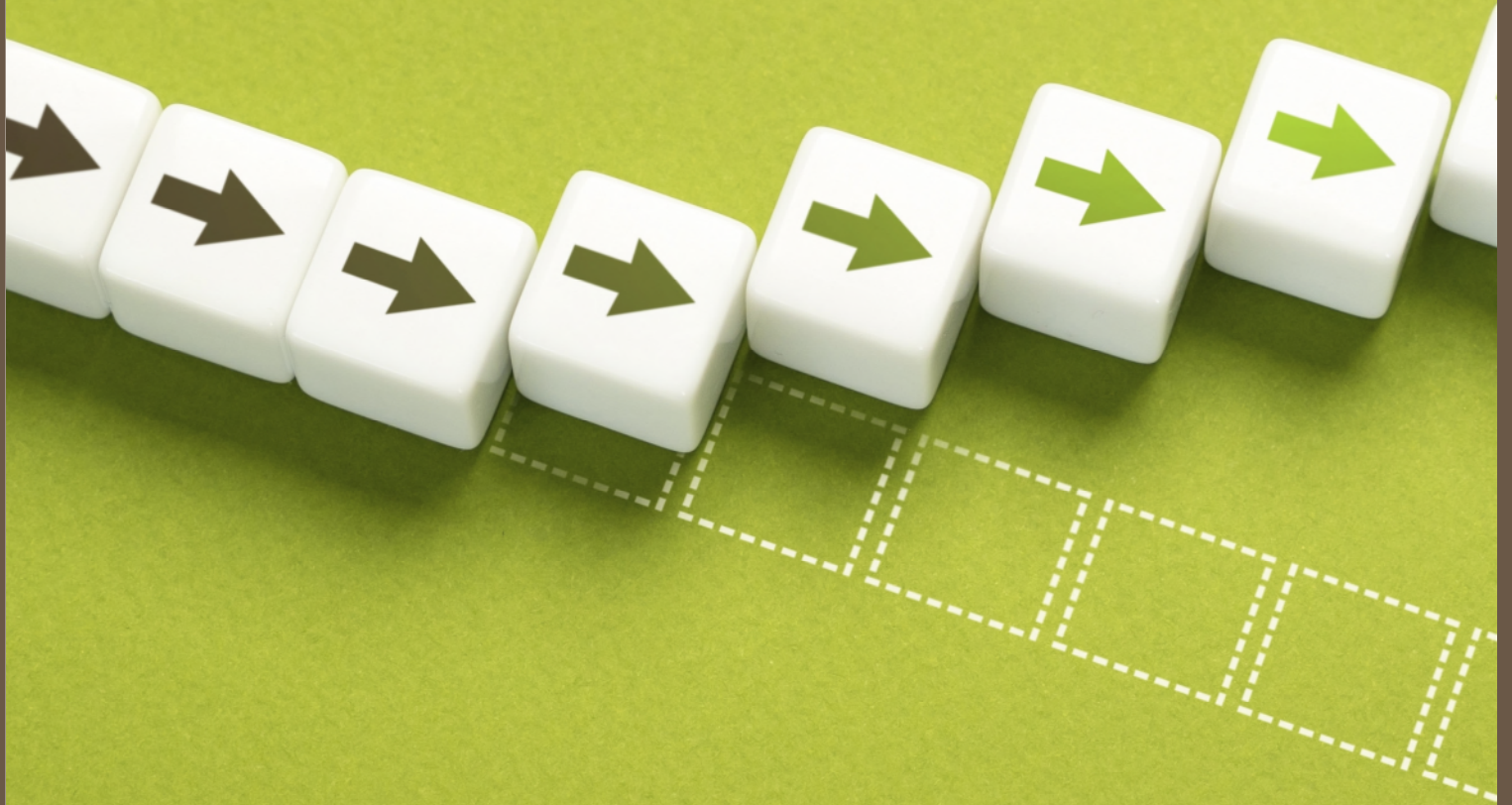


**New York Public Welfare Association
156th Annual Winter Conference**

**Moving & Seeing
Beyond the Tradition**



**Program Brochure
January 28-31, 2025
The Albany Marriott Hotel**

Welcome & Keynote Address
Wednesday, January 29
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM
Salons D/E

Presiding:

Michael McMahon, NYPWA President and
 Commissioner of Rensselaer County DSS

Honorable Daniel P. McCoy

Albany County Executive

Dr. DaMia Harris-Madden, Commissioner,
 Office of Children & Family Services

Barbara Guinn, Commissioner,
 Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance

Keynote Speaker



Dr. Lisa Patierne

**"Delivering Humanity: Empowering Social
 Services for a Resilient Future"**

Today's social service professionals work tirelessly in demanding environments, facing the realities of burnout, vicarious trauma, and high turnover. To continue serving effectively, we must also address the internal needs of our workforce: strong leadership, a positive culture, resilience, and support. This keynote, delivered by Dr. Lisa Patierne, introduces Delivering Humanity a transformative approach that brings empathy, compassion, and connection to the forefront of social services.

Aligned with the conference theme, Moving and Seeing Beyond the Tradition, Dr. Lisa Patierne will share strategies that uplift social service teams, helping them build an inclusive, compassionate culture that supports both individual and organizational well-being. Drawing from her ongoing collaboration with visionary leader, Commissioner Brandy Hillard Bouldin, and their work with the Schenectady County Department of Social Services, Dr. Patierne illustrates how Delivering Humanity can create a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to make a meaningful impact.

Key Takeaways:

- **Real Solutions to Workforce Challenges:** Learn practical ways to address retention, burnout, and a positive workplace culture through a compassion-centered approach.
- **A Shift from Judgment to Curiosity:** Explore how leading with curiosity over judgment opens new possibilities for connection, collaboration, and problem-solving across teams.
- **Building Resilience Through Humanity:** Gain insights into creating a supportive environment where team members feel valued, resilient, and inspired to contribute their best.

