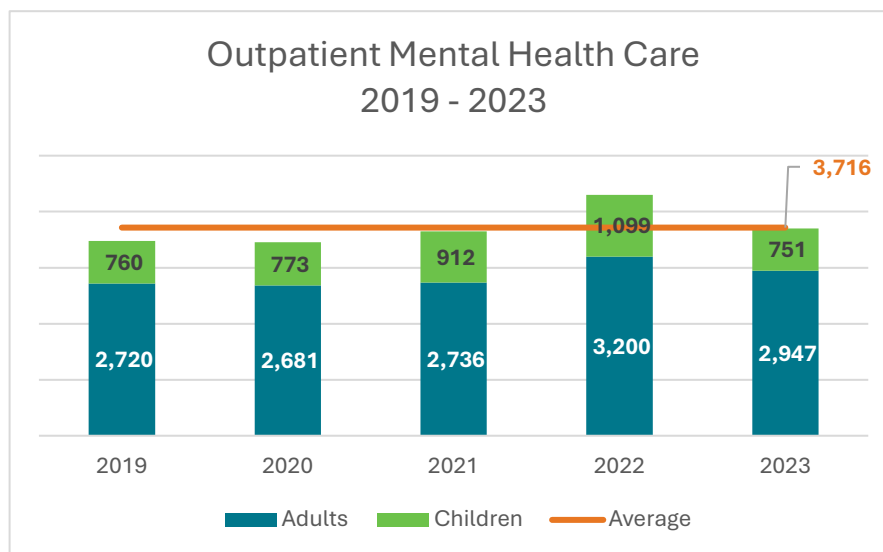
<sup>97</sup> <https://www.bassett.org/locations>

and mental health services to youth in grades PreK-12. Provided is a map of Bassett-affiliated health care clinics and SBHC's located throughout Otsego County. Additional primary care outside the Bassett Network is available at WellNow Urgent Care (Oneonta), the Oneonta Community Health Center, and Family Planning of South Central New York.

Mental Health Care: A listing of mental health providers in Otsego is available through the Rehabilitative Support Services (RSS) 2021 Otsego County Guide to Mental Health Service publication. According to this source there are 14 private providers offering services to children and adolescents, 17 providers of adult mental health services, and 12 family providers, and one Psychiatrist. Additional outpatient mental health care is offered through the Otsego County Mental Health Clinic, Bassett Hospital Psychiatry Department, and through Bassett Healthcare School Based Health Centers for youth enrolled in the individual school districts.

During 2023, an estimated 3,698 individuals accessed outpatient mental health services in Otsego County, of which 2,947 (79.7%) were adults and 751 (20.3%) were children. During the same year, the average daily census for inpatient treatment at a general hospital, private hospital, or state psychiatric center was 6.8 for adults and 2.8 for children<sup>98</sup>. Generally, the total number of people accessing mental health care in Otsego County has risen since 2019. While the number of adults accessing outpatient mental health care has

been consistent, the number of children receiving care has fluctuated. From 2022 to 2023, the number children accessing care dropped by 348 or 31.7%. Inpatient census counts over the same period average 8.0 for adults and 1.9 for children. *Note: no children were recorded as receiving inpatient care in 2021.*

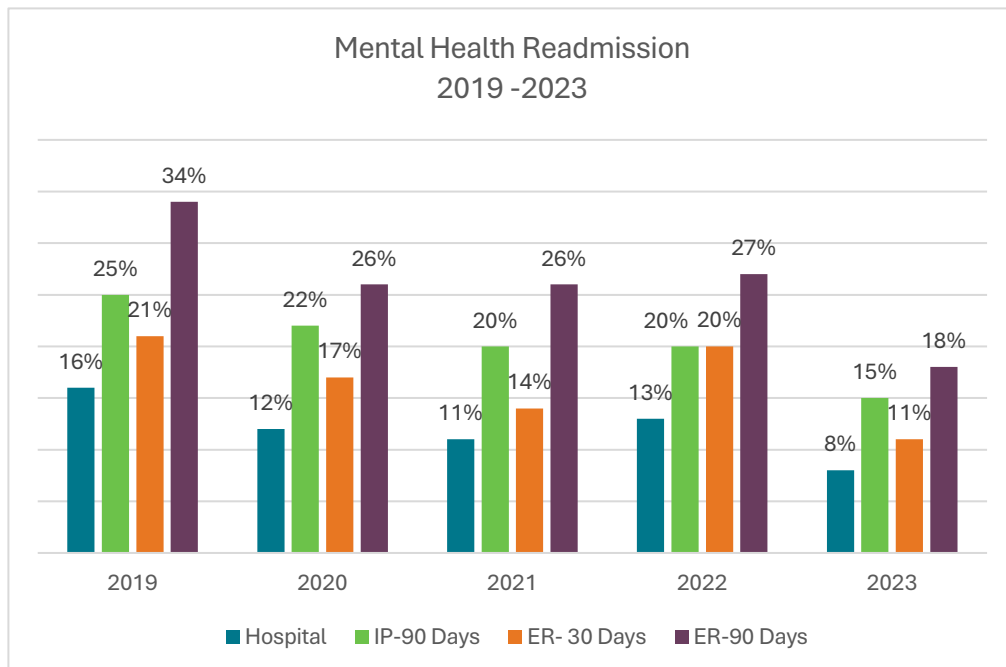


Bassett Healthcare is the only resource for inpatient mental health care in Otsego County. Per its website, “Bassett Medical Center has an Inpatient Psychiatry Unit that offers psychiatric assessment, evaluation and treatment to adults 18 and over who require acute care hospitalization.” In place of inpatient crisis-based services, Otsego County partners with the Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT) from The Neighborhood Center in Utica to provide 24 hour/7 day a week intervention, mental health assessment, crisis de-escalation and debriefing, and other community-based supports to individuals with psychiatric needs. Mental health emergencies are managed by the hospital emergency department.

<sup>98</sup> <https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/tableau/county-profiles.html>

Per the OMH website, the closest inpatient mental health facilities to Otsego County are in Albany (Capital District Psychiatric Center); Binghamton/Elmira (Elmira Psychiatric Center; Greater Binghamton Health Center); Marcy/Utica (Central New York Psychiatric Center; Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center; Secure Treatment and Rehabilitation Center); Rochester (Rochester Psychiatric Center); and Syracuse (Hutchings Psychiatric Center). Additional facilities noted in the RSS Guide to Mental Health Service are Binghamton General Hospital, Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica (Faxton-St. Lukes and St. Elizabeth), and Ellis Hospital in Schenectady.

Over the period 2019-2023, an average of 12% of people accessing inpatient mental health care at a hospital in Otsego County were readmitted after 30-days, while 20% accessing inpatient care for 90-days were readmitted. Average readmission rates for people seeking psychiatric care through the Emergency Room over the same period were 17% after 30 days and 26% after 90 days<sup>99</sup>.



As of the date of this report, there is not an established Assertive Community Treatment (ACT Team) serving Otsego County. ACTs offers treatment, rehabilitation, and community integration services to individuals diagnosed with serious mental illness. However, similar support is offered through the Southern Tier Mobile Integration Team (MIT) for youth and adults. In addition to supporting persons in Otsego County, the Southern Tier MIT provides services in 14 other counties including Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne and Yates. Additional mental health support is available through the following programs within Otsego County<sup>100</sup>

Emergency/Crisis	
Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc.	Adolescents, Adults
The Neighborhood Center, Inc.	Adults
Inpatient	

<sup>99</sup> <https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/tableau/county-profiles.html>

<sup>100</sup> <https://my.omh.ny.gov/analytics/saw.dll?dashboard#about>



Bassett Healthcare Psychiatric Inpatient Unit	Adults
<b>Outpatient</b>	
Bassett Healthcare Outpatient Clinic	Children, Adolescents, Adults
Otsego County Mental Health Clinic	Children, Adolescents, Adults
<b>Support - Care Coordination, General Support, Education, Self-Help, Vocational</b>	
The Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital	Adults
Family Resource Network, Inc.	Children, Adolescents, Adults
Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc.	Children, Adolescents, Adults
<b>Residential - Treatment Program, Unlicensed Housing</b>	
Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc.	Children, Adolescents, Adults

### **Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey about Mental Health in Otsego County**

*“Access to mental health care [is a] big concern.”*

*“There is a lot of mental health issues and homelessness in the area. There are not enough resources.”*

*“People...are in denial about poverty, mental health and drug abuse. For example, the RSS project that has been proposed in the City of Oneonta’s downtown has large community opposition despite it providing needed housing and health services for the community in a location that is centralized.”*

*“All mental health providers are short staffed.”*

*“Child Mental Health access!”*

Addiction/Recovery Services: The New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) website offers a listing of substance abuse providers in Otsego County.

Providers listed on this site include treatment programs (Otsego County Community Services Board); prevention providers (LEAF: Leatherstocking Education on Alcoholism and Addictions); providers of clinical screening and assessment services for the impaired driving offender (Otsego County Community Services Board/Chemical Dependencies Clinic) and other NYS OASAS approved providers/practitioners, of which there are five<sup>101</sup>. Additional support is offered through various support groups (e.g. AA, NA, Al-anon), some of which are coordinated through Friends of Recovery: Delaware and Otsego. Support groups are offered in a variety of communities, including Bainbridge, Cooperstown, Oneonta, Otego, Richfield Springs, and Unadilla<sup>102</sup>.

