



Office of Addiction
Services and Supports

Office of
Mental Health

Office for People With
Developmental Disabilities

Goals and Objectives 2024-2027 Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Margaret Coker, Behavioral Health Administrator
(margaret.coker@schenectadycountyny.gov)

Goal 1

Goal 1: Title GOAL # 1. Schenectady County will increase the number of available and affordable apartments for the Behavioral Health System

Goal 1: Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 1: Description According to the 2023 Rental Housing Market in Schenectady, the average monthly rent for a single apartment is \$1,279. The year-to-year change is up 6.7%. Within the Mental Health System this has caused a dearth of affordable apartments leaving programs struggling to meet their budgets. For a person on SSI, the average income is \$914 per month, and for those on SSD and/or who have part-time employment the income could be up to \$2,000 per month. Usually, rents are often higher than the fair market value. In that case agencies need to use their program funds to supplement the cost.

Goal 1: OASAS? No Goal 1: OMH? Yes Goal 1: OPWDD? Yes

Goal 1: Need Addressed 1 Housing

Goal 1: Need Addressed 2

Goal 1: Need Addressed 3

Goal 1, Objective 1: Title Housing

Goal 1, Objective 1, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 1, Objective 1, Description Objective #1. OCS will await the issuance of RFPs for available housing opportunities per governor Hochul's budget and will encourage current OMH housing agencies to apply for the increase in housing opportunities for Schenectady County.

Goal 1, Objective 2: Title Housing

Goal 1, Objective 2, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 1, Objective 2, Description Objective #2. The Schenectady LGU will provide letters of support for all ESSHI projects submitted to OCS by November of 2024.

Goal 1, Objective 3: Title Housing

Goal 1, Objective 3, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 1, Objective 3, Description . Governor Hochul's budget includes an increase in the number of supportive apartments, (1500) and the creation of many CR's, Step Downs beds etc. Through RFPs issued by OMH per counties or regions, Schenectady County will apply for all opportunities through our non-profit agencies. RFPs have yet to be issued, thus the number of beds cannot be determined at this time.

Goal 1, Objective 4: Title Housing

Goal 1, Objective 4, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 1, Objective 4, Description 100% of available RFPs relevant to the population served by OCS that will fund housing initiatives or increase the availability of affordable apartments will be forwarded to those housing providers that require such funding and encourage such agencies to apply for said RFP.

Goal 2

Goal 2: Title Workforce

Goal 2: Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 2: Description . Schenectady County will decrease the number of staff vacancies across the Behavioral Health System agencies.

Goal 2: OASAS? Yes Goal 2: OMH? Yes Goal 2: OPWDD? Yes

Goal 2: Need Addressed 1 Workforce

Goal 2: Need Addressed 2

Goal 2: Need Addressed 3

Goal 2, Objective 1: Title Workforce

Goal 2, Objective 1, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 2, Objective 1, Description Overall, there are approximately 47 staff vacancies across our contracted agencies. The Office of Community Services will monitor all reported staff vacancies through quarterly reports mandated by our office throughout 2024.

Goal 2, Objective 2: Title Workforce

Goal 2, Objective 2, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 2, Objective 2, Description The Office of Community Services will continue to inquire about what efforts are being implemented to recruit and retain staff successfully in their agencies and share this information with other agencies throughout 2024. OCS will share best practice recruitment and retention strategies.

Goal 2, Objective 3: Title Workforce

Goal 2, Objective 3, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 2, Objective 3, Description The Office of Community Services will advocate for funding from Governor Hochul's budget that calls to improve mental health services across the state, including staffing opportunities and a 4% COLA increase, and will distribute all appropriate RFPs to our agencies to this end.

Goal 3

Goal 3: Title Crisis Services

Goal 3: Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 3: Description Goal #3. Schenectady County will work with agencies that provide crisis services and assist with improving outcomes.

Goal 3: OASAS? Yes Goal 3: OMH? Yes Goal 3: OPWDD? Yes

Goal 3: Need Addressed 1 Crisis Services

Goal 3: Need Addressed 2

Goal 3: Need Addressed 3

Goal 3, Objective 1: Title Crisis Services

Goal 3, Objective 1, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 3, Objective 1, Description While Schenectady County has had Mobile Crisis services through Northern Rivers for the past few years, the initial plan to develop this service resulted in creating a Regional service covering 5 counties in the Capital Region. Due to this, the response time is not always able handle the immediate needs for crisis management. The Office of Community Services will advocate to have separate units in each county through its monthly meetings with the HRFO.

Goal 3, Objective 2: Title Crisis Services

Goal 3, Objective 2, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 3, Objective 2, Description OCS will also ask the CLMHD to put this issue on their legislative docket to advocate for improved crisis services through the Legislature in 2024.