Whether you're in management, finance, legal, or front-line service, this keynote provides tools and inspiration to empower a more compassionate and resilient workforce. Join us to explore how Delivering Humanity can shape a stronger, more connected future for social services.

Tuesday ■ January 28

3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Exhibit Setup and Registration

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Conference Registration

6:00 PM

Dinner on Your Own

Wednesday ■ January 29

7:30 AM - 8:45 AM

Breakfast Buffet

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Conference Registration

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Exhibit Area Open

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Concurrent Sessions

Board Room

NYPWA Board of Directors' Meeting

Empire

**Confidentiality and Where to Find It
 (1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)**

Confidentiality Update- a review of the 2025
 Confidentiality Handbook, particularly the

updated sections. Where to Find It – this session will focus on various sources for information concerning social services programs, particularly those which contain legal and other policy statements of the agencies that regulate the social services programs administered by the local social services districts.

Presenter:

Mark Maves, Counsel to the NYPWA

Schenectady/Troy

Linking Children, Youth and Families to Needed Resources

Part 1 – CarePortal - This workshop will provide information on an innovative strategy to strengthen families. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) recently partnered with CarePortal, a technology platform that connects children and families to resources in their local communities. This partnership allows caseworkers access to a network of community providers that are willing to donate requested tangible items such as household items, furniture, and other necessities to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families. This pilot is being implemented in a number of local districts with hopes to provide these services statewide.

Part 2 – HEARS line - As we continue our endeavors to de-link poverty from neglect, come hear how the HEARS family line assists families by identifying local resources and providing information on a variety of services in their community. Caring representatives guide families to resources that provide, food, clothing, housing, childcare, parenting education, and more. Representatives are available to help Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mandated reporters who work with families that need help can call the OCFS HEARS line to obtain information for families and/or provide the OCFS HEARS phone number 1-888-554-3277 to families. We also welcome your ideas on how we can expand and improve.

Part 3 – Bravehearts Heartline – This presentation will focus on the development of

the Heartline, a warmline for youth and young adults in foster care. Information will be shared on the need that the Heartline is attempting to meet, logistics of the Heartline, and early data on calls and resources shared.

Presenters:

Part 1 – CarePortal:

Tenisha Hope, Program Manager, NYS OCFS
Steve Poissant, CarePortal, New York’s Area Director

Part 2 – HEARS Line:

Kristin Gleeson, Associate Commissioner, NYS OCFS

Jeri Guidry, HEARS Manager, NYS OCFS

Tina Calacone, HEARS Manager, NYS OCFS

Randall Williams, Community Relations Manager at HSCC, NYS OCFS

Carolyn May, Family Policy Advisor, CWCS, NYS OCFS

Part 3 – Bravehearts

Jessica Grimm, Director of Bravehearts Services, Bravehearts Move New York

Kevin Young, Bravehearts

Molly McHale, Youth Local Assistance Program Specialist, NYS OCFS

Salons A/B

Assessing Quality in Child Welfare

Chemung County has developed a quality assurance protocol for assessing casework practice. Quality tools which encompass federal, state and county regulations and procedures are completed at certain intervals on cases and entered into a database. This data is generated at an individual, unit, and division- wide level and is used to identify training and drive practice change.

Presenters:

Mindy Banfield, Commissioner, Chemung County DSS

Karen Fitzpatrick, Director of Services, Chemung County DSS

Jennifer Yannette, Grade A Supervisor, Chemung County DSS

Salon C

Housing Partnerships to Increase Capacity

Increasing emergency, transitional, and permanent housing capacity through partnerships involves collaboration between various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profits, private sector entities, and community organizations. Partnerships like these are crucial for addressing not just the immediate needs for emergency shelter, but also for creating pathways to more stable housing solutions across the continuum of housing programs. Dutchess County will share strategies for maximizing community resource to help meet the needs of our most vulnerable clients.

Presenters:

Christie Bonomo-Gose, Director of Adult Services, Dutchess County DCFS;
Anelie Etienne, Grants Program Coordinator, Dutchess County DCFS

Salon D

1115 Waiver NYHER: Context, Updates, and Next Steps

As the designated social care network lead entity for the Capital, Central, and North Country regions (24 counties) within the 1115 Waiver NYHER program, we will provide the overarching context, newest developments, and next steps for participants. This Medicaid redesign effort will bring together a robust ecosystem comprised of organizations in housing, food, transportation, clinical care, and social care - among many others - and this presentation will provide details related to implementation for all in attendance.

Presenters:

Scott Emery, Chief Strategy Officer, Healthy Alliance
Terri Morse, Director of Community Services, Essex County

Salon E

Recharging your Battery: Self-care and Everyday Wellness in Child Welfare

Child Protective Services (CPS) is a stressful and demanding profession. Caseworkers, front line

supervisors, and administrators are at increased risk for a myriad of physical, emotional, and relational challenges. This workshop provides participants with an overview of the common mental health risk factors, secondary traumatic stress, and moral injury associated with a career in child welfare. Just as important as understanding the risk factors, Child Welfare staff are provided with the tools they need to mitigate these risk factors. The Self-Care and Everyday Wellness in Child Welfare uses the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSAs) 8 Dimensions of Wellness to help staff create and implement their own wellness plans with a focus on achieving optimal work-life balance.

Presenters:

Belinda Schlafer, LMHC, CCTP, EMDR-C, Compelled to B Well, LLC
Angeal Tinder, MSW, Grade B Supervisor, Allegany County DSS
Brent Schlafer, Wellness Coordinator, Allegany County Sheriff's Department

Salon F

FFPSA Overview & Updates to Case Documentation and Federal Reimbursement Requirements

This will be a panel discussion with an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and receive feedback regarding Family First Updates. We will talk about the three pathways to achieve federal reimbursement and discuss any updates to the cost allocation plan and CONNECTIONS implementation.