Inpatient addiction centers closest to Otsego County include St. Mary's Healthcare in Amsterdam and McPike Addiction Treatment Center in Utica. St. Mary's Healthcare is a 14-bed unit for adults. In addition,

<sup>101</sup> <https://webapps.oasas.ny.gov/providerDirectory/>

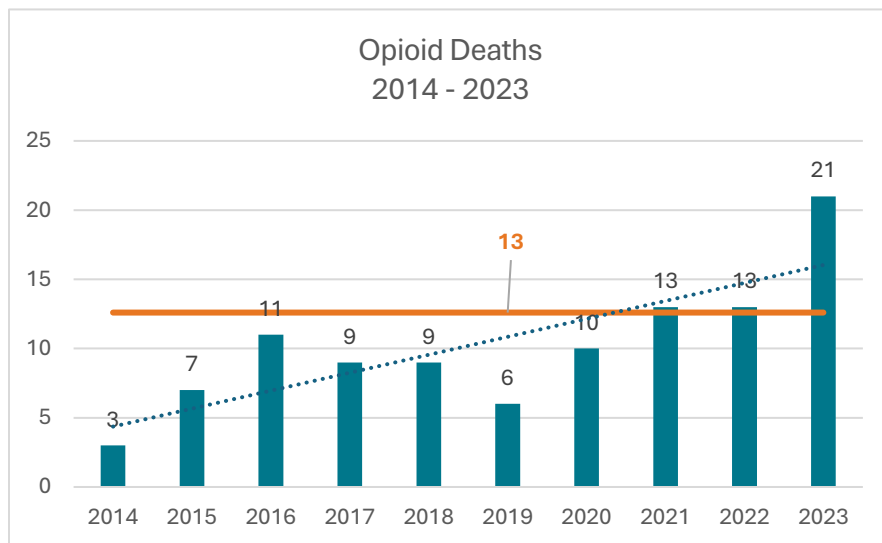
<sup>102</sup> <https://nenyaa.org/meetings/> and <https://www.district8.aahmbny.org/1740-2/>



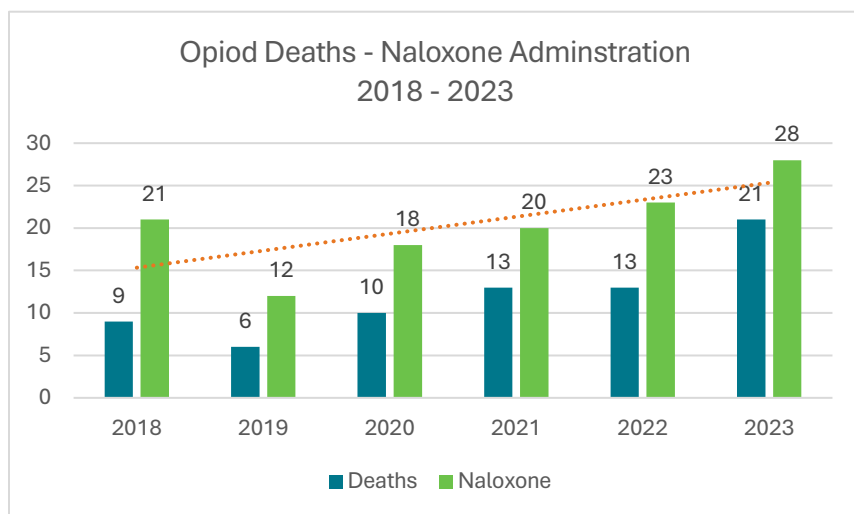
they offer an Opioid Treatment Program. McPike offers beds for 68 adults and serves 16 counties within New York State. Inpatient detox facilities near Otsego County are Delaware Valley Hospital (Walton, NY); Conifer Park (Glenville, NY); and St. Peters Addiction Recovery Center (Guilderland, NY).

New York State Department of Health tracks several data points that serve as key substance use disorder indicators for counties across New York State, including overdose deaths involving any opioid; opioid-related emergency department visits; and newborns with neonatal withdrawal symptoms and/or affected by maternal drug use. The first Opioid-

related death recorded in Otsego County by the NYS Department of Health was in 2005. Since, opioid-related deaths have been on the rise. **Over the five-year period from 2019-2023, Otsego County averaged 13 opioid-related deaths annually<sup>103</sup>.** Preliminary data gathered via New York State County Opioid Quarterly Reports recorded 7 opioid deaths as of September 2024.



This same data set records Naloxone administration by EMS by year. As illustrated in the accompanying chart, one can hypothesize that **Naloxone administration reduced opioid deaths by 43% over the period 2018-2023<sup>104</sup>.**



<sup>103</sup> <https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Vital-Statistics-Opioid-Related-Deaths-by-County>

<sup>104</sup> [https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG\\_Public/opioid-quarterly/#reports](https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/opioid-quarterly/#reports)

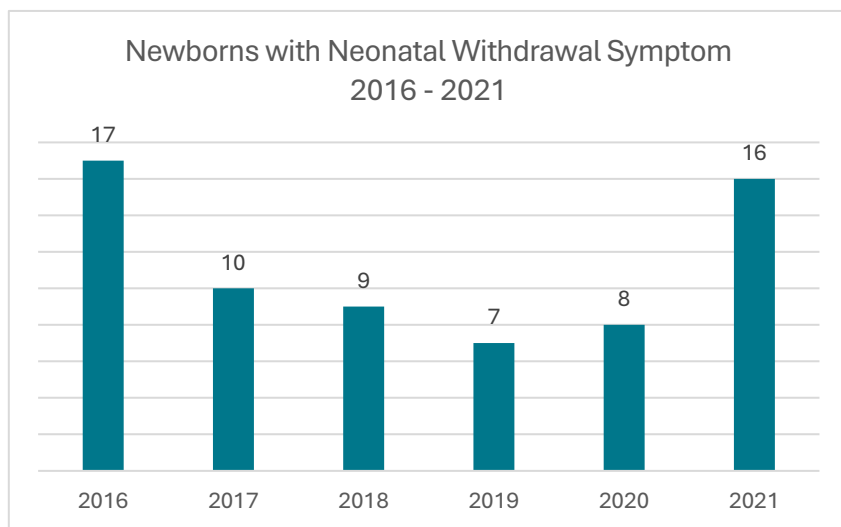
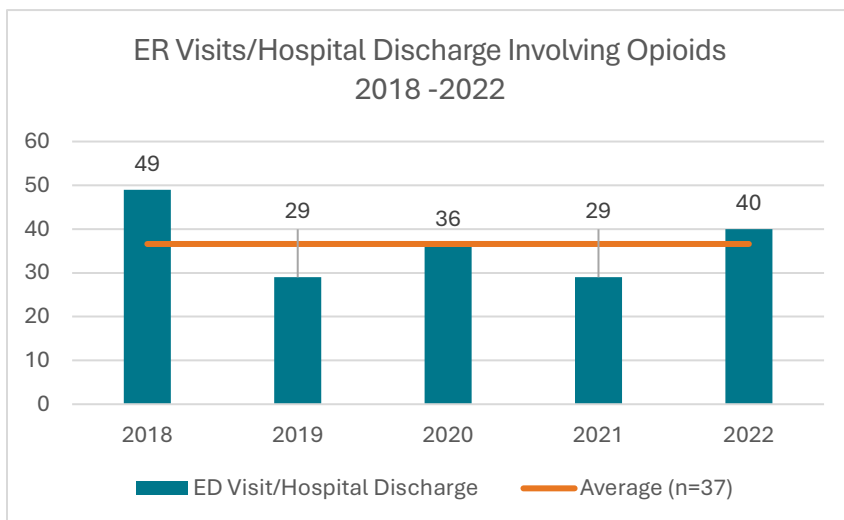
On average, 37 visits to the emergency room and hospital discharges in Otsego County involve opioid abuse or dependence.

In 2022, of the 458 newborns born and discharged from the hospital in Otsego County, there were 16 incidents of newborns exhibiting neonatal withdrawal symptoms (3.5%).

**The number of newborns delivered in Otsego County with neonatal withdrawal symptoms was on a steady decline from 2016 until 2022 when it doubled from the previous year.**

Pharmacy Access: Access to pharmacies is an essential component to community health and a social determinant of health. As of May 2025, there are 53 licensed Pharmacists and 14 Pharmacies in Otsego

County<sup>105</sup>. However, in the coming months Rite Aid pharmacies are scheduled to close, including ones in Otsego County. Pharmacies not only provide access to prescribed medicine and vaccinations, but public health and harm-reduction strategies. To prevent blood borne diseases (e.g. HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and C), licensed pharmacies, health care facilities, and health care practitioners can sell or furnish hypodermic needles or syringes to people 18 years of age or older without a patient-specific prescription. The Expanded Syringe Access Program (ESAP) law became permanent in New York State in 2009. In August 2022, New York issued a statewide pharmacy standing order for Naloxone to reverse life-threatening overdoses from opioids, including fentanyl, heroin, and opioid-based pain killers. Naloxone can be accessed without a prescription and can be covered by health insurance or through the Naloxone Co-payment Assistance Program (N-CAP). Free Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs are also available at the Community Cupboard in Edmeston, Friends of Recovery of Delaware and Otsego Counties (FOR-DO) in Oneonta, Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in Cooperstown, and Otsego County Dept. of Health in Cooperstown<sup>106</sup>.



<sup>105</sup> <https://www.op.nysed.gov/professions/pharmacist/license-statistics>

<sup>106</sup> <https://providerdirectory.aidsinstitute.org/>

Pharmacy	Location	ESAP Registered	Naloxone Participating
<b>Cooperstown</b>			
Bassett Medical Center	1 Atwell Drive, Cooperstown		
Church and Scott	5396 State Highway 28, Cooperstown		
CVS	100 Main Street, Cooperstown	✓	✓
<b>New Berlin</b>			
Service Pharmacy	12 South Main Street, New Berlin		
<b>Oneonta</b>			
Foxcare Pharmacy	1 Foxcare Drive, Oneonta		
Hannaford	705 State Highway 28, Oneonta	✓	
Price Chopper	1000 Main Street, Oneonta		✓
<i>Rite Aid</i>	<i>400 Chestnut Street, Oneonta</i>	✓	✓
<i>Rite Aid</i>	<i>94 Chestnut Street, Oneonta</i>	✓	✓
Walgreens	99 Chestnut Street, Oneonta	✓	✓
Walgreens	5626 State Highway 7, Oneonta	✓	✓
Walmart	5054 State Highway 7, Oneonta	✓	✓
<b>Richfield Springs</b>			
Kinney Drugs	10 Main Street, Richfield Springs	✓	✓
<b>Unadilla</b>			
Browns Pharmacy	225 Main Street, Unadilla		

**Narrative Responses from the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Survey regarding Addiction and Recovery in Otsego County**