Goal 3, Objective 3: Title Crisis Services

Goal 3, Objective 3, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 3, Objective 3, Description OCS has developed a working relationship with the Schenectady Police Department, as well as participating in CIT to improve police interactions with persons with a mental illness or substance use disorder. Positive interactions and outcomes will be documented throughout 2024.

Goal 3, Objective 4: Title Crisis Services

Goal 3, Objective 4, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 3, Objective 4, Description Due to the lack of staffing and the closure of inpatient beds, the Crisis Unit at Ellis Medicine has been overwhelmed with persons presenting themselves to the ED, and subsequently to the Crisis Unit. Often there is no room in the unit to hold people, so if they are stabilized even for a short period of time, they will be discharged. Similarly, because of bed closures, the crisis unit is then not able to transfer persons to the inpatient units. Staffing shortages and worsening mental health conditions in the community exacerbate this issue. In 2024 Governor Hochul's plan is to monitor and enforce agreements with Article 28 hospitals to open beds as outlined in their operating certificates. There have also been many discharges from the Crisis Unit when it is believed that the discharge is not appropriate. OCS will monitor Crisis discharges and perform quality assurance reviews on appropriate cases.

Goal 4

Goal 4: Title Cross Systems Services

Goal 4: Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 4: Description The Office of Community Services will look for opportunities designed to improve cross systems services.

Goal 4: OASAS? Yes Goal 4: OMH? Yes Goal 4: OPWDD? Yes

Goal 4: Need Addressed 1 Cross System Services

Goal 4: Need Addressed 2

Goal 4: Need Addressed 3

Goal 4, Objective 1: Title Cross Systems Services

Goal 4, Objective 1, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 4, Objective 1, Description High need high acuity clients who are dually or triply diagnosed across systems often do not get their needs met and fall through the cracks as individual systems do not take ownership for their care and cross systems collaborations do not always work due to the belief that the individual is in the wrong system. Schenectady OCS will advocate with the CLMHD to close these system gaps and encourage the development of services for these individuals with complex care needs.

Goal 4, Objective 2: Title Cross Systems Services

Goal 4, Objective 2, Target Completion Date Dec 31, 2024

Goal 4, Objective 2, Description The Office of Community Service will assist in facilitating solutions on a case-by- case basis and directly include and appeal to OASAS, OMH and OPWDD to successfully resolve such conflicts as they arise throughout 2024.

Goal 4, Objective 3: Title Crisis Services

Goal 4, Objective 3, Target Completion Date

Goal 4, Objective 3, Description Schenectady County has always had excellent collaboration with non-profit agencies. OCS will continue to include all mental health and substance use agencies through established meetings to continue to work together and problem solve any issues that arise in the community.



Update to 2024-2027 Goals and Objectives Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Darin Samaha, Director
darin.samaha@schenectadycountyny.gov

Goal 1	
Title	GOAL # 1. Schenectady County will increase the number of available and affordable apartments for the Behavioral Health System
Update	OCS continues to work with provider agencies to pursue housing opportunities through HUD, ESSHI and other opportunities. May agencies have received approval and funding to expand our housing options in the County.
OBJECTIVES	
Housing	Ongoing
Housing	Ongoing
Housing	Ongoing
Housing	Ongoing
OBJECTIVE UPDATES	

Goal 2	
Title	Workforce
Update	OCS continues to support provider agencies in filling vacancies and the overall situation has improved from last year.
OBJECTIVES	
Workforce	Ongoing
Workforce	Ongoing
Workforce	Ongoing
OBJECTIVE UPDATES	

Goal 3	
Title	Crisis Services
Update	OCS in partnership with local law enforcement held a CIT training for police as well as improved the 911 call centers diversion, where appropriate to mobile crisis.
OBJECTIVES	
Crisis Services	Ongoing
Crisis Services	Ongoing
Crisis Services	Ongoing
Crisis Services	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE UPDATES

Goal 4	
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Title	Cross Systems Services
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Update	
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OBJECTIVES	
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Cross Systems Services	Ongoing
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Cross Systems Services	Ongoing
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Crisis Services	Ongoing
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OBJECTIVE UPDATES



**Office of Addiction
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Developmental Disabilities**

2026 Update to 2024-2027 Goals and Objectives Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Lori Bennett, Manager Community Services
(lori.bennett@schenectadycountyny.gov)

Goal 1

Goal 1, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 1, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to work with community agencies to increase housing opportunities through HUD, OMH and other State and Federal Funding sources. Three have received approval and funding to expand our housing options in the County.

Goal 1 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 1 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to encourage and support any RFP's for available housing opportunities.

