



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## Local Commissioners Memorandum

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	23-LCM-08
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Date:</b>	May 22, 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	2023 New York State TANF Summer Youth Employment Program Allocations
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	Iwona Ostrowska-Sheedy (518) 473-2500 <a href="mailto:SYEP@otda.ny.gov">SYEP@otda.ny.gov</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment A – 2023 SYEP Allocation</a> <a href="#">Attachment B – 2023 NYS SYEP District Designation Form</a> <a href="#">Attachment C – 2023 District and LWDB Performance Goal Form</a>

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### Section 2

#### I. Purpose

The New York State Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget appropriates \$47.1 million in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to support the 2023 New York State Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to notify social services districts (districts) of their 2023 SYEP allocation, to provide general program guidance, and to request that each district inform the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) of their decision concerning the administration of this summer’s program, and the use of their allocation by no later than June 2, 2023. Each district is expected to ensure its 2023 SYEP adheres to the guidelines established in this LCM as expenditures for placements deviating from these guidelines will not be reimbursed.

#### II. Background

The SYEP is an important platform to introduce youth into the workforce and help them acquire skills that can be used to improve school performance and become responsible adults. Since many low-income youths face the prospect of a challenging transition to work, constructive workforce experiences can provide great benefits. In addition to the income it provides, experience in the workforce and interaction with working adults can help youth recognize the importance of educational achievement and expand their education and career goals.

SYEP allocations to each district are available to provide summer employment opportunities for TANF eligible youth throughout the State. Districts may opt to retain their allocation and use district mechanisms (i.e., direct administration, district contracts, transfer of funds between county

agencies) to operate the program, or they may assign funds to their Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) to operate the program. Districts are also allowed to transfer up to 10.62 percent of their 2023 SYEP allocation to support their Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) plan for non-SYEP purposes.

### III. Program Implications

#### A. Program Activities and Services

The SYEP provides TANF eligible youth from low-income households with employment opportunities during the summer months. Paid employment is an integral component of the SYEP program. To augment the work component of the SYEP, providers may include limited educational and/or career exploration activities which will better prepare youth as they continue their education and transition into the world of work. Allowable activities and services for the SYEP include work subsidies for youth (payment to employer or third party); education and training as set forth below; and supportive services such as transportation, case management, and incentive payments.

- **Providers electing to offer education and/or career exploration components must limit these stand-alone non-employment activities to no more than 20% of each provider's total 2023 enrollments.** In addition, these placements should be reserved for younger youth (e.g., 14 and 15-year-olds), or those who would otherwise be more difficult to place in traditional employment opportunities.
- **At least 80% of program participants must be engaged in traditional paid employment activities with no more than 30% of hourly participation for these SYEP participants in non-employment activities such as career exploration, mentoring outside the workplace, financial literacy, or education.**

In accordance with Chapter 421 of the Laws of 2014, providers are required to include a financial literacy education program for teenagers and young adults as part of the 2023 SYEP. To comply with this statutory requirement, a financial literacy component must be in place for all SYEP participants.

**Please note:** During the 2023 SYEP, all districts and their designated program providers are instructed to gather SYEP participant input to evaluate their current financial literacy offerings. Based on the participant responses received, SYEP providers shall review their financial literacy curriculums to identify any potential strengths and weaknesses. This feedback should be used by providers as part of an overall evaluation of their existing programs and shared with financial literacy training partners as appropriate. Adjustments should be made to future financial literacy offerings to improve program effectiveness. OTDA has developed a sample participant survey for this purpose, which will be shared with districts and their designated program providers following the release of this LCM. Each district shall inform OTDA of their plan to gather participant feedback to evaluate their current financial literacy curriculums as a component of Attachment C: 2023 SYEP Performance Goals and Planned Details, which is due by June 2, 2023. In addition, districts shall provide OTDA a synopsis of participant feedback as part of the SYEP final reporting package for the 2023 program.