*“Stigma of...drug addiction [still exists].”*

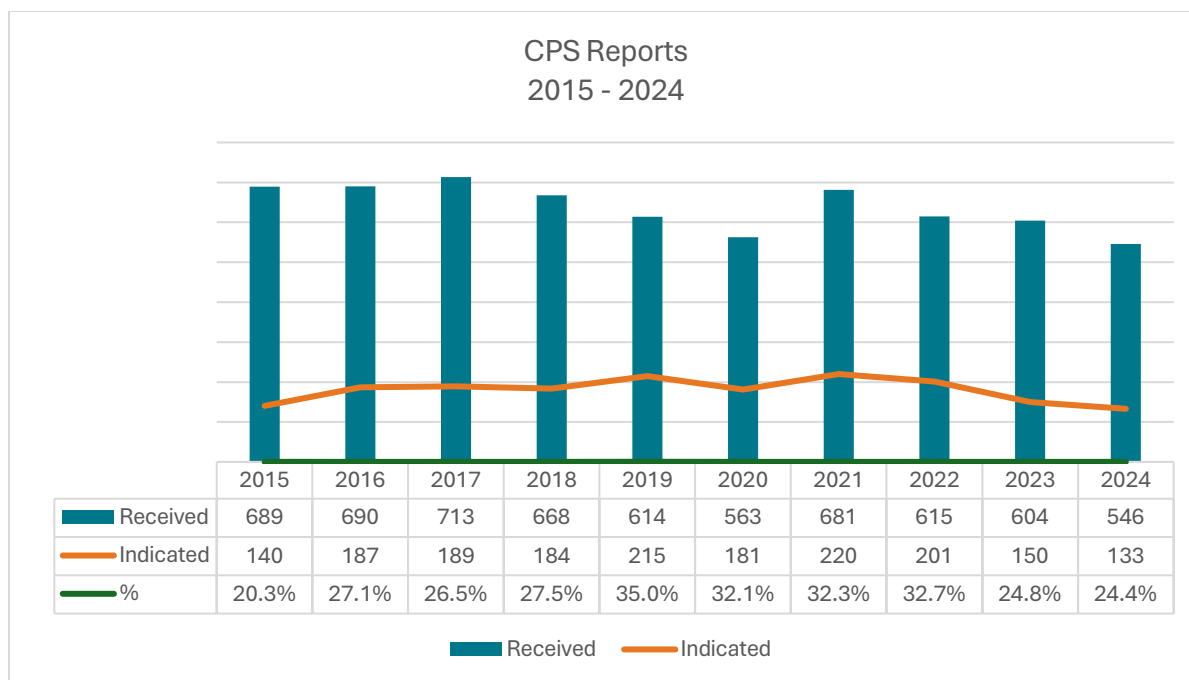
*“[Need] help with drugs in Cooperstown area.”*

*“[No] Sober housing.”*

*“Barrier...entertainment that isn't a bar.”*

**Child Abuse and Neglect:** The average number of suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or maltreatment received by Otsego County Child Protective Services (CPS) from 2015 to 2024 was 638 annually, with 2017 being the highest number of reports received by the local CPS office dating back to 1995 with a total of 713. **On average, the rate of “indicated” reports of child abuse/neglect being is 28.3% or 180 annually.** The year 2019 had the greatest percentage of indicated reports at 35.0%<sup>107</sup>.

<sup>107</sup> <https://ocfs.ny.gov/reports/maps/aggregate.php>



Additional data on child abuse and maltreatment was obtained from the Otsego County Child Advocacy Center (CAC), which provides a multi-disciplinary approach to investigating cases of child sexual abuse and severe physical abuse. Members of the CAC include the Oneonta Police Department, Cooperstown Police Department, Otsego County Sheriff's Office, the New York State Police, Otsego County Department of Probation, Otsego County District Attorney's Office, Otsego County Attorney's Office, Otsego County Department of Social Services, Bassett Healthcare Network, Opportunities for Otsego/Violence Intervention Program, and the Otsego County Mental Health Department.

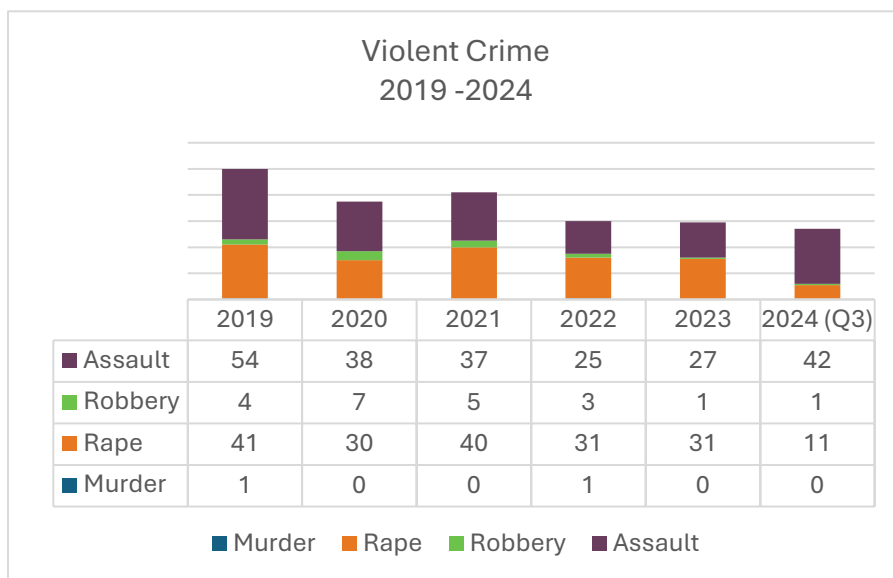
**Over the years 2021-2024, the CAC supported and assisted 562 children who were victims of child abuse in Otsego County.** Among these victims, 21.9% were aged birth-five, 31.2% aged 6-10 and 45.7% aged 11-17. Victims by sex was 61.2% female (n=344) and 38.4% male (n=216). The most prevalent victimization type of children being seen at the CAC was sexual assault (70.1%); followed by physical abuse (14.1%); neglect (5.9%); witness to violence (3.0%); and drug endangerment (1.4%).

**Crime and Victimization:** The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) maintains, analyzes and publishes criminal and youth justice system data, including incidents of crime and arrests and dispositions. Police departments, sheriffs' offices, probation departments and the state Office of Court Administration report these data, which provide the public and policy makers with information detailing how the criminal justice system is operating in their communities. A summary of crime data for Otsego County is provided below for the period 2019 to 2023<sup>108</sup>.

<sup>108</sup> [https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/tableau\\_index\\_crime\\_by\\_agency.htm](https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/tableau_index_crime_by_agency.htm)

**Violent Crime:** Over the period 2019-2023, there were an average of 75 incidents of violent crime across Otsego County. Aggravated assault (an attempt to cause bodily harm, with or without a weapon) represented 48.1% of all violent crimes occurring over the 5-year period, closely followed by rape at 46.0%. Robbery and Murder accounted for nearly 6% of remaining violent crime at 5.3% and 0.5% respectfully. Through the third quarter of 2024, Otsego law enforcement agencies - Cooperstown Village, Oneonta City, Otsego County Park, Otsego County Sheriff, State Police, and SUNY Police – reported a combined 11 rapes, 1 robbery, and 42 aggravated assaults.

Under the Clery Act, colleges and universities are required to report campus crime data and disseminate a public annual security report (ASR) to employees and students every fall. The ASR includes statistics of campus crime for the preceding 3 calendar years. Over the period 2019-2021, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta reported the



following combined violent crime statistics: 15 incidents of rape, 5 fondling; 6 aggravated assaults; and 14 burglaries<sup>109</sup>. *Campus representatives who are confidential resources do not report crimes to law enforcement or college officials without victim consent, therefore Clery Act data and DCJS data may differ.*

Since 2019, nearly 6% of violent crimes have been committed by firearms in Otsego County; 1 murder; 3 robberies; and 18 aggravated assaults.

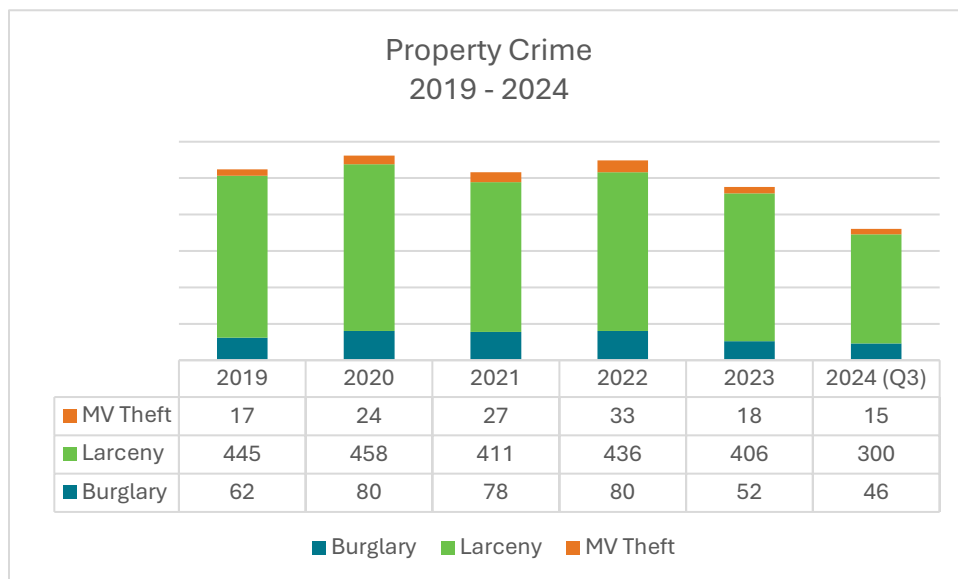
**Property Crime:** Over the period 2019-2023, there were an average of 252 incidents of property crime across Otsego County. Larceny, which includes shoplifting, purse snatching, bicycle thefts, and other acts of unlawfully taking possession of another’s property, is the highest reported incident consistently over the period encompassing 82.1% of all property crimes. Burglary (unlawful entry into a structure) represented 13.4% of property crimes and motor vehicle thefts were 4.5%. Through the third quarter of 2024, Otsego law enforcement agencies - Cooperstown Village, Oneonta City, Otsego County Park, Otsego County Sheriff, State Police, and SUNY Police – reported a combined 46 burglaries: 300 larcenies, and 15 motor vehicle thefts.

<sup>109</sup> <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

Over the period 2019-2021, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta reported a combined 14 incidents of burglary .

