

OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

MISSION

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), working in close collaboration with the Office of Children and Family Services and other agencies, helps needy adults and families achieve economic self-sufficiency through work, job training and child support enforcement. OTDA provides economic assistance to aged and disabled persons who are unable to work, transitional support to welfare recipients while they are working toward self-sufficiency, and supportive services to low-income households to help them avoid welfare dependency.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance has its central office in Albany and three major field offices throughout the State. These offices provide direct operational support, supervision and guidance to the State's 58 local social services districts, which comprise each county and New York City. Social services districts are responsible for directly administering most welfare programs, including those that serve the homeless and refugees.

Agency staff also provide legal, audit and computer systems support. Through its Disability Determinations Program, the Agency evaluates the medical eligibility of disability claimants for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Executive Budget recommends **\$5.0 billion All Funds (\$1.3 billion General Fund; \$3.7 billion Other Funds)** for OTDA. This is a decrease of **\$244 million (\$183 million General Fund; \$61 million Other Funds)** from the 2007-08 Budget. This net change primarily reflects the transfer of funding for non-OTDA programs from OTDA to the budgets of administering agencies; an increase in the county share of public assistance costs; and other adjustments.

The Office's workforce will remain unchanged at **2,305** positions in 2008-09. Approximately 660 of these positions are paid by State tax dollars from the General Fund with partial Federal reimbursement and 1,299 are funded directly by Federal grants. The remaining 346 positions are supported by various special revenues.

Major Budget actions include:

- **Child Support:** The amount of child support collections passed through to custodial parents receiving public assistance will increase from a maximum of \$50 to \$100 per month.
- **Supportive Housing:** The amount of funding for OTDA's Single Room Occupancy Program will reach \$21.3 million in 2008-09, a \$1.4 million increase from 2007-08. This increase will fund supportive services for new housing units expected to come online in 2008-09.

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- **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to the SSI State Supplement:** Legislation enacted in 2006 provided an annual State COLA for SSI recipients residing in Congregate Care Level III facilities. The 2008-09 Executive Budget includes \$3 million to fund the 2008 COLA.
- **Performance Reporting:** The 2007-08 Enacted Budget required performance reporting for a number of OTDA initiatives. The 2008-09 Executive Budget will expand this requirement to additional programs to assist OTDA in analyzing the effectiveness of current programs and implementing cost-effective program changes. Expanded performance data will be available on the agency's public website.
- **Transparency in Funding:** Programs historically funded within OTDA with Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant dollars, but administered by other agencies, will be transferred to the administering agency and will be funded from the General Fund. This action, which will involve the transfer of \$112 million in appropriation authority out of OTDA and into the budgets of the administering agencies, will increase transparency, eliminate unnecessary administrative steps, and expedite the distribution of funds.
- **Public Assistance Costs:** The gross cost of public assistance benefits is approximately \$2 billion a year, of which approximately 60 percent is reimbursed with Federal and State funds, with the remainder paid by local governments. The 2008-09 Executive Budget will require New York City and counties to pay 2 percent more of all public assistance costs. In the case of families who have been on assistance for less than five years, the local share will increase to 27 percent. In the case of single adults and families on welfare for more than 5 years, the adjusted local share will be 52 percent. This proposal, which will generate \$40.5 million in State savings in 2008-09, should encourage counties to focus on those public assistance recipients, 111,000 in total, who they have deemed unable to work, to ensure they are either provided with the supportive services they need to make the successful transition from public assistance to self-sufficiency or that they receive the appropriate government support for any long term disabilities. In addition, the Executive Budget will apply more stringent work requirements for county attainment of a work incentive bonus initiated by the State to encourage counties to place more of their public assistance recipients in work activities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The welfare system in New York State is designed to provide temporary income and transitional support services while recipients secure employment and child support payments. The system promotes individual responsibility and provides social services districts with the flexibility they need to effectively administer a work-oriented welfare system. The system has evolved from one that focused primarily on determining client eligibility and distributing benefit payments to one that now focuses on assisting individuals in achieving independence from publicly-supported welfare programs.

Since 1994, over 1.1 million recipients have left the welfare rolls, which represents a decline of 68 percent. In addition to generating significant State and local government savings, this caseload decrease has allowed the State to use the TANF Block Grant to fund supportive services that encourage employment. The programs funded include the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), child care, and transportation services.

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OTDA's programs also emphasize prevention of welfare dependency by providing work supports and services to at-risk households. The Executive Budget continues the Strengthening Families through Stronger Fathers initiative to encourage employment and related activities for low-income, non-custodial parents.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

The Family Assistance program, which is financed jointly by the State, Federal government, and local districts, provides employment assessments, support services and time-limited cash assistance to eligible families with children.