Presenters:

Patricia Mantey, Associate Commissioner - CWCS, NYS OCFS
Rebecca Colman, Director – OREPA, NYS OCFS
Matthew Dilmore, Principal Accountant – BFO, NYS OCFS
Jessica Brown, Research Scientist – OREPA, NYS OCFS

Salons G/H

Staff Development Association Meeting

(Attendance Limited to LDSS Only)

Chairperson:

Kelly Eagan, President, SDANYS & Cortland County SDC

10:30 AM

- Coffee Break • **Sponsored by Conduent**

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

Welcome & Opening Address

Salons D/E

11:30 AM - 1:15 PM

Lunch

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Salons A/B

State & Local Commissioners' Dialogue

(Attendance Limited to State & Local Commissioners)

Commissioners of OTDA, OCFS, and their executive deputies, are invited to discuss current issues facing social services with local DSS commissioners. The session will begin with topics from local commissioners, followed by time for state commissioners to raise additional issues. **At 3:00 p.m. the meeting will end and local commissioners will remain to vote on the slate of officers for the 2025 NYPWA Board of Directors.**

Facilitator:

Michael McMahon, NYPWA President

- Coffee Break •

Empire

Legal Risks v. Rewards in the use of

AI in Social Services Operations

(1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

A CLE that is also designed for management and fiscal that provides an overview of how AI might

be used in staff operations, the growing legal oversight, the potential risks and rewards, and the possibility of creating "safety rails" for onboarding an AI application.

Presenter:

Paula Mallory Engel, Esq., Chief Welfare Attorney, Onondaga County Department of Law Division of Legal Affairs, OTDA

Schenectady/Troy

Mastering Intercultural Competence in the Workplace

Session participants will learn what it means to be culturally competent. Participants will learn skills to effectively and appropriately communicate with, manage and lead individuals from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures (ie. ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, LGBTQ+). Common pitfalls to avoid when interacting across cultures and identities will also be discussed. The benefits and satisfaction gained from developing and having intercultural competence will also be explored.

Presenter:

Vanessa R. Exhem, Founder, The Makings of You Consulting

Salon C

Applying Positive Youth Development (PYD) to Youth Justice

Our presentation will highlight the importance and benefits of cross-sector collaborations, focusing on the powerful partnership between the Boys & Girls Club of Newburgh and Dutchess County. By working together, we've created a safe and supportive environment where youth can build lasting relationships with caring adults and engage in life enhancing programs. These collaborations foster hope and opportunity, positively shaping the future of our youth.

Presenters:

Karmen Smallwood, Assistant Commissioner for Youth Services, Dutchess County DCFS

Dareshanie D'Arpino, Vice President, Club Operations, Boys & Girls Club of Newburgh and Poughkeepsie

Salon D

"Let's Get Together!" - A Medicaid Roundtable Discussion for the LDSS

(Attendance Limited to LDSS Only)

Recent and upcoming changes to the Medicaid program present new challenges for local districts. This facilitated discussion will allow districts to share their successes and seek out best-practices from others.

Presenter:

Jim Sluder, Medicaid Director, Suffolk County DSS

Salon E

AI Budgeting, Forecasting, & Claiming

From EAA, EAF to Child Welfare, all require a distinct budgeting and forecasting approach, specific to each department or county's needs. We will discuss the process and explore how artificial intelligence may support social services' fiscal budgeting and forecast.

Presenters:

Joseph Dalli, Coordinator of Fiscal Operations, Westchester County DSS

Biji Kuruvila, Reimbursement Specialist, Westchester County DSS

Salon F

Empowering Communities:

The Impact of Integrating DSS with HUD Continuum of Care

Discover how the Westchester County Department of Social Services plays a pivotal role in driving the success of our HUD Continuum of Care Partnership Program. In this session, we'll explore how this seamless integration has revolutionized access to housing and support services, creating a powerful alliance between federal housing resources and local DSS benefits and case management to better serve our community.

Presenters:

Allison McSpedon, Program Administrator, Westchester County DSS

Jenny Badree, Program Specialist, Westchester County DSS

Salons G/H

Effective Child Support Administration

(Attendance Limited to LDSS Only AND Vendors Are Prohibited From Participating in This Workshop)

This session is designed specifically for Child Support Coordinators and is restricted to LDSS staff who oversee the Child Support program. Please join your colleagues in addressing what is happening in your district and in other regions. This session is an opportunity for meaningful dialogue on the issues that matter the most to you concerning the local administration of Child Support.

Facilitators:

Maria Restivo, Child Support Enforcement, Coordinator, Ulster County DSS

Laura McKay, Child Support Enforcement, Coordinator, Sullivan County DHHS

3:00 PM

- **Coffee Break** •

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Empire

Child Support Case Law Update

(1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

Discussion of significant court decisions in 2024 relating to parentage, child support establishment, modification, and enforcement.

Presenters:

Edward W. Stano, Esq., Deputy Counsel, NYS OTDA

Nikita Valcik, Esq., Associate Attorney, NYS OTDA

Aimee Furdyna, Esq., Associate Attorney, NYS OTDA

Schenectady/Troy

Increasing Productivity; Achieving

Compliance with Regulatory CPS Timelines

Per regulation, safety assessments and investigation conclusions have clear deadlines. This presentation will review the strategies behind Chemung County's journey from being

ranked one of the last in the state for timely safety assessments and investigations to the top of list! Learn strategies and tips for success!

Presenters:

Mindy Banfield, Commissioner, Chemung County DSS

Karen Fitzpatrick, Director of Services, Chemung County DSS

Jennifer Yannette, Grade A Supervisor, Chemung County DSS

Salons A/B

Deputy Commissioners' Leadership

Network Meeting

(Attendance is Limited to LDSS Administrators)

Deputy Commissioners and other upper-level administrators will address issues that could arise during the conference, local experiences, new challenges, and other topics of interest.