*Campus representatives who are confidential resources do not report crimes to law enforcement or college officials without victim consent, therefore*

*Clery Act data and DCJS data may differ.*



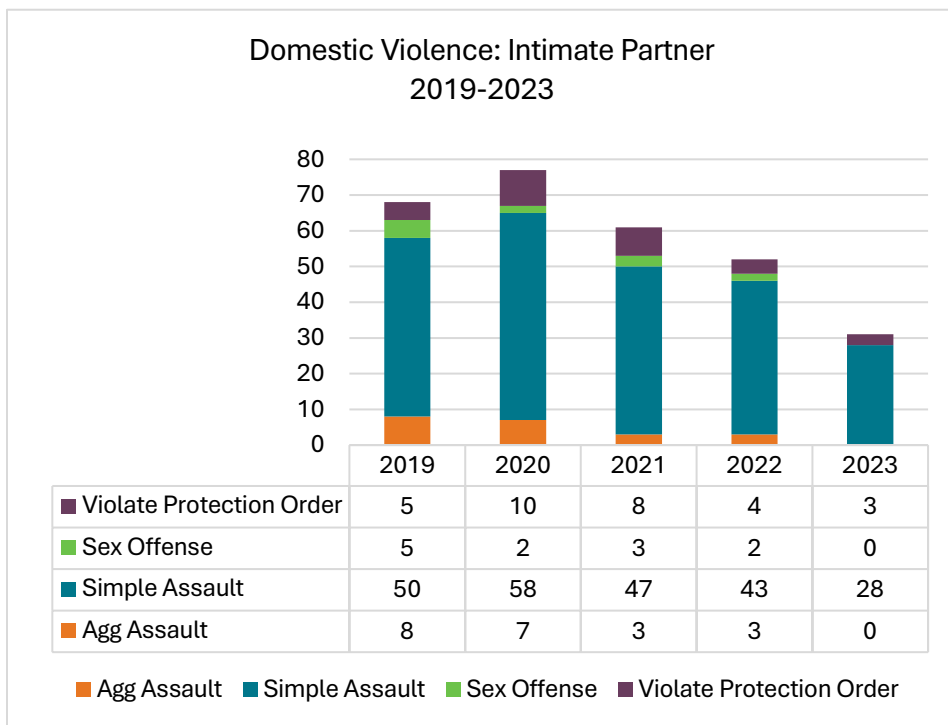
Since 2020, there were four incidents of hate crime in Otsego County committed by 4 offenders and impacting 5 victims. Of these crimes, 1 was Anti-Asian; 2 Anti-Jewish; and 1 Anti-Gay Male<sup>110</sup>.

Domestic Violence: Domestic violence involves members of the same family, including but not limited to parents, children and siblings, and intimate partners who may or may not live together at the time of the incident. Domestic incidents are categorized and reported as aggravated assault, simple assault (e.g. stalking, harassment, intimidation, coercion, or hazing), sex offenses (rape, statutory rape, sodomy, incest, or sexual abuse), and violation of protective orders (violation of a court order by the person for which the order was issued against).

<sup>110</sup> <https://data.ny.gov/Public-Safety/Hate-Crimes-by-County-and-Bias-Type-Beginning-2010>

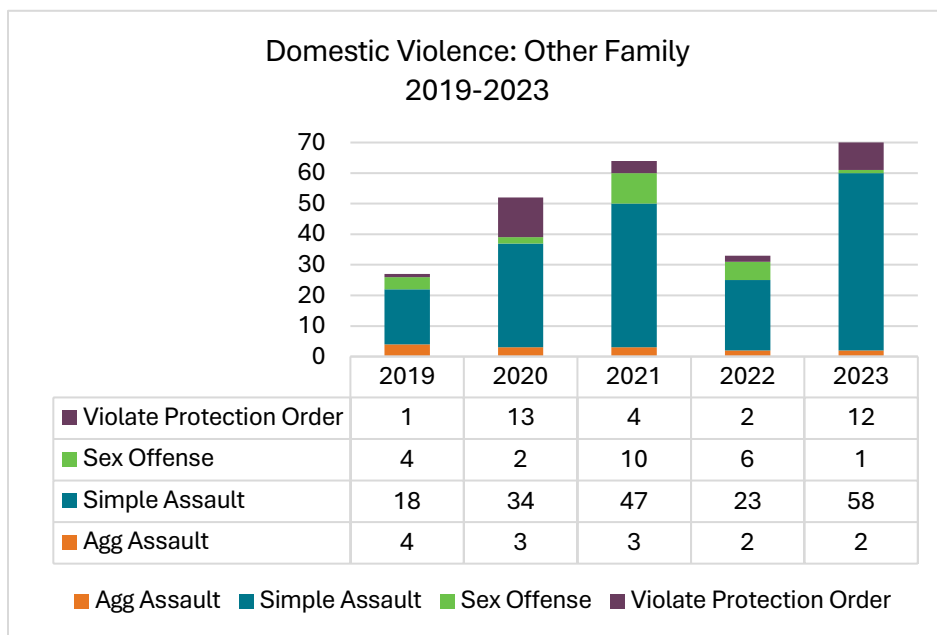
Incidents of domestic violence by an intimate partner were on the decline in Otsego County until 2020, when reports spiked in part to COVID-related lock downs and social distancing. These increases prompted New York State to develop innovative solutions to reach domestic violence survivors and provide critical services. Since then, reports of

domestic violence by an intimate partner have begun to drop again. Over the period 2019-2023, simple assaults accounted for 78.2% of crimes; followed by Protection Order violations (10.2%); aggravated assaults (7.3%), and sexual offenses (4.2%).



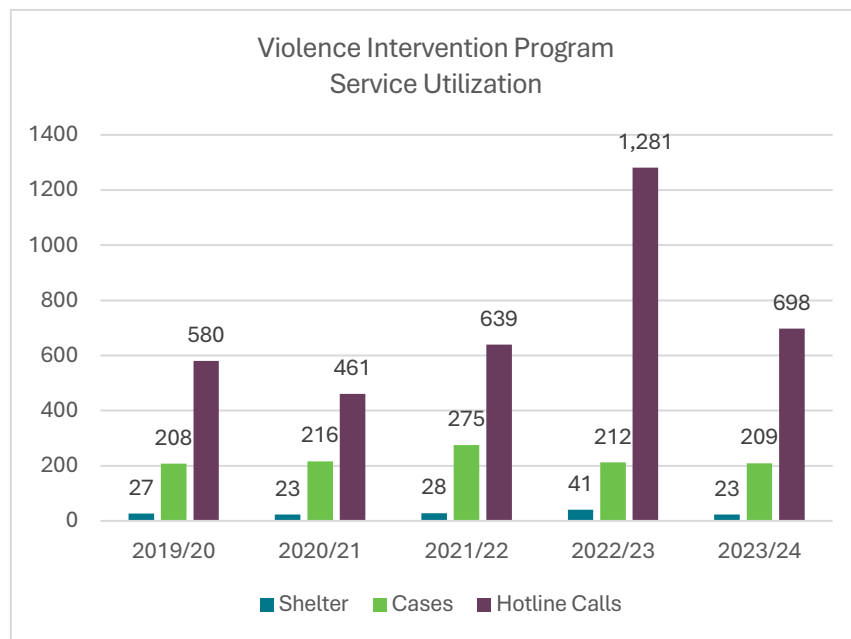
Conversely, incidents of domestic violence between “Other” family - sibling, child grandparent, grandchild, in-law, stepparent, stepsibling, and other blood and in-law relationships – are trending upward in Otsego County. **Since 2019, the number of reported “other family” domestic violence incidents increased 170%.** Like intimate partner domestic violence incidents,

simple assault were the highest number and rate of domestic violence incidents between other family members at 72.3%, followed by Protection Order violations (12.9%); sexual offenses (9.2%); and aggravated assaults (5.6%).



Over the period 2019-2021, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta reported a combined 17 VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) offenses: 6 incidents of dating violence; 6 incidents of stalking; and 5 incidents of domestic violence<sup>111</sup>.

The Violence Intervention Program (VIP) at Opportunities for Otsego is the primary provider of domestic violence and sexual assault support services in Otsego County. VIP also assists innocent victims of violent crime. Program data on service utilization (e.g. persons sheltered, active cases, and hotline calls) over the period 2019-2024 is provided in the accompanying table. On average, VIP helps 224 victims of violence each year.



Protection Orders: Over the period 2019-2024, Otsego County Courts granted an average of 729 orders of protection annually, with Family court granting 48.7% of all protection orders. These Orders include temporary, final, required and non-required orders. The increase in orders of protection issued through Supreme Civil Court may be attributed to the opening of the Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) court. Per a 10.23.2019 article in the Daily Star, the Otsego County IDV court was scheduled to open in January 2020<sup>112</sup>. This court model streamlines the judicial process for victims of domestic violence by taking a holistic approach to meeting all the legal needs a victim of violence may have, including issuing orders of protection.

Orders of Protection in Domestic Violence Registry 2017-2023						
	County/Supreme	Family	Local Criminal	Supreme Civil	Town/Village	Total
2025*	10	147	59	71	59	346
2024	28	371	119	171	152	841
2023	22	391	132	147	134	826
2022	27	367	95	72	109	670
2021	12	416	155	27	114	724
2020	12	360	116	21	91	600
2019	11	392	203	2	103	711

\*2025 data is January through June 2025

<sup>111</sup> <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

<sup>112</sup> [https://www.thedailystar.com/news/local\\_news/new-county-court-to-ease-burden-on-domestic-abuse-victims/article\\_5c943814-a13b-5319-9c14-dc6fb3fb06fe.html](https://www.thedailystar.com/news/local_news/new-county-court-to-ease-burden-on-domestic-abuse-victims/article_5c943814-a13b-5319-9c14-dc6fb3fb06fe.html)





# COMMUNITY VOICES

## COMMUNITY VOICES

As part of this assessment, Opportunities for Otsego collected qualitative and quantitative data specific to poverty in Otsego County and its relation to community demographics. This data is used to establish, along with data gathered from other sources, a determination of need across Otsego County.

Community Needs Assessment Survey: From February 2025 through April 2025, Opportunities for Otsego made its Community Needs Assessment Survey available to the public, community partners, agency governing/advisory committees and the Board of Directors. The survey aimed to gain a better understanding of the needs across Otsego County to assist in developing partnerships and resources to address services gaps and improve community conditions. A total of 188 surveys were collected.

Community Forum: As follow up and to supplement the Community Needs Assessment Survey, Opportunities for Otsego hosted a half-day forum with 100+ community partners and players. The forum was facilitated in partnership with the New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA). Attendees included representatives from Community-Based Organizations (64.3%); Business/Private Sector (13.3%); Faith-Based Organizations (2.0%); Individual/Community Member (11.2%); and Educational Institution ( 9.2%).