All Family Assistance participants must undergo an assessment of their employability, skills and training needs and, unless determined to be exempt, must participate in assigned work activities to remain eligible for cash benefits. Federal law mandates a 50 percent work participation rate for all Family Assistance cases, which can be offset by a state's reduction in public assistance caseloads. Federal financial participation in cash benefits for Family Assistance participants is limited to a cumulative period of five years. If the Family Assistance household is unable to transition off cash assistance during this period, the family typically moves to the Safety Net Assistance program, which is financed jointly by the State and local districts.

New York's welfare program fosters individual responsibility to help break the cycle of long-term dependency. All applicants and recipients are required to participate in screening and assessment to determine if the need for welfare results from drug or alcohol abuse. If a participant is unable to work because of such circumstances, he or she is referred to an appropriate treatment program. Teen parents must attend high school or other approved education programs to receive welfare benefits.

Welfare reform also requires each social services district to screen its Family Assistance caseload for domestic violence. Acting through its designated domestic violence liaison, each district informs the individual of services they may access on a voluntary basis. Districts waive application of welfare program rules, including but not limited to child support cooperation and work requirements, if the district determines that these provisions would cause further risk or make it more difficult for the person to escape domestic violence.

SAFETY NET ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Article XVII of the State Constitution requires the State and its social services districts to provide for the needy. New York State meets this obligation through the Safety Net Assistance program for persons who are not eligible for Family Assistance or Supplemental Security Income.

Safety Net Assistance participants are single adults and childless couples; families that have exhausted their five-year limit on Family Assistance; households where the adult is unable to work because of substance abuse; and households where the adult has refused to participate in drug/alcohol screening or treatment. In addition to providing for essential needs, the Safety Net Assistance program provides employment services such as job search and work training. Unless prevented from doing so by a physical or mental disability, Safety Net Assistance participants must engage in assigned work activities to receive assistance.

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SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Activities undertaken since welfare reform have strengthened child support enforcement to ensure that parents provide for the economic well-being of their children. Improvements include automated updating of child support awards to reflect inflation; improved customer services through website access of account information; interstate reciprocity in child support proceedings; and administrative authority for social services districts to order genetic tests, subpoena information and collect relevant data from Federal, State and local agencies. The Executive Budget continues to re-invest Federal incentive bonuses in child support initiatives to strengthen performance in “hard-to-collect” cases, and continue State-local partnerships to increase criminal prosecution of parents who refuse to pay child support. These measures will help to increase total child support collections to a projected level of \$1.66 billion in 2008.

The Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides cash assistance to the aged, blind, and disabled, and is administered by the Social Security Administration. New York State has chosen to provide additional financial support to its SSI recipients. The State’s SSI supplement is one of the most generous in the nation. The cost of the SSI supplement is projected to be \$680 million in 2008-09 to cover approximately 652,000 recipients.

The Federal Food Stamp Program provides low-income households with an electronic benefit card that can be used as cash to purchase food. New York receives \$2.3 billion per year in Federal Food Stamp benefits, with eligible households receiving an average monthly benefit of \$202.

The 2008-09 Executive Budget provides a total of \$1.05 billion in TANF-supported allocations to counties and New York City, including \$3 million for non-residential services to victims of domestic violence, up to \$35 million for the Summer Youth Employment Program and \$1.01 billion for the Flexible Fund for Family Services. The Flexible Fund for Family Services gives counties more discretion and responsibility in determining where their TANF funding should be directed.

The 2008-09 Executive Budget also continues funding for the State’s transitional and emergency shelter system and supportive housing efforts, which assist homeless individuals and families in achieving self-sufficiency by strengthening their independent living skills and helping them acquire permanent housing.

ALL FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Category	Available 2007-08	Appropriations Recommended 2008-09	Change	Reappropriations Recommended 2008-09
State Operations	456,347,000	477,097,000	20,750,000	278,000,000
Aid To Localities	4,737,101,000	4,472,549,000	(264,552,000)	4,057,656,300
Capital Projects	30,000,000	30,000,000	0	113,795,000
Total	5,223,448,000	4,979,646,000	(243,802,000)	4,449,451,300

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ALL FUND TYPES PROJECTED LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT BY PROGRAM FILLED ANNUAL SALARIED POSITIONS

Program	Full-Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)		FTE Change
	2007-08 Estimated FTEs 03/31/08	2008-09 Estimated FTEs 03/31/09	
Administration			
General Fund	201	203	2
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	65	65	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	79	79	0
Internal Service Funds	4	4	0
Child Well Being Program			
Special Revenue Funds - Other	74	74	0
Disability Determinations Program			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	993	993	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	105	105	0
Employment and Economic Support Program			
General Fund	40	43	3
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	178	178	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	27	27	0
Executive Direction			
General Fund	16	16	0
Information Technology Program			
General Fund	102	101	(1)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	40	40	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	45	45	0
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	270	270	0
Specialized Services Program			
General Fund	31	27	(4)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	23	23	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	12	12	0
Total	2,305	2,305	0

STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2007-08	Recommended 2008-09	Change
General Fund	68,107,000	63,517,000	(4,590,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	217,800,000	244,946,000	27,146,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	169,240,000	167,434,000	(1,806,000)
Internal Service Funds	1,200,000	1,200,000	0
Total	456,347,000	477,097,000	20,750,000

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STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

<u>Program</u>	<u>Available 2007-08</u>	<u>Recommended 2008-09</u>	<u>Change</u>
Administration			
General Fund	25,602,000	13,467,000	(12,135,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	9,000,000	9,000,000	0
Special Revenue Funds - Other	24,540,000	36,025,000	11,485,000
Internal Service Funds	1,200,000	1,200,000	0
Child Well Being Program			
General Fund	0	2,500,000	2,500,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	3,800,000	12,046,000	8,246,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	30,000,000	30,000,000	0
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement			
General Fund	(81,500,000)	0	81,500,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	85,000,000	0	(85,000,000)
Disability Determinations Program			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	168,000,000	164,000,000	(4,000,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	9,600,000	10,600,000	1,000,000
Employment and Economic Support Program			
General Fund	7,625,000	4,669,000	(2,956,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	5,000,000	21,400,000	16,400,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	4,000,000	7,109,000	3,109,000
Executive Direction			
General Fund	1,815,000	608,000	(1,207,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	0	1,200,000	1,200,000
Information Technology Program			
General Fund	89,784,000	30,756,000	(59,028,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	31,500,000	35,000,000	3,500,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	14,600,000	69,000,000	54,400,000
Legal Affairs			
General Fund	22,123,000	10,541,000	(11,582,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	0	11,000,000	11,000,000
Specialized Services Program			
General Fund	2,658,000	976,000	(1,682,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	500,000	3,500,000	3,000,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	1,500,000	2,500,000	1,000,000
Total	<u>456,347,000</u>	<u>477,097,000</u>	<u>20,750,000</u>

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**STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS
SUMMARY OF PERSONAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES
2008-09 RECOMMENDED
(dollars)**

Program	Total		Personal Service Regular (Annual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	1,491,000	(13,303,000)	1,336,000	(13,423,500)
Child Well Being Program	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	35,500,000	0	35,500,000
Employment and Economic Support Program	1,638,000	(3,956,000)	1,556,000	(3,958,000)
Executive Direction	303,000	(1,207,000)	235,000	(1,194,400)
Information Technology Program	1,139,000	(7,294,000)	1,139,000	(7,294,000)
Legal Affairs	7,003,000	(11,582,000)	6,589,000	(11,635,400)
Specialized Services Program	733,000	(1,682,000)	687,000	(1,690,000)
Total	<u>12,607,000</u>	<u>(3,224,000)</u>	<u>11,842,000</u>	<u>(3,395,300)</u>

Program	Temporary Service (Nonannual Salaried)		Holiday/Overtime Pay (Annual Salaried)	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	120,000	120,000	35,000	500
Child Well Being Program	0	0	0	0
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	0	0	0
Employment and Economic Support Program	0	0	82,000	2,000
Executive Direction	65,000	(15,600)	3,000	3,000
Information Technology Program	0	0	0	0
Legal Affairs	29,000	(6,300)	385,000	59,700
Specialized Services Program	0	0	46,000	8,000
Total	<u>214,000</u>	<u>98,100</u>	<u>551,000</u>	<u>73,200</u>

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**STATE OPERATIONS - GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS
SUMMARY OF NONPERSONAL SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE UNDISTRIBUTED
APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES
2008-09 RECOMMENDED
(dollars)**

Program	Total		Supplies and Materials	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	11,976,000	668,000	110,000	(44,300)
Child Well Being Program	2,200,000	2,200,000	0	0
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	46,000,000	0	0
Employment and Economic Support Program	3,031,000	1,000,000	27,000	(3,000)
Executive Direction	305,000	0	24,000	(8,900)
Information Technology Program	29,617,000	(51,734,000)	37,900	(1,000)
Legal Affairs	3,538,000	0	160,000	21,500
Specialized Services Program	243,000	0	21,000	(14,100)
Total	<u>50,910,000</u>	<u>(1,866,000)</u>	<u>379,900</u>	<u>(49,800)</u>