Facilitated by Steering Committee:

Theresa Giovaniello, Deputy Commissioner, Dutchess County DCFS

Monica Brown, Deputy Commissioner, Onondaga County DSS/ES

Irene Kurlander, Deputy Commissioner, Orange County DSS

Randy Scott, Deputy Commissioner, Westchester County DSS

Cynthia Stumer, DBH, Deputy Commissioner, Orleans County DSS

Denise Read, Deputy Commissioner, Monroe County DHS

Salon C

Child Care Services Updates

This interactive presentation will provide an overview of the initiatives rolled out in 2024 and those planned for 2025, updates on New York States work to move toward compliance with the requirements for paying based on enrollment and paying prospectively. We will also provide information on the OCFS-IT modernization initiative, the status of the Child Care Development Fund Plan and related waivers New York State has requested.

Presenters:

Nora Yates, Deputy Commissioner, NYS OCFS

Emily Meyer, Associate Commissioner,

NYS OCFS

Joy Connolly, Associate Commissioner, NYS OCFS

Merideth Infantino, Director of Child Care Assistance & Enrollment Services, NYS OCFS

Salon D

Delivering Humanity to the Workforce: A Transformative Approach

Experience *Delivering Humanity* firsthand in this 90-minute interactive session with Dr. Lisa Patierne and Commissioner Brandy Hillard Bouldin. Through immersive exercises rooted in compassion and empathy, you'll explore practical ways to foster resilience, inclusivity, and genuine connection within your team. Whether you're in management, finance, legal, or direct service, this session provides actionable tools to create a supportive, human-centered workplace where every role feels valued. Join us to discover how delivering humanity can transform daily interactions and build a stronger, more engaged workforce.

Presenters:

Dr. Lisa Patierne; Consultant

Brandy Hillard Bouldin, Commissioner, Schenectady County DSS

Salon E

Long Term Care Update

DOH will present updates on activities in the long-term care arena, focusing on the Statewide Fiscal Intermediary for CDPAP and other issues related to long term care.

Presenter:

Trisha Schell-Guy, J.D., Director, Division of Program Development & Management, OHIP, NYS DOH

Salon F

Human Trafficking Liaison: Responsibilities and Resources

The 09-ADM-01 created the Human Trafficking Liaisons (HTL) at DSS offices. This discussion will be about the responsibilities of the current role, resources for HTL's, and potential updates to the

administrative directive.

Presenter:

Estelle Davis, Assistant Director, NYS OTDA

Salon G/H

Collaborative Approaches to Serving Cross Systems Youth

The panelists will discuss the process of working in partnership between the County and school district to identify community need, gaps in services, and barriers for youth and families to obtain necessary mental health services. The county engaged with LaSalle and together with Ulster County we were able to rapidly build and implement a community School Based Mental Health program that best meets those needs.

Presenters:

Dave Wallace, Executive Director,
LaSalle School

Tara McDonald, LMSW, MPA, Commissioner,
Ulster County Department of Mental Health

Katrina Huller Williams, LCSW-R, CASAC,
Deputy Commissioner, Ulster County
Department of Mental Health

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

LDSS Commissioners' Private Reception

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Networking Reception

7:00 PM

Dinner on Your Own

Thursday ■ January 30

7:30 AM - 8:45 AM

Breakfast Buffet

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Conference Registration

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Exhibit Area Open

9:00 AM- 10:30 AM

Concurrent Sessions

Empire

Child Welfare Caselaw Review, Part I

(1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

A review of the reported child welfare cases from July 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. Part 1 will primarily focus on abuse and neglect cases.

Presenters:

Mark E. Maves, Esq., Counsel to NYPWA

Vineet Chawla, Esq., Family Court Legal
Services, Legal Training & Support, NYC ACS

Jennifer Sadaka, Esq., Senior Team Leader &
Legal Trainer, NYC ACS

Salon A

Integrating Individuals with Lived Experience in the Child Welfare System

This workshop explores the integration of individuals with lived experience into the NYS child welfare system at various levels. At the state level, participants will learn how OCFS partners with Policy Advisors to conduct research and analysis of existing family policies to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. At the county level discussions focus on the interests of families in meetings, forums, and committees to ensure that the voices of families are heard, considered and integrated into policy decisions.

Community level integration includes support and mentorship for families currently navigating

Wednesday ■ January 24 & Thursday ■ January 30

the child welfare services system by family peer advocates who have navigated the system.

Presenters:

Aqueelah Sumpter, Family Policy Advisor, NYS OCFS

Ginger Molloy, Family Policy Advisor, NYS OCFS

Salon B

Alcohol and Substance Use Disorder: Becoming Effective Advocates & Resources

People struggling with alcohol and substance use disorders often encounter stigma and barriers to recovery. However, treatment and recovery modalities are changing and no longer necessitate a one-size fits all solution. How do we, as DSS professionals, destigmatize these populations and better assist them with the various challenges and barriers they face? How do we become highly effective resources for both our clients and their peer support agencies? Discover how Westchester County DSS is being intentional in using supportive language and providing effective advocacy and resources for the people we serve.

Presenter:

Maria Calidonna, B.A., M.Ed., Social Case Worker, Westchester County DSS

Salon C

Personality Dimensions

Personality Dimensions is an assessment tool that bridges the gap with employees by helping them understand how we differ from other people. The differences can be seen in a number of different ways through what we value, the way we prefer to communicate and the way we behave. Learning to understand others and ourselves is paramount to effective communication, relationships and productivity. It's a valuable tool professionally and personally and it's fun to learn about together.

Presenter:

Stephanie Hoxie, Staff Development Coordinator, Oswego County DSS

Salon D/E

Diving into the Executive Budget

Budget experts from OCFS, OTDA, and DOH will discuss the Governor's budget proposal for social services in SFY 2025-26. There will be an opportunity to dig deeper into the Governor's budget as our panel of local district fiscal experts seek to clarify the new budget proposals.