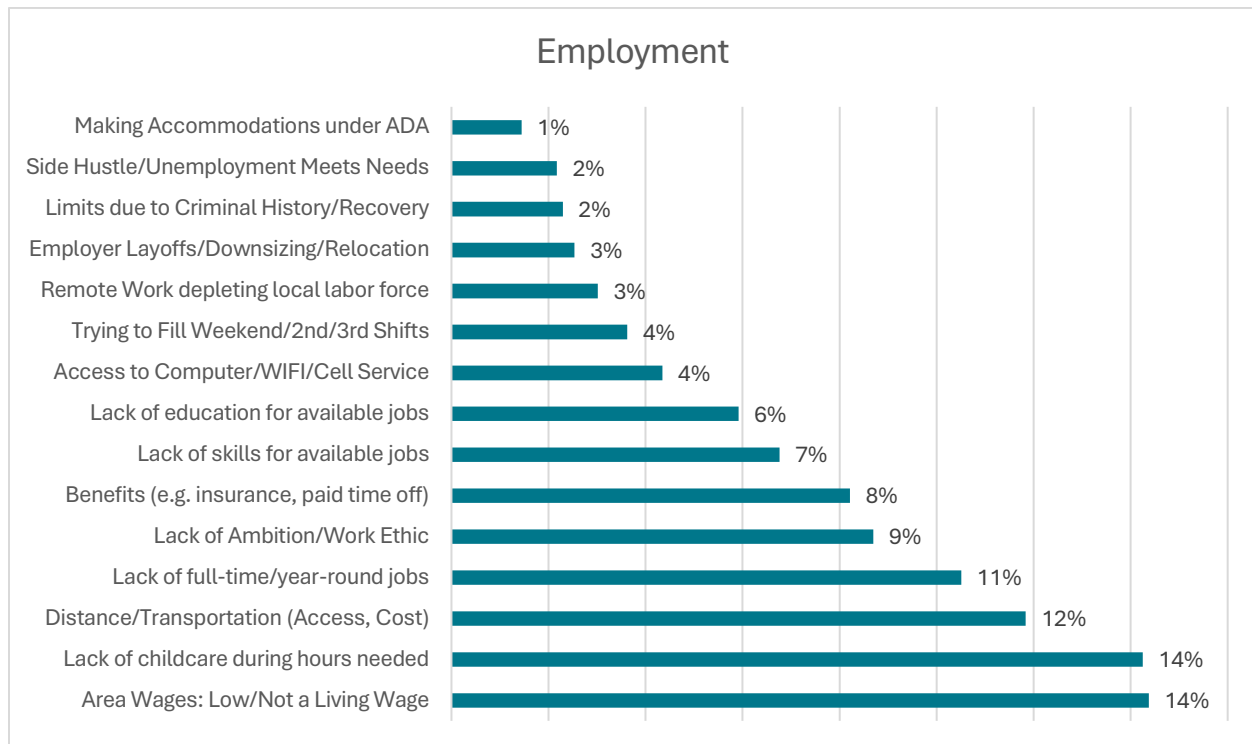
A summary of the survey and forum “take-aways” follows.



## Community Needs Assessment Survey Otsego County, NY

Summary of data collected 02.06.2025 – 04.02.2025. A total of 188 surveys were received.

EMPLOYMENT is a concern in our area: 8% No 89% Yes



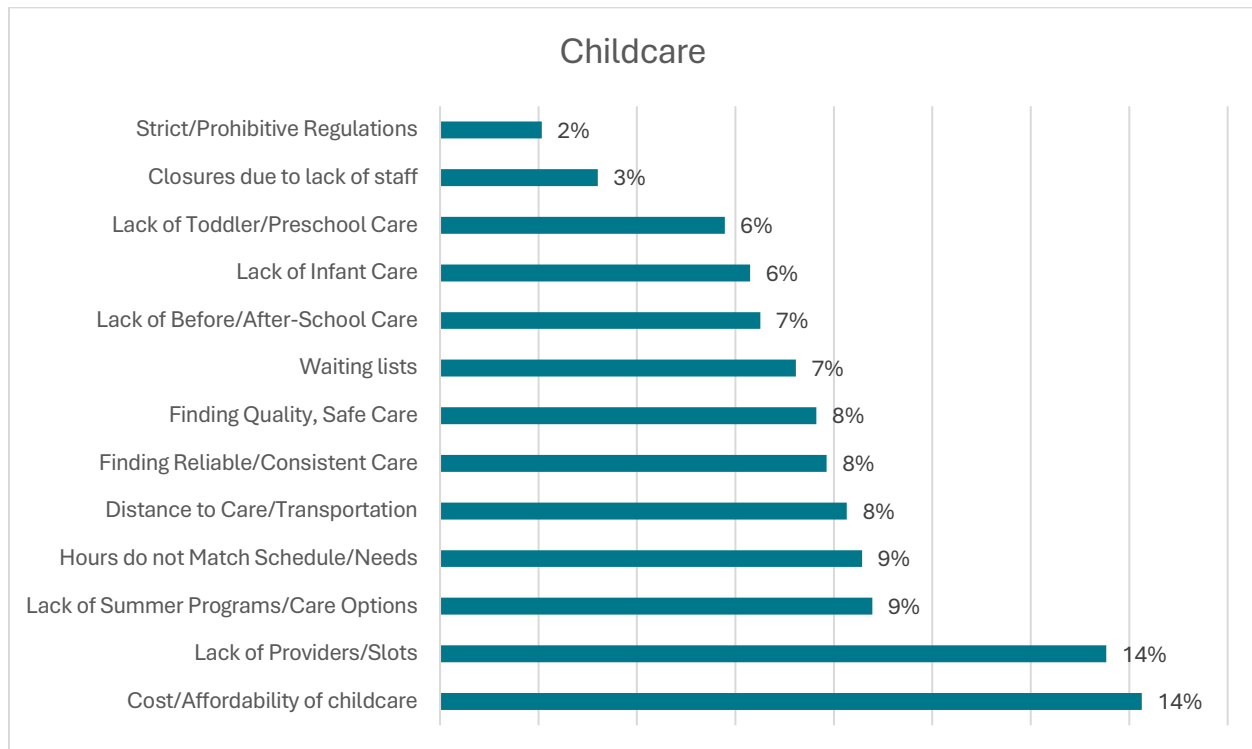
### Employment

- Lack of diversified, year-round, well-paying jobs, especially in STEM and technical fields.
- Overreliance on low-wage, seasonal tourism jobs.
- High tax burdens and health insurance costs strain small businesses.
- Otsego County is the lowest-paying county; many residents hold multiple jobs and still struggle.
- Barriers to starting and sustaining local businesses due to lack of support and infrastructure.

## CHILD CARE is a concern in our area

9% No

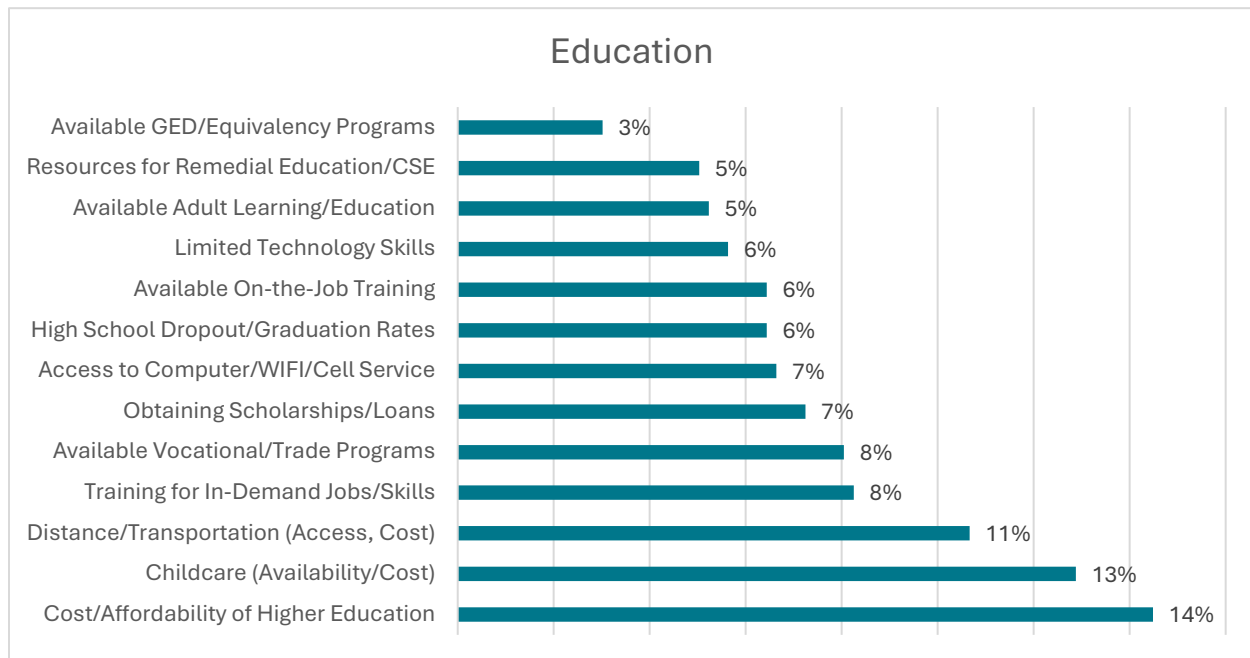
89% Yes



### Childcare

- Severe shortage of flexible and affordable childcare options.
- Need for more programming for toddlers, children under 5, and school-aged kids during non-work hours and in colder months.