Program	Travel		Contractual Services	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	290,000	31,900	11,226,000	702,100
Child Well Being Program	0	0	2,200,000	2,200,000
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	0	0	46,000,000
Employment and Economic Support Program	147,000	68,000	2,833,000	931,000
Executive Direction	35,000	(14,500)	225,000	14,400
Information Technology Program	36,700	2,000	6,598,400	(5,733,000)
Legal Affairs	198,000	42,300	2,603,000	(49,800)
Specialized Services Program	107,000	14,100	106,000	(300)
Total	<u>813,700</u>	<u>143,800</u>	<u>25,791,400</u>	<u>44,064,400</u>

Program	Equipment		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	350,000	(21,700)	0	0
Child Well Being Program	0	0	0	0
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	0	0	0
Employment and Economic Support Program	24,000	4,000	0	0
Executive Direction	21,000	9,000	0	0
Information Technology Program	70,000	(2,000)	22,874,000	(46,000,000)
Legal Affairs	577,000	(14,000)	0	0
Specialized Services Program	9,000	300	0	0
Total	<u>1,051,000</u>	<u>(24,400)</u>	<u>22,874,000</u>	<u>(46,000,000)</u>

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STATE OPERATIONS - OTHER THAN GENERAL FUND AND OFFSET FUNDS SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES 2008-09 RECOMMENDED (dollars)

Program	Total		Personal Service	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	46,225,000	11,485,000	23,340,000	10,420,000
Child Well Being Program	42,046,000	8,246,000	7,944,000	538,000
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	(85,000,000)	0	(36,330,000)
Disability Determinations Program	174,600,000	(3,000,000)	78,050,000	(400,000)
Employment and Economic Support Program	28,509,000	19,509,000	16,247,000	13,747,000
Executive Direction	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Information Technology Program	104,000,000	57,900,000	8,038,000	6,830,000
Legal Affairs	11,000,000	11,000,000	11,000,000	11,000,000
Specialized Services Program	6,000,000	4,000,000	3,743,000	2,408,000
Total	<u>413,580,000</u>	<u>25,340,000</u>	<u>149,562,000</u>	<u>9,413,000</u>

Program	Nonpersonal Service		Maintenance Undistributed	
	Amount	Change	Amount	Change
Administration	22,885,000	1,065,000	0	0
Child Well Being Program	34,102,000	7,708,000	0	0
Departmental Administrative Reimbursement	0	(48,670,000)	0	0
Disability Determinations Program	96,550,000	(2,600,000)	0	0
Employment and Economic Support Program	12,262,000	5,762,000	0	0
Executive Direction	0	0	0	0
Information Technology Program	60,962,000	47,570,000	35,000,000	3,500,000
Legal Affairs	0	0	0	0
Specialized Services Program	2,257,000	1,592,000	0	0
Total	<u>229,018,000</u>	<u>12,427,000</u>	<u>35,000,000</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>

AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

Fund Type	Available 2007-08	Recommended 2008-09	Change
General Fund	1,422,832,000	1,244,181,000	(178,651,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	3,277,930,000	3,200,432,000	(77,498,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	16,339,000	17,936,000	1,597,000
Fiduciary Funds	20,000,000	10,000,000	(10,000,000)
Total	<u>4,737,101,000</u>	<u>4,472,549,000</u>	<u>(264,552,000)</u>

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AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

<u>Program</u>	<u>Available 2007-08</u>	<u>Recommended 2008-09</u>	<u>Change</u>
Child Well Being Program			
General Fund	34,000,000	34,500,000	500,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	108,000,000	102,000,000	(6,000,000)
Employment and Economic Support Administration Program			
General Fund	349,755,000	346,542,000	(3,213,000)
Employment and Economic Support Program			
General Fund	913,227,000	736,439,000	(176,788,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	2,762,505,000	2,659,732,000	(102,773,000)
Fiduciary Funds	20,000,000	10,000,000	(10,000,000)
Food Stamp Administration Program			
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	364,000,000	406,275,000	42,275,000
Special Revenue Funds - Other	6,339,000	7,936,000	1,597,000
Specialized Services Program			
General Fund	125,850,000	126,700,000	850,000
Special Revenue Funds - Federal	43,425,000	32,425,000	(11,000,000)
Special Revenue Funds - Other	10,000,000	10,000,000	0
Total	<u>4,737,101,000</u>	<u>4,472,549,000</u>	<u>(264,552,000)</u>

CAPITAL PROJECTS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS (dollars)

<u>Comprehensive Construction Program</u>	<u>Available 2007-08</u>	<u>Recommended 2008-09</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Reappropriations 2008-09</u>
Supported Housing Program				
Housing Program Fund	30,000,000	30,000,000	0	113,795,000
Total	<u>30,000,000</u>	<u>30,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>113,795,000</u>