Every employer in New York State is required to adopt a sexual harassment prevention training. All employees must complete the model training, or a comparable training that meets the minimum standards developed by the Department of Labor (DOL) and Division of Human Rights, on an annual basis. Model sexual harassment policy language and training materials are available on the DOL website at: <https://www.ny.gov/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace/employers/>.

Districts are encouraged to conduct outreach to SYEP participant families to help them access the range of programs and services available in New York State to assist low-income families. Such programs include Temporary Assistance, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), as well as various tax credits. More information regarding these programs and other resources may be found on OTDA's website at <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/>. Districts may also order myBenefits.ny.gov palm cards ([PUB-4951](#)) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) brochures ([PUB-4786](#)) for dissemination to youth and their families. These and other helpful publications may be ordered on OTDA's website at: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/publications/>.

If the district opts to assign all or a portion of their 2023 SYEP allocation to their LWDB, they should assist program operators with providing this information to SYEP participants and their families. Districts are also encouraged to share information with youth and their families regarding the New York State Department of Health's (DOH) Prevention Agenda. Through this Agenda, DOH has established statewide public health priority areas to improve the overall health of New Yorkers and to reduce health disparities among racial, ethnic, disability and socioeconomic groups. Focus areas for intervention include chronic disease, mental health, substance abuse, and infectious diseases. More information regarding the agenda may be found on DOH's website at: [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention\\_agenda/2019-2024/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2019-2024/).

Agencies should make a concentrated effort to maximize the number of TANF eligible youths employed by this allocation and limit administrative and program staffing expenditures to those essential to program delivery.

## B. Participant Eligibility

Eligible participants are youth ages 14 to 20 who are:

- Family Assistance (FA) recipients,
- Former FA recipients who have reached their 60-month limit on TANF and have transitioned to Safety Net Assistance (SNA), or
- Eligible under the TANF 200% of federal poverty guidelines in accordance with [00-LCM-20](#).

Districts should continue to make special efforts to ensure participation of at-risk and vulnerable youth including, but not limited to, youth in foster care, homeless and runaway youth, and youth with a disability.

SYEP providers are encouraged to use the TANF Youth Services Application and Review Form ([LDSS-4770](#)) to document eligibility determinations for the SYEP participants eligible under TANF 200% of federal poverty guidelines. A modified application may be used by providers if it captures all the information included on the TANF Youth Services Application. Modified local equivalent applications must be approved by OTDA. The 2023 SYEP Guidelines and Reporting Requirements will be emailed to SYEP providers following the release of this LCM, once the District Designation Form is received. The Guidelines will contain additional information regarding eligibility requirements and the procedure for requesting approval of local equivalent forms.

## C. Allocations

A total of \$47.1 million is available to support the 2023 SYEP. Districts will receive a base allocation equivalent to what they received in 2022. The increased funding of \$1 million will be distributed based on each district's share of 12 to 17-year-olds residing in households with income under 200% of the federal poverty level. District allocations are provided in Attachment A. It is critical that districts adhere to the Program Activities and Services and Participant

Eligibility requirements provided above, as reimbursement is only available for enrollments that are consistent with these requirements.

#### D. Claiming Instruction and Forms for Districts

For districts opting to assign all or a portion of their 2023 SYEP allocation to LWDBs, districts will be held liable for assigned funds not used in a manner consistent with the purpose of the SYEP allocation.

Instances which may result in a payment due to OTDA include overpayment of claims or disallowances of claims resulting from audits performed by OTDA and other agencies. The LWDB will have 30 days from the end of the 2023 SYEP (October 31, 2023), or from the date of final notification of an audit finding, to repay OTDA. If OTDA is not successful in obtaining repayment from the LWDB, the payment will be recouped through a bottom-line adjustment on a district settlement. OTDA will keep the district's accounting office apprised of our attempts to reach a fiscal settlement with the LWDB.