EDUCATION is a concern in our area    34% No    61% Yes



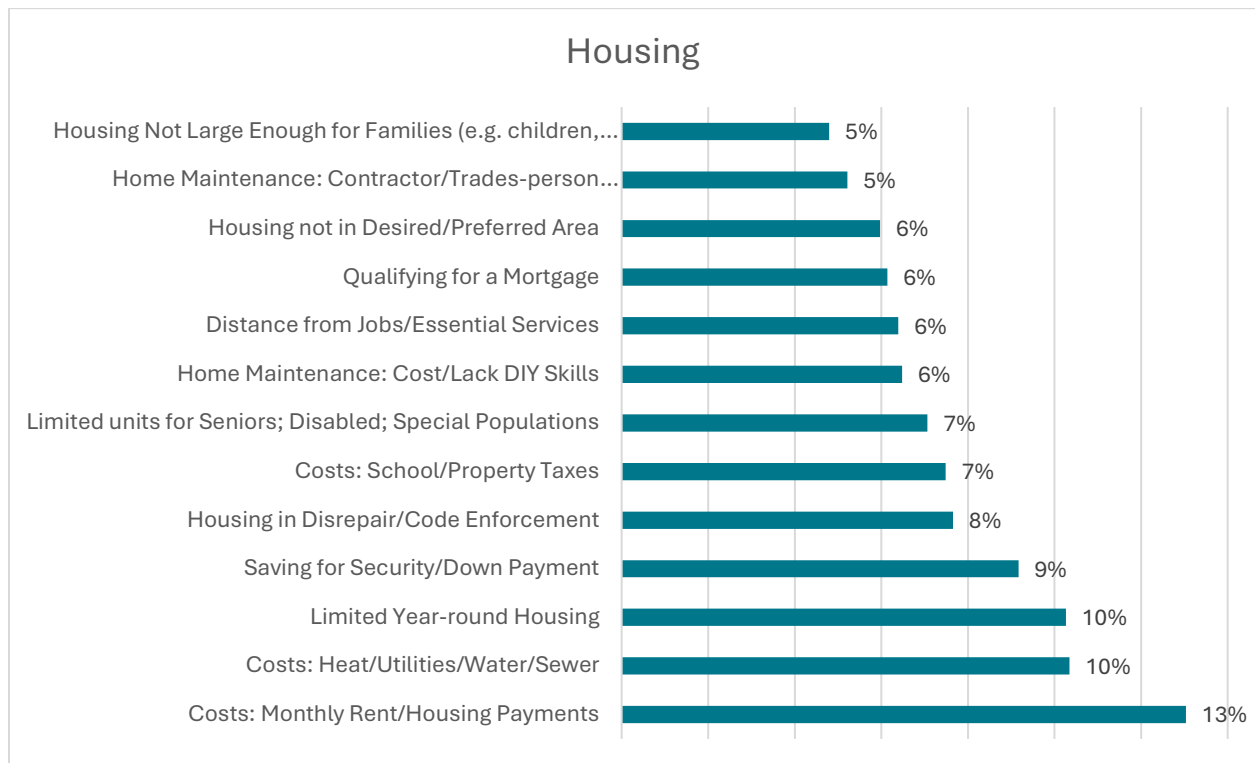
#### Education

- Lack of diversified, year-round, well-paying jobs, especially in STEM and technical fields.
- Widespread low literacy levels noted across all age groups; Some residents cannot read or write well enough to access basic services or information.
- Difficulty finding local information about programs and resources, especially online; Many programs are not advertised, relying instead on word of mouth.
- No meaningful community education or leadership programs that include new perspectives; Lack of platforms to discuss ideas or network with community leaders; Need for more open-minded, data-driven approaches to education and planning.
- Schools are struggling to meet the needs of high-needs students; Staff are overworked and underpaid; Mental health services for children are inadequate; child mental health access is a major concern.
- A desire for more local STEM opportunities and professional paths to encourage youth to return after college; Lack of support from county institutions (e.g., IDA) to foster education-based economic development like R&D or technical careers.
- Schools and educational programs are siloed from other local organizations; Need for better collaboration between educational institutions, social services, and municipalities.

HOUSING is a concern in our area

3% No

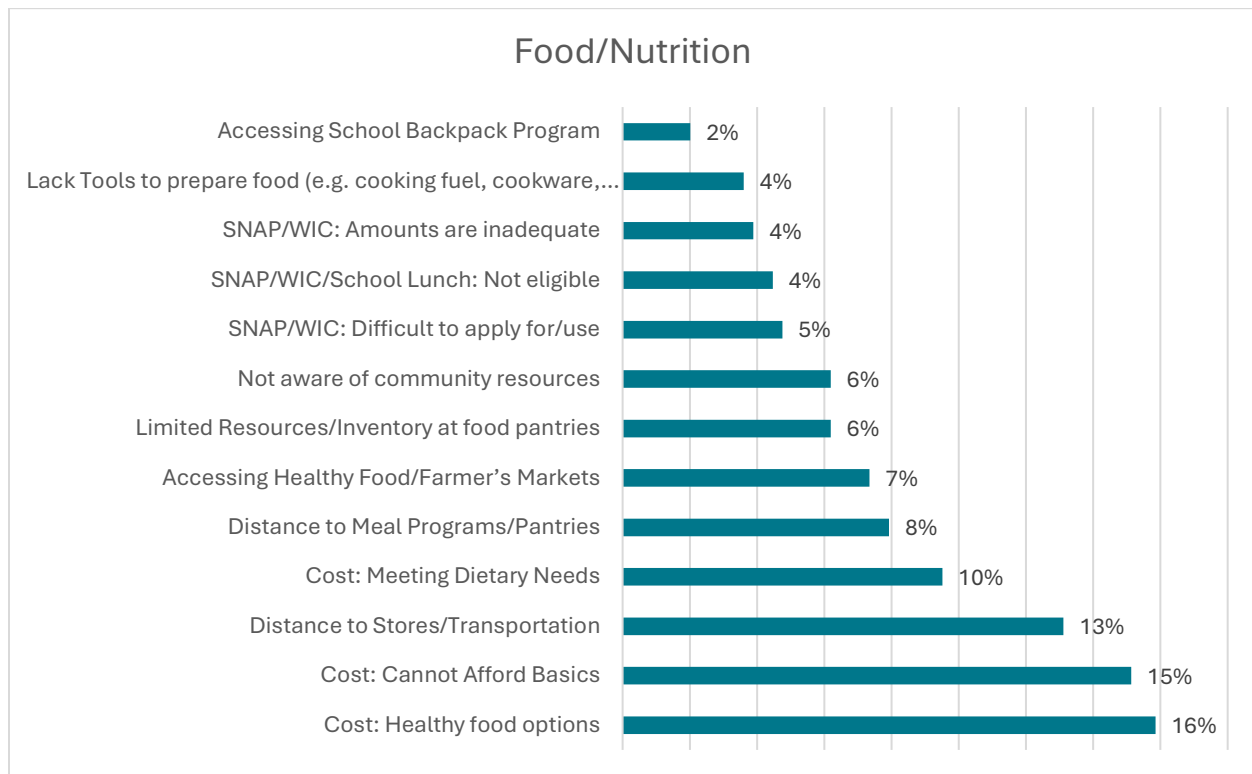
97% Yes



#### Housing

- Affordable housing crisis: high rents, limited availability, especially for seniors and working families.
- Baseball tourism and student housing displace year-round residents.
- Lack of single-floor housing for seniors.
- Absentee landlords and unregulated contractors worsen housing conditions.
- Homelessness and insufficient sober housing and assisted living facilities.
- Aging housing stock and inadequate property maintenance services.

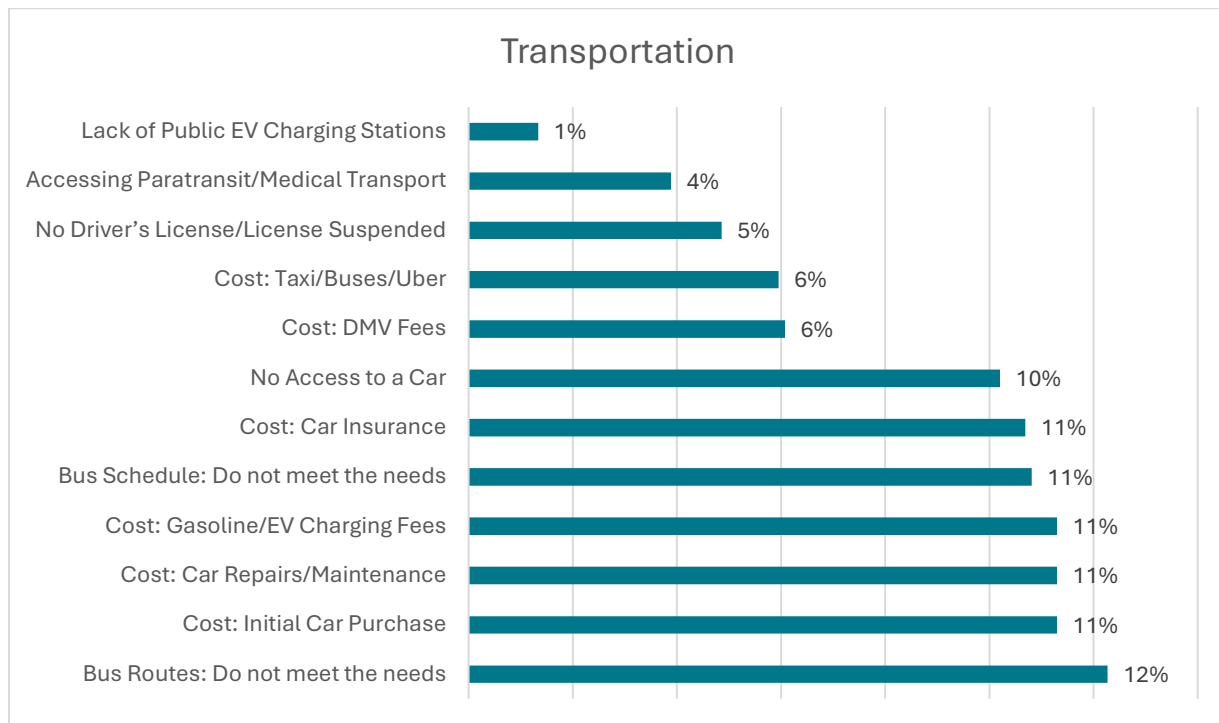
FOOD/NUTRITION is a concern in our area      19% No      77% Yes



#### Food/Nutrition

- Difficulty accessing healthy and diverse food options.
- Meals on Wheels and senior nutrition programs noted as helpful, but limited in scope.
- Concerns about affordability and food security, especially for low-income seniors.