Presenters:

Laura Fiske, Director, Bureau of Budget Management, NYS OCFS

Michael Kendall, Director, Bureau of Budget Management, NYS OTDA

Jeremy Russell, Medicaid Unit Manager, Bureau of Budget Management, NYS DOH

Salon F

Safe Harbour Program: A Rural Viewpoint

Unlike the larger counties, Orleans County has had to be creative to raise awareness of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Through trial and error their Safe Harbour program continues to grow.

Presenter:

Cynthia Stumer, DBH, Deputy Commissioner, Orleans County DSS

Salons G/H

Innovations in Accessing Transportation Benefits for Temporary Assistance Clients

Monroe County worked for years, with OTDA and our local transit authority, to create a pathway for clients to access transportation without needing a paper bus pass. This year, we launched a program that allows Temporary Assistance clients, who are eligible for a transportation benefit, to swipe their EBT/CBIC card to access public transportation throughout the Metro-Rochester Region.

Presenters:

Denise Read, Deputy Commissioner, Monroe County DHS

Jon Casper, Computer Project Coordinator, Monroe County DHS

10:30 AM

• **Coffee Break • Sponsored by**
Deloitte

10:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Empire

Child Welfare Caselaw Review, Part II
(1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

A review of the reported child welfare cases from July 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. Part 2 will focus on termination of parental rights and miscellaneous other cases in the child welfare area.

Presenter:

Mark E. Maves, Esq., Counsel to NYPWA
Vineet Chawla, Esq., Family Court Legal Services, Legal Training & Support, NYC ACS
Jennifer Sadaka, Esq., Senior Team Leader & Legal Trainer, NYC ACS

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Salon A

Raise the Age Voluntary Agency Programs for JDs – What Have We Learned?

This session will provide a refresher on the LDSS placement options for JD-RtA youth and will include updates from RtA programs on the successes, challenges and status of the programs 5 years later. This provides an opportunity for open dialogue and problem solving for family-court adjudicated JD youth.

Presenters:

Rachel Bryant-Hillside, RtA Program
George Dermody, President & CEO – Children’s Home of Wyoming RtA Program
Dr. Nina Aledort, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Youth Development & Partnerships for Success, NYS OCFS
Gail Geohagen-Pratt, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Child Welfare & Community Services, NYC OCFS

Salon B

AI-Powered Assistance for Local Districts

Join us for a discussion on how AI is transforming the way agencies manage time-consuming administrative tasks. From answering incoming calls to providing clients with rights and responsibilities information, AI solutions are automating repetitive processes, allowing staff to focus on more complex and personalized client interactions. We’ll explore real-world examples of AI implementation, the impact on service delivery, and how these innovations are improving both efficiency and client satisfaction in health and human services.

Presenters:

Karen Marcum, Commissioner, Jefferson County DSS
Christine Peters, Commissioner, Clinton County DSS
Kira Pospesel, Commissioner, Greene County DSS
Daniel Auwarter, Commissioner, Chenango County DSS
Lee Sullivan, Commissioner, Oswego County DSS
Greg Tipping, Chief Strategy Officer and Co-Founder, TipCo Automated Systems

Salon C

Keeping The Faith! Onboarding For Retention

Staff Development Coordinators do so much more than training! This panel presentation will detail three different initiatives that strengthen our teams from day one in the role through advanced leadership titles. From extensive onboarding of new staff to team spirit week and a Better Together program, learn about three examples of how staff developers are critical components in employee morale and retention.

Presenters:

Kate Cook, Staff Development Coordinator, Ulster County DSS
Simone McGuane, Staff Development Coordinator, Rockland County DSS
Edwin Rosado, Staff Development Assistant, Rockland County DSS

Stephanie Macauley, Staff Development Coordinator, Suffolk County DSS
Sal Patella, Staff Development Coordinator, Orange County DSS

Salon D

Medicaid Eligibility Updates

In this session, members of the New York State Department of Health's Division of Eligibility and Marketplace Integration (DEMI) will provide updates in the following areas: Continuation of certain policy easements and other processes after expiration of the public health emergency Unwind period; PERM and MEQC; and other eligibility updates.

Presenters:

Gabrielle Armenia, Director, Division of Eligibility and Marketplace Integration (DEMI), NYS DOH
Anne Marie Massaro, Deputy Director, DEMI, NYS DOH
Mary Frances Carr, Bureau Director, Long Term Care/SSI-Related Populations, DEMI, NYS DOH

Salon E

Hot Topics for State & Local Fiscal Administrators

Join local fiscal administrators and state staff from OCFS, OTDA and DOH in a discussion of fiscal issues directly affecting social services districts.

Presenters:

Justin Gross, Principal Accountant, NYS OTDA
Shonna Clinton, Chief Budgeting Analyst, NYS OCFS
Laura Fiske, Director, Bureau of Budget Management, NYS OCFS
Anil Thomas, Principal Accountant, NYS DOH

Salon F

Adoption Lean Data Project

Overview of Dutchess County's Adoption Lean Data Project. Using a systemic approach to analyze progress, monitor, and identify barriers in achieving timely permanency for children who are freed for adoption. Strategies for anticipating placement disruptions and supporting foster parents.

Presenters:

Felice Sarmiento, Foster Care/Adoption Supervisor, Dutchess County DCFS
Jenna Stroly, Children Services – Project Manager, Dutchess County DCFS
Gillian Hill, Foster Care/Adoption, Dutchess County DCFS

Salons G/H

Child Support Program Updates

Hear key developments and operational updates for the child support program including federal and State updates; payment processing and banking operations; mechanisms to enhance annual performance and collections; policy guidance impacting districts; training opportunities; system enhancements and releases; and measuring our progress through data and metrics.