Goal 1 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 1 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update Description: All EISHI housing proposals have been provided letters of support.

Goal 1 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 1 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update Description: Our community agencies have applied for all eligible funding opportunities from OMH.

Goal 1 Objective 4, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 1 Objective 4, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to forward any funding opportunities for housing to our community housing providers with encouragement to apply.

Goal 2

Goal 2, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 2, 2026 Status Update Description: Vacancies continue to be an issue that remains in Outpatient Behavioral Health Clinics. Agencies provide updates on vacancies regularly to Office of Community Services. Office of Community Services will continue to support these agencies in their efforts to fill such vacancies.

Goal 2 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 2 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services will receive updates on staffing vacancies and when positions are filled.

Goal 2 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 2 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services will continue to communicate with agencies regarding efforts being implemented to recruit and retain staff.

Goal 2 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 2 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update Description: COLA's are being provided and Mohawk Opportunities is launching a Forensic ACT team.

Goal 3

Goal 3, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 3, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to work with Agencies in the community to provide crisis services when there is a community need. Office of Community Services and identified community agencies have provided crisis services over the past year in the event of significant community losses.

Goal 3 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 3 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to work in partnership with Northern Rivers Family Services to ensure that any barriers to Schenectady County community members receiving Mobile Crisis Services are eliminated and needed services are delivered. Office of Community Services will continue to brainstorm ideas with Northern Rivers Family Services to improve Mobile Crisis Services for Schenectady County.

Goal 3 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update: Complete

Goal 3 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update Description: This goal was accomplished and we continue to advocate for crisis services.

Goal 3 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 3 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update Description: Schenectady County Office of Community Services has positive relationships with law enforcement who are responsive to the needs of individuals with various challenges and disabilities. Additionally we partner with the City PD to run a street level outreach program.

Goal 3 Objective 4, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 3 Objective 4, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to work with Ellis Crisis/Inpatient Units to keep premature discharges from occurring. Increased communication around discharges is necessary for this to be successful.

Goal 4

Goal 4, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 4, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services continues to work with system stakeholders to address specific cases and has frequently worked with OPWDD, OASAS and OMH licensed agencies to provide better cross systems care.

Goal 4 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 4 Objective 1, 2026 Status Update Description: Advocacy with the CLMHD is ongoing in order to address challenges faced when dealing with complex cases. Individuals (adults and children) who are dually diagnosed continue to be those who are difficult to connect to needed services. Office of Community Services continues to support our agency providers in development of services to meet these individuals needs.

Goal 4 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 4 Objective 2, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services has and will continue to involve when necessary OMH, OASAS and OPWDD in finding solutions to conflicts that may arise when working to meet the service needs of identified individuals.

Goal 4 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update: Ongoing

Goal 4 Objective 3, 2026 Status Update Description: Office of Community Services will continue to facilitate established meetings with mental health and substance use agencies. This continued collaboration will help problem solve issues that may arise.



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2024 Needs Assessment Form Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Case Management/Care Coordination Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of our agencies indicated that this is a need, but it not score in the top four.

Crisis Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Cross System Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Housing Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Inpatient Treatment Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? No

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): While the survey indicated that this is a need, it not score in the top four

Non-Clinical Supports Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of providers indicated that it is a need, but not score in the top four

Outpatient Treatment Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? No

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): Again, the survey of our providers indicated that this is a need, but not in the highest priority.

Residential Treatment Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? No

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of our providers did not indicate that it is a top four priority

Respite Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of our providers did not indicate that it is a top four priority

Transition Age Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? No

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? No

Need Applies to: Youth Only

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of our providers did not indicate that it is a top four priority

Transportation Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? No

Need description (Optional): The survey of our providers did not indicate that it is a top four priority

Workforce Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

LGU Representative: Margaret Coker

Submitted for: Schenectady County Office of Community Services



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2025 Needs Assessment Form Schenectady County Office of Community Services

Case Management/Care Coordination Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Cross System Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Housing Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Residential Treatment Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Workforce Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

LGU Representative: Darin Samaha

Submitted for: Schenectady County Office of Community Services



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**2026 Needs Assessment Form
Schenectady County Office of Community Services**

Crisis Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Housing Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Residential Treatment Services Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

Workforce Yes

Applies to OASAS? Yes

Applies to OMH? Yes

Applies to OPWDD? Yes

Need Applies to: Both Youth and Adults

Do any of the Goals on the Goals and Objectives Form address this need? Yes

Need description (Optional):

LGU Representative: Lori Bennett

Submitted for: Schenectady County Office of Community Services

List of Agencies included in Local Service Plan for Schenectady County

Ellis Medicine

Capital District Psychiatric Center

Rehabilitation Support Services

Mohawk Opportunities

Bethesda House

YMCA

Northern Rivers