TRANSPORTATION is a concern in our area      13% No      84% Yes

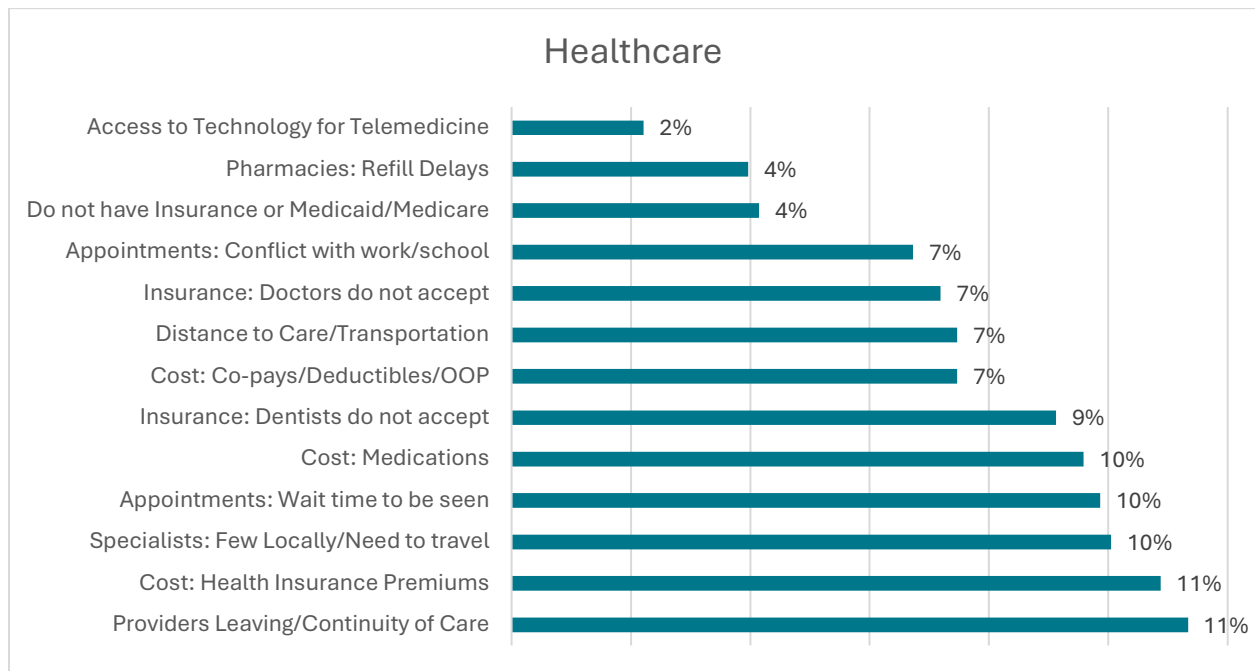


#### Transportation

- Poor road conditions and infrastructure maintenance (e.g., potholes in Oneonta).
- Transportation needs for seniors and people with disabilities (e.g., rides to programs, stores, appointments) are not adequately met.
- People without cars or the ability to drive are often isolated or unable to access basic services (e.g., healthcare, housing resources, recreation).
- Seasonal weather and snowy/icy roads exacerbates existing mobility barriers and create public health and safety concerns.
- Reliable, affordable car repair services are hard to find.
- Transportation is siloed across towns and villages; no coordinated rural transit to reach services, schools, or jobs across Otsego County.
- No planning for transit in economic development: Not considered in housing or employment initiatives; Economic plans focused on tourism do not support transportation needs of residents year-round.



HEALTH CARE is a concern in our area 8% No 89% Yes



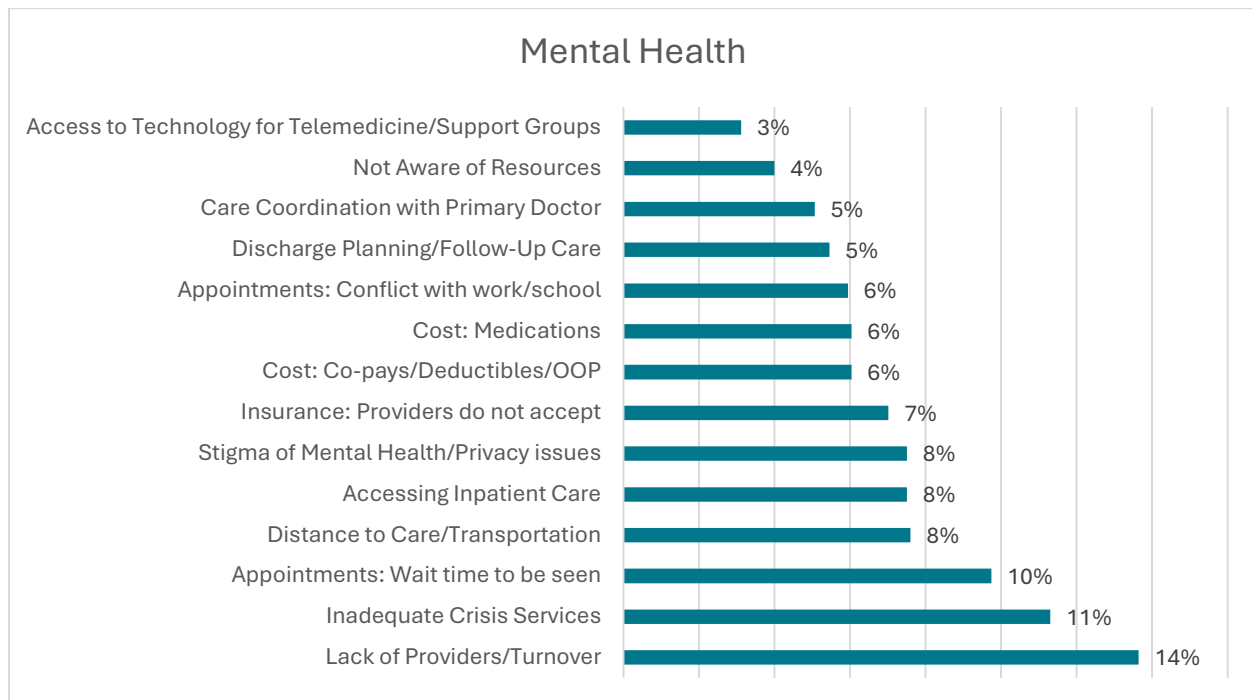
#### Healthcare

- Long wait times at local medical centers (e.g., Bassett), forcing residents to travel far for care.
- Lack of accessible and quality dental care (especially pediatric).
- Need for skilled nursing staff in care facilities.
- High health insurance costs for small businesses.

MENTAL HEALTH is a concern in our area

4% No

93% Yes



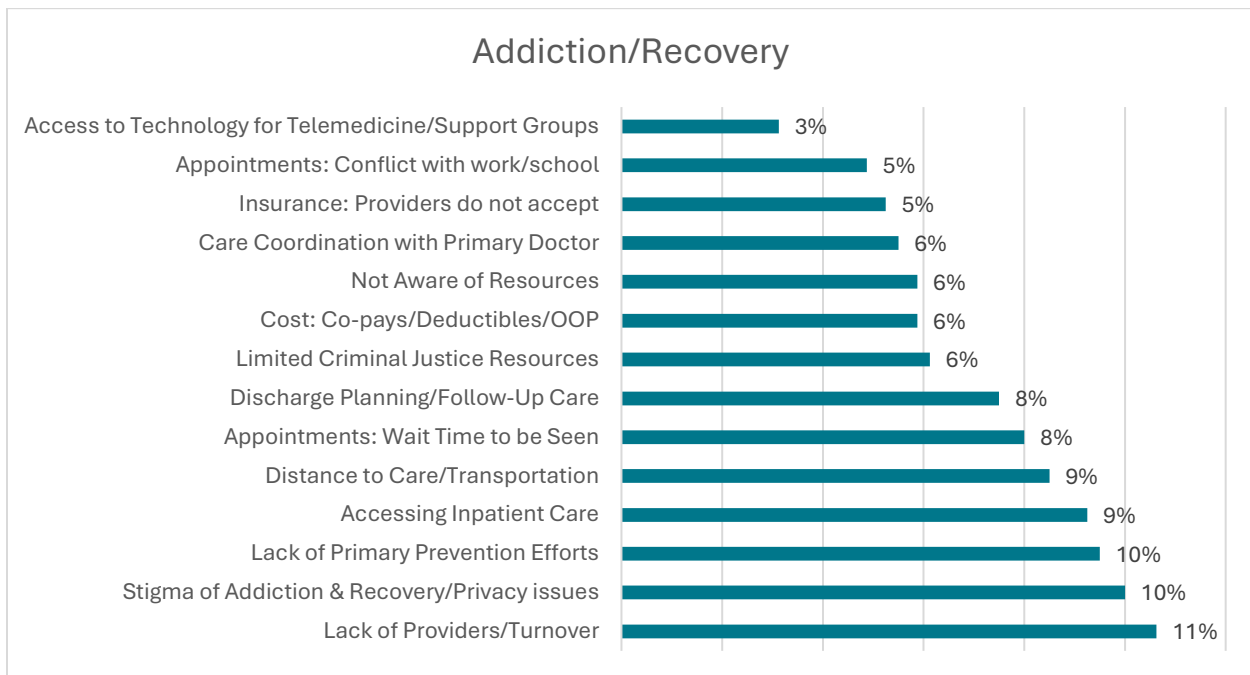
#### Mental Health

- Severe shortage of mental health providers and long wait times.
- Child mental health access is critically lacking.
- Community-wide struggles with untreated mental illness, especially among unhoused populations.

ADDICTION/RECOVERY is a concern in our area

12% No

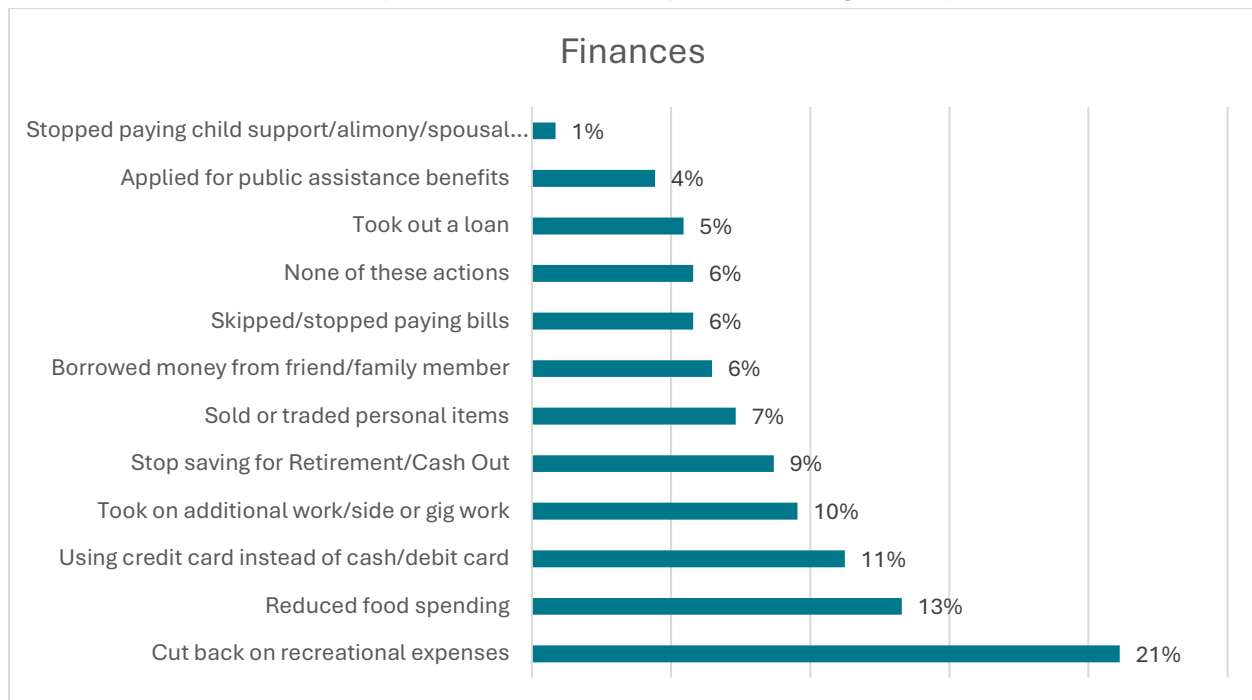
80% Yes



#### Addiction/Recovery Services

- Drug use and sales in public spaces.
- Stigma and lack of community support for addiction and homelessness.
- Limited supportive and sober housing.
- Overburdened recovery and supportive service organizations.