Presenters:

Eileen Stack, Deputy Commissioner and Director NYS OTDA/CSS
Susanne Dolin, Assistant Director NYS OTDA/CSS
Monique Rabideau, Assistant Director NYS OTDA/CSS
Elizabeth McGeough Gamache, Bureau Chief - Program Operations NYS OTDA/CSS
Karen Sicurelli, Bureau Chief - Data Management NYS OTDA/CSS
Jennifer Sherry, Bureau Chief - State Disbursement Unit NYS OTDA/CSS
Evelyn Addams, Bureau Chief, Policy and Training, NYS OTDA/CSS

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Board Room

Integrated Eligibility System Meeting
(LDSS Workgroup Only)

11:30 AM - 1:15 PM

Lunch

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Empire

Evidentiary Issues in Article 10 Cases

(1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

This presentation is to include updates in evidentiary issues in Article 10 cases, including hearsay exceptions, Confrontation Clause and challenges in domestic violence matters.

Presenters:

Vineet Chawla, Esq., Family Court Legal Services, Legal Training & Support, NYC ACS
Jennifer Sadaka, Esq., Senior Team Leader & Legal Trainer, NYC ACS

Schenectady/Troy

Supporting Children & Youth with Cross-Systems and Complex Care Needs

This workshop will cover the multiple ways in which the Council on Children and Families (CCF) helps support children and youth with cross-system and complex needs. Learn about the support available from CCF's Interagency Resolution Unit to assist individual children and youth experiencing challenges in accessing needed services and supports. Find out about CCF's new user-friendly online resources, Help Hub for Families, providing trusted resources and service information to assist family members and frontline staff navigating human service, health, and education systems. Other CCF systems-building efforts to strengthen and align New York's child-serving systems will be covered, too.

Presenters:

Elana Marton, Deputy Director & Counsel, Council on Children and Families
Chris Tosado, Director, Interagency Resolution Unit, Council on Children and Families
Meghan Glass, System of Care Policy Director, Council on Children and Families

Salon A

Design Thinking - A Human Centered Approach to Innovative Solutions

Design thinking is a non-linear, iterative process that teams use to understand users, challenge

assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test. This approach, used by IBM to meet modern enterprise demands, has proven its usefulness in the human services world. In this hands-on, get out of your chair, workshop, you will learn how to use the principles of Design Thinking to bring system partners together. You will learn the phases of design thinking and participate in an exercise to demonstrate how cross functional teams can work together to tackle any challenges and create innovative solutions.

Presenters:

Louise McLoughlin, Executive Director, Dutchess County Workforce Investment Board
Sabrina Jaar Marzouka, Commissioner, Dutchess County DCFS
Theresa Giovannello, Deputy Commissioner, Dutchess County DCFS

Salon B

Temporary Assistance & Employment Roundtable

(Attendance is Limited to State & Local DSS)

OTDA will participate in a roundtable discussion exclusively for Temporary Assistance and Employment Directors and their staff to discuss items identified by OTDA as agency priorities as well as topics for discussion identified by districts.

Presenters:

Stacey Nodelman, Director, Temporary Assistance Bureau, NYS OTDA
Stephanie Boshart, Director, Employment & Advancement Services, NYS OTDA
Bill Koncelik, Bureau Chief, Employment & Advancement Services, NYS OTDA
Tara Wood, Bureau Chief, Employment & Advancement Services, NYS OTDA
Melissa Alexander, Bureau Chief, Temporary Assistance Bureau, NYS OTDA
Tammy Thackrah, Bureau Chief, Temporary Assistance Bureau, NYS OTDA

Further Developing the Strategic Leader in You in 2025: A Continued Discussion on the Importance of Strategic Succession Planning!!

The purpose of this interactive and strategic workshop is to continue the discussion on the importance of designing and customizing agency-specific and unique succession planning frameworks that harness and safeguard institutional knowledge with the goal of promoting and advancing untapped talent in the human and social services fields. This workshop will also highlight the progress and successes of NYS County Departments of Social Services that have implemented effective succession planning frameworks and systems.

Presenters:

Marvela L. Guice, Founder & President- DBA Marvela L. Guice Organizational & Staff Development Training Services, NYS M/WBE Certified

Salon C

Temporary Assistance, Medicaid and other important topics.

Facilitator:

John Befus, First Deputy Commissioner, Westchester County DSS

Medicaid Modernization Update

An update on the development of the State's new Medicaid Eligibility and Client Management (MECM) system including a demo of the new system. Information will also be provided on change management activities the State is embarking on to support its Medicaid Modernization effort.

Presenters:

Sara Oberst, Deputy Director, Division of Eligibility & Marketplace Integration, NYS DOH
Jace Perkins, Eligibility Program Manager, Division of Eligibility & Marketplace Integration, NYS DOH

Salon D

Salon E

DSS Fiscal Administrators Roundtable Discussion

(Attendance Limited to LDSS Only)

Come meet with your district colleagues from around the state to informally discuss policies and best practices regarding Housing & Homeless Services, Child Welfare, Child Care,

Salon F

Understanding Substance Use and Implementing Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention Practices

As rates of overdose continue to rise, with annual overdose deaths surpassing 100,000 in 2021. Project COPE is a SAMHSA-funded grant initiative that seeks to reduce rates of overdose death in New York by connecting to vulnerable, underserved populations such as pregnant and parenting persons. Join members of the Project COPE team in exploring the science of substance use and substance use disorders, the basics of overdose prevention and naloxone use, and concrete ways professionals outside of the substance use disorder treatment system can help prevent overdoses among the individuals and families they serve.

Presenter:

Jessica Sorbello, LCSW, Project Director for Community Overdose Prevention Education, NYS OASAS/Project COPE

Salons G/H

Child Support Turns 50! Engaging for the Future and Supporting Families

In 2025 the Child Support Program turns 50! The program has undergone changes over the years but is it time for a bigger transformation? Systems modernization provides an opportunity to re-envision the service model for the next generation of customers and workers. This session will be an open, interactive discussion regarding what the Program can do to modernize services for our customers and workers.