## FINANCES: What actions have you taken to make sure you have enough money on hand for basic need?



### Finances

- Rising electricity and utility bills.
- Ineligible for aid but not earning enough ("middle-class poor").
- Financial strain in retirement due to high housing costs and low fixed incomes.
- Property tax perceptions skewed; true burden often hidden by reliance on sales tax revenue.

## OTHER COMMUNITY CHALLENGES:

### Infrastructure

- Poor local infrastructure: failing roads, limited internet/phone coverage, inadequate utilities.
- Buildings and housing in disrepair due to lack of reliable contractors and oversight.
- Environmental factors (e.g., extreme weather) exacerbate infrastructure vulnerabilities.

### Government/Municipalities

- Poor communication: outdated or missing municipal websites, wrong contact information.
- Ineffectual or unresponsive leadership at the town and county level.
- Lack of transparency, accountability, and data-informed decision-making.
- Overreliance on unstable sales tax revenue rather than sustainable fiscal planning.

### Recreation/Socialization

- Lack of activities for teens and families, especially in colder months.
- Limited affordable recreation options like tubing, skiing, or music/cultural events.
- Public spaces (e.g., parks) feel unsafe due to drug use or lack of maintenance.
- Insufficient social programming for seniors.

### Community Services/Resources

- Organizations overstretched and underfunded.
- Lack of collaboration among local nonprofits, governments, and service providers.
- Siloed approaches to community development.
- Decreased volunteerism and difficulty recruiting competent staff and board members.
- Lack of awareness or promotion of existing resources.

#### Other

- LGBTQ+ residents feel unsafe or unwelcome in the community.
- General erosion of community trust and social cohesion.
- Discrimination, racism, and social stigma against newcomers, low-income individuals, and vulnerable populations.
- Declining and aging population leads to loss of local vitality.
- Lack of public support for special education and disability services.
- General apathy or resistance to change among long-term residents and leadership.

What "lens" are you answering these questions through?		
Business/Private Sector	8	4%
Community-Based Organization	50	27%
Educational Institution	20	11%
Faith-Based Organizations	4	2%
Individual/Community Member	91	48%
Public Sector (Municipality or Public Official)	15	8%

Have you/immediate family member ever utilized an Opportunities for Otsego program?		
Yes	63	34%
No	114	61%
NO RESPONSE	11	6%

OPTIONAL: What is your age?		
18-24	4	2%
25-34	16	9%
35-44	33	18%
45-54	39	21%
55-64	35	19%
65-74	25	13%
75+	11	6%
NO RESPONSE	25	13%

OPTIONAL: What town do you live in?		
Cherry Valley	1	1%
Cooperstown	9	5%

Edmeston	4	2%
Fly Creek	1	1%
Garrattsville	2	1%
Gilbertsville	3	2%
Hartwick	4	2%
Laurens	9	5%
Maryland	2	1%
Middlefield	1	1%
Milford	9	5%
Morris	6	4%
Mount Vision	2	1%
New Lisbon	1	1%
Oneonta (City)	56	33%
Oneonta (Town)	24	14%
Otego	10	6%
Otsego	4	2%
Richfield Springs	4	2%
Schenevus	1	1%
Springfield	2	1%
Springfield Center	1	1%
Unadilla	3	2%
West Oneonta	3	2%
Worcester	6	4%

## Community Forum

On April 29, 2025 Opportunities for Otsego convened a half-day forum with 100+ community partners and players. Based on feedback from the Community Needs Assessment Survey, five work groups were selected for further discussion: Employment; Childcare; Housing; Transportation; and Mental Health/Healthcare.

Forum attendees included representatives from Community-Based Organizations (64.3%); Business/Private Sector (13.3%); Faith-Based Organizations (2.0%); Individual/Community Member (11.2%); and Educational Institution (9.2%). Discussion groups were prearranged to encourage discussion between a cross-section of sectors within the community. Group leaders were provided with a list of questions, based on quantitative and qualitative community data, to facilitate solution-focused discussions.

Below is a summary of each group's solutions and interventions to community address gaps.

### Employment

- Offer flexible hours as appropriate
- Find ways to increase wages to “living wages”
- Consider life experience in lieu of education
- Develop onboarding/training programs to address any gaps in technical knowledge.
- Create pipelines to employment modeled after Griffiss Institute
- Foster business-high school partnerships (e.g. career days, internships)
- Offer business-based childcare
- Employee incentive programs in collaboration with local business (e.g. discounts)
- Integrate Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to address barriers to maintaining employment (e.g. childcare, job coaching)
- Develop Rideshare program/app
- Explore development of entrepreneurial programs to address transportation barriers
- Partnerships with Chamber of Commerce for mentorships, small business development, new jobs/expansion

### Childcare

- Develop a web-based hub of all childcare options in the community
- Partner with schools to develop and/or expand after school/summer care options. Potentially resource educators to supplement their income over the summer.
- Partner with Assisted Living facilities and Bassett Healthcare to offer space for childcare
- Offer OPT (Oneonta Public Transit) bus stops at established childcare centers
- Care-and-Pair Internship programs (e.g. Colgate College, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Oneonta)

Suggestions to help sustain childcare providers included:

- Offer drop-in childcare to visitors to the Cooperstown All-Star Village and Dreams Park at a premium rate to subsidize year-round care.
- Offer grant writing support to childcare programs who do not have the capacity or staff to craft and submit grant applications
- Group healthcare policy for childcare providers within the community to reduce costs
- Rental assistance for childcare centers
- Engage and educate businesses on the impact childcare has on the local economy, worker productivity and retention.
- Incorporate childcare into the Otsego County Strategic Plan
- Housing and other incentives for college students to stay and work in the area after graduation

### Housing

- Develop housing to address and alleviate increasing housing costs for year-round residents.
- Expand manufacturing jobs to bring year-round residents to the area.
- Increase inventory of low-income/subsidized housing to alleviate excessive wait lists
- Community education/awareness campaign on benefits to supportive housing (e.g. RSS and Springbrook projects)
- Review and update County and municipal laws/ordinances that create bottlenecks, impede progress, increase costs, and limit the inventory multi-family dwellings and year-round housing (e.g. number of unrelated individuals in one one-unit, short-term housing, rent control laws, zoning)
- Fund rental assistance programs/landlord incentives through “Carbon Capture Credit” – higher tax rates for summer and student rental units.
- Offer housing incentives to students to remain after graduation
- Tenant Education – tenant rights, Code Enforcement, community assistance programs (e.g. Legal Aid)
- Expand housing assistance programs to homeowners to address costs and maintenance (e.g. wells, septic systems,
- Greater collaboration between local, state, and federal energy/utility and repair programs to braid funds and remove barriers (e.g. NYSEDA, Community Solar Initiative, NY Forward, Otsego County Preservation)
- Convene landlord meet-and-greet to foster relationships, encourage including utility costs in rent
- Increased communication amongst local housing providers and players (e.g. newsletter)

### Transportation

- Utilize community data (e.g. households without vehicles, worker commuter trends) to reimagine public transportation options, routes, and schedules to better address community needs/gaps.
- Develop an online transportation Resource Hub to consolidate all transportation options. Possible print resource to share with schools and community organizations.
- Vehicle Repairs - Develop partnerships with AAA/Tow Companies to get vehicle to repair shops; repairs shops/retired mechanics to assist with vehicle repairs, discounted services, provide estimates for community programs; Mobile Mechanic program to go to homes.



- Expand partnerships and incentivize other community transportation programs (e.g. GetThere, VA vans, Medicaid transportation providers) to expand services in Otsego County.
- Create space in Oneonta (greatest population hub) to establish satellite offices for people seeking service/support from Cooperstown-based organization/programs (e.g. DSS, District Attorney, DMV)
- Instacart/DoorDash vouchers to assist with access to nutrition and other basic needs
- Countywide Transportation Committee to bring ideas to the County Board of Representatives and City of Oneonta officials.
- Business-sponsored work shuttles for evening/overnight commuters (e.g. Corning, Bassett Healthcare, Springbrook, ARC)

#### Mental Health/Healthcare

- Greater dissemination of current resources (e.g. OCCAN Parent Handbook) to community agencies, school districts, local media, and links on agency websites.
- Maintain a “Mega-List” of community events which people can come together to create community and relationships with providers (e.g. tabling events, health fair). Suggest maintaining and hosting on City of Oneonta, Otsego County, or Chamber of Commerce website.
- Host a countywide Health Fair in partnership with the Otsego Department of Health
- Foster relationships with organizations/businesses to keep new graduates in healthcare fields in the area (e.g. internships, pipeline to employment, volunteer opportunities).
- Entice young healthcare professionals to stay in the area with resources for singles/youth/family and better promotion of the “perks” of rural living
- More engaging events/activities that support sober lifestyle (e.g. no alcohol or “puff”)
- Offer housing incentives to students to remain after graduation
- Collaboration with Spectrum and Bassett Healthcare to expand Telehealth
- Develop Mobile outreach programs to address social isolation and transportation issues
- Build on BOCES and Hartwick College healthcare programs. Bring Masters-level programs to Otsego County





Opportunities for Otsego extends its appreciation to our clients, community partners, funders, and our Board of Directors for their support in developing the 2025 Otsego County Community Needs Assessment.

This publication is a reflection of our shared commitment and efforts, and a testament to what we can achieve together to address the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.