Presenters:

Eileen Stack, Deputy Commissioner and Director NYS OTDA/CSS
Susanne Dolin, Assistant Director NYS OTDA/CSS
Monique Rabideau, Assistant Director NYS OTDA/CSS;

Shannon Smith, Bureau Chief - Integrated Eligibility System NYS OTDA/CSS

Jennifer Pekins, Bureau Chief - Systems Operations NYS OTDA/CSS

3:00 PM

• **Coffee Break** • *Sponsored by*
TipCo

3:30 PM- 5:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Empire

Bridging the Gap: Reconciling the Need for Strong Legal Positions with the Client-Centered & Family-Centered Focus Required for Child Welfare Professionals (1.5 CLEs, 90 minutes)

This CLE will help attorney understand how to prepare department caseworkers and staff members to testify in child welfare and child protective proceedings. It will focus on how child welfare staff are trained and how attorneys can best teach these staff members to ensure that case notes and testimony are legally sound. The presenter also comes from a background where she was trained as a therapist and practiced for a number of years before attending law school. While in law school the presenter also helped create a mediation program at the school. The presenter has experience working on both sides of these important issues and does testimony preparation and training for Warren County DSS staff.

Presenter:

Sommer-Lynn Cross, Esq., Social Services Attorney, Warren County DSS

Salon A

Making Social Care Networks Work for You -- How to Make the Most of the Medicaid 1115 Waiver for Your Clients (Vendors Are Prohibited From Participating in This Workshop)

NYSDOH has obtained approval to deliver

Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) services under a Medicaid Section 1115 demonstration from 2025-2027. Under the waiver, HRSN will include Medicaid-funded housing, transportation, nutrition and case management services. Taking advantage of this fast-moving, complicated change in Medicaid policy will be difficult but will also potentially be a tremendous benefit for many LDSS clients. This session will help LDSS leaders jump into this rapidly developing opportunity.

Presenter:

John Liddle, Commissioner, Sullivan County DHHS

Salon B

NYS OWIG: Working Together to Combat Welfare Fraud

This presentation will highlight NYS Office of the Welfare Inspector General's (NYS OWIG) investigative resources, and the benefits of creating partnerships with local district fraud units. The presentation will also discuss how a robust fraud unit working collaboratively with program staff to deter, identify, and investigate fraud can pay dividends for a county, thereby allowing more resources to help those most vulnerable. Come learn best practices for identifying fraud based on real case examples.

Presenter:

Andrew Weiss, Attorney-in-Charge for Welfare Fraud, NYS OWIG

Salon C

Collaborative Strategies for Successful Practice Implementation

In this workshop, we explore the pivotal role of building partnerships for successful child welfare practice implementation in Orange County. Focusing on OCFS' implementation of the Safe & Together Model to improve our system's response to families experiencing domestic violence, we will explore the principles of building effective partnerships, including identifying shared goals, establishing trust, and fostering open communication. The session will also highlight ongoing support and coaching strategies designed to enhance supervisor and worker skills, fostering a culture of continuous support and practice improvement. Participants

will learn how to build and strengthen existing partnerships, creating a collaborative environment that drives sustainable change in child welfare practices.

Presenters:

Candace Calabrese, OCFS Safe & Together Practice Implementation Manager, NYS OCFS

Salvatore Patella, Staff Development Coordinator Orange County DSS

Leah Horrevoets, Case Supervisor CAC, Orange County DSS,

Sarita Green, Associate Director, Fearless!Hudson Valley

Salon D

Integrated Eligibility System Program Update

(Vendors Are Prohibited From Participating in This Workshop)

During this session attendees will learn about IES Program updates, including accomplishments to date and plans going forward.

Presenters:

Caroline Thompson, IES Program Director, NYS ITS

Luis Gomez, IES Technical Director, NYS ITS;

Lisette Bernal-Cruz, IES Operations Director, NYS ITS

Dennis Packard, Business Change Lead, NYS ITS

Bill Capozzi, Application Development Manager, NYS ITS

Salon F

Using AI Tools to Work Smarter Not Harder

Join us for a friendly and approachable seminar that demystifies the role of AI in your daily work. Discover how available AI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini can streamline your routine tasks, giving you more time to focus on what truly matters—adding the human touch. Robin will share real-world examples and practical takeaways, empowering you to integrate AI into both your professional and personal lives. Whether you've never used AI before or you're looking for ideas to freshen your approach, this session can help transform the way you work.

Presenter:

Robin Thompson, Sr Talent Development Manager, Advance Local

Salons G/H

Creating Transformational Change for Families Involved in the Child Welfare System

In recent years Suffolk County Family & Children Services (CPS) has been challenged to examine its internal practices, processes as well as relationships and interactions with service providers/ mandated reporters. The Suffolk County Advisory Board on Child Protection, under the leadership of the County Executive's office, began to explore ways to build and improve relationships and educate about the child welfare system.

The outcome of these discussions was presented in a November 2024 regional conference entitled "Creating Transformational Change for Families Involved in the Child Welfare System," which brought together professionals working with children and families to explore ways to mitigate systemic, negative impacts of the child welfare system and create transformational changes'

This conference also brought together the Suffolk County Multidisciplinary Team members to educate attendees on the investigatory process as well as a panel of service providers to discuss service needs and building service capacity. Several local elected officials also participated in speaking on their commitment to improvements, highlighted by an inspirational keynote from Katie Beers who was a child involved with both the child protective and foster care systems in Suffolk County in the early 90s.

Presenters:

John E. Imhof, PhD, LCSW, Commissioner, Suffolk County DSS

Annette Mahoney - Cross, LCSW, Assistant Division Administrator – Family & Children's Services, Suffolk County DSS

Anne E. Oh, Esq., Chief Counsel, Suffolk County DSS

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Salons A/B/C

- Cocktail Reception • *Sponsored by*
The Albany Marriott Hotel

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Salons D/E

Annual Banquet with *Live Music* by
Made in the Shade

Friday ■ January 31

Empire

LDSS Commissioners' Meeting

(Restricted to LDSS Commissioners Only)

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM

***Commissioners Only Networking
Breakfast***

8:30 AM - 10:45 AM

***Commissioners' Meeting & Policy
Discussion***

NYPWA President will facilitate a discussion on issues that arose during the conference and other compelling topics of interest to local commissioners.

10:45 AM - 11:30 AM

Wrap-up and Next Steps

7:30 AM - 8:45 AM

Breakfast Buffet

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Conference Registration

8:30 AM - 9:45 AM

Salons A/B

State & Local Child Support Dialogue

***(Attendance is limited to OTDA & LDSS Child
Support Coordinator Staff)***

This "wrap-up" session is an opportunity to discuss new policy and procedures that were presented at the conference and to strategize how local districts will be able to implement them, leaving time for Q & A.

Facilitators:

Maria Restivo, Child Support Enforcement,
Coordinator, Ulster County DSS

Laura McKay, Child Support Enforcement,
Coordinator, Sullivan County DSS

Thursday ■ January 30 & Friday ■ January 31

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Salon C | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Local DSS Fiscal Policy Dialogue

(Attendance is Limited to LDSS Staff)

Fiscal administrators will recap their conference experience and share any useful strategies they learned about or that they have already implemented locally.

Facilitator:

John Befus, First Deputy Commissioner, Westchester County DSS

Salon D

Director of Services & TA Directors Meeting

(Attendance is Limited to LDSS Staff)

Directors will recap their conference experience and share any useful strategies they learned about or that they have already implemented locally.

Facilitator:

Jennifer A. Robinson, Executive Deputy Commissioner, Onondaga County DSS-ES

Salon E

Meeting with State Agency Counsel

LDSS attorneys are invited to meet with OCFS (9:00-10:15) and OTDA (10:00-11:00) counsel to discuss questions related to their respective areas of practice as well as those where clarification from the State agencies are needed.

Facilitator:

Mark E. Maves, Esq., Counsel to the NYPWA

Special Feature

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Salon G/H

The Emotionally Intelligent Leader

In this presentation, we'll explore the pillars of emotional intelligence and the role it plays in effective leadership. Participants will complete an emotional intelligence self-assessment to create greater self-awareness and determine growth areas.

Presenter:

Deborah J Cabral, PCC, Founder/President & CEO, Cabral Enterprises, LLC DBA DC Efficiency Consulting

Paperless Conference:

Our intention is that conference information including the program brochure, meeting agendas, and materials will be in electronic format. Please plan to use your own laptop, tablet, or phone to access documents. You may wish to download or print them in advance. Exception: We will have printed name badges and copies of the schedule at-a-glance which lists topics, times, and meeting rooms.

NYPWA's 156TH ANNUAL WINTER CONFERENCE

JANUARY 28-31, 2025

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete the Conference Registration form and send it to the NYPWA with your voucher, check, or credit card information.
2. All meals must be purchased individually through the NYPWA by completing the "MEALS ORDER FORM". Please return the completed form with payment directly to the NYPWA. Please note: meals are NOT included with the cost of conference registration fee. All purchased meal tickets will be available at the NYPWA Registration Desk. Meal packages will NOT be reserved through The Albany Marriott as it has in the past. Please use one form per reservation.
3. Carefully read the Hotel Reservation Policy, noting that the cut-off date for hotel registration is **Friday, January 10, 2025**.
4. The Albany Marriott Registration Link is available on the Hotel Registration form and on our website (www.NYPWA.org). One night reservations will be accommodated by nearby hotels
5. **REGISTRATION CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refund of registration fee, less a \$15 administrative fee, will be made only when cancellation is received in writing and emailed by **Friday, January 10, 2025**.
6. **MEAL CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refund of meals will be made only when received in writing and emailed before **Friday, January 10, 2025**. After **Friday, January 10, 2025** all meals MUST still be paid for.
7. **MEAL TICKET PICK-UP LOCATION:** If you have purchased meal tickets through the NYPWA, they will be available at The NYPWA Registration Desk upon arrival. The meal tickets will be in your welcome package envelope as long as tickets were purchased for you.

NYPWA CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:

	By Dec. 20	After Dec. 20	6 th LDSS Registrant	Registration Information: <i>Name, Title, District (Agency), Address, Phone Number & Email:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> \$214.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$228.00	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> One-Day	<input type="checkbox"/> \$137.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$140.00	<input type="checkbox"/> FREE	

NYPWA MEAL ORDER FORM:

	PRICE	SELECTION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29		
Breakfast	\$45.20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lunch	\$51.25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reception	\$57.25	<input type="checkbox"/>
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30		
Breakfast	\$45.20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lunch	\$53.35	<input type="checkbox"/>
Banquet	\$82.30	<input type="checkbox"/>
FRIDAY, JANUARY 31		
Breakfast	\$45.20	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

*Please include allergies so they may be accommodated prior to arrival: _____
(day of changes or requests are unable to be guaranteed).*

NYPWA Forms of Payment:

- 1) Check: Make Payable to "NYPWA" and return via mail:
NYPWA, 130 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210
- 2) Voucher: Email to info@nypwa.org or use surface mail.
- 3) Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, Amex, Discover):
Email: Send form to info@nypwa.org with credit card information.

NYPWA Credit Card Processing:

Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, Amex, Discover):

Credit Card Payment Contact

(if **NOT** the same as above [name, title, email & phone number] -
NYPWA will call): _____

Provide:

Card Holder Name: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Please submit conference registration form:
NEW YORK PUBLIC WELFARE ASSOCIATION • 130 WASHINGTON AVENUE • ALBANY, NEW YORK 12210
• www.nypwa.org • PHONE: 518-465-9305 • FAX: 518-465-5633 • info@nypwa.org •