For 2023, SYEP payments will consist of three-monthly advances of 15%, 35% and 35% of the total estimated expenditures for the months of June, July and August, as indicated in the 2023 District Performance Goal Form (Attachment C). The final 15% of the allocation will be paid as claims are submitted to substantiate payment.

Federal regulations define non-administrative (program) and administrative costs as follows:

- Non-Administrative (program) costs are the direct salaries and fringe benefit costs of the staff providing direct services; providing program information to clients; developing employability plans, providing work activities and work subsidies for eligible program participants; providing post-employment services and work supports; and performing case management services. Non-salary costs of staff performing work activities that are considered programmatic are also allowable program costs. Non-salary costs may include, but not be limited to travel, postage, utilities, rental costs, maintenance, supplies, and equipment. Contracts whose main purpose is to provide services defined as program costs as above are considered program as well. Agencies should limit the amount of program costs necessary to operate the SYEP to maximize the amount of funds available to pay participant wages and the number of youths employed.
- Administrative costs are the salaries, fringe benefits, and non-salary costs of staff performing activities related to eligibility determinations; preparing program plans, budgets and schedules; monitoring programs and projects; performing procurement activities; providing public relations; performing accounting, legal, payroll and personnel activities; property management; and preparing reports and other documents. OTDA has set a 15% spending limitation on administrative costs.

Consistent with the definition at 45 CFR 260.31(b)(2) and at 45 CFR 286.10(b)(2), work subsidies are payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training; and include all expenditures related to operating a subsidized employment program, including the costs of overseeing the program, developing work sites, and providing training to participants.

Project expenditures for the 2023 SYEP must be claimed through the RF17 claim package for special project claiming. These costs are first identified on the RF2A claim package as F17 functional costs and reported in the F17 column on the [LDSS-923](#) "Cost Allocation Schedule of Payments Administrative Expenses Other Than Salaries" and the [LDSS-2347](#) "Schedule D DSS Administrative Expenses Allocation and Distribution by Function and Program. After final acceptance of the RF2A claim package, the individual project costs are then reported under the

project label “SYEP SSD 2023” on the [LDSS-4975A](#) RF17 Worksheet, “Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs.”

Salaries, fringe benefits, staff counts, and central services costs are directly entered on the RF-17 Worksheet while overhead costs are automatically brought over from the RF2A, Schedule D and distributed based upon the proportion of the number of staff assigned to this project. Employees not working all their time on this project must maintain time studies to support the salary and fringe benefit costs allocated to the program.

Non-salary administrative costs are reported with the appropriate object of expense(s) on the [LDSS-923B](#) Summary-Administrative (page 1) “Schedule of Payment for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs”. Any client-related program costs should be reported as object of expense 19.5 – Work Subsidies for Training on the [LDSS-923B](#) Summary-Program (page 2) “Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs”.

Total project costs and shares should be reported on the [LDSS-4975](#) “Monthly Statement of Special Project Claims Federal and State Aid (RF17)”.

Administrative costs may be claimed up to 15% of the amount allocated to your district for the 2023 SYEP. Any administrative costs in excess of the 15% limit should be claimed on the Schedule D3 “Allocation and Claiming for Administrative Costs for Employment Programs” ([LDSS-2347-B1](#)).

The 2023 SYEP claims must be for services provided during the period May 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023. Expenditures for such services must be made by October 31, 2023 and claims for 2023 SYEP expenditures must be “Final Accepted” in the Automated Claiming System (ACS) no later than December 31, 2023.

Additional instructions for completing time studies, the [LDSS-923](#) and Schedule D, Schedule D-3, and RF17 claim package can be found in Chapters 4, 7, 10 and 18 of the Fiscal Reference Manual (FRM) Volume 3. The FRMs are available on the OTDA website at: <http://otda.state.nyenet/bfdm/finance>.

#### **Claiming Contacts:**

Claiming Questions (Regions 1-5): Justin Gross, (518) 408-4970 or via email at: [otda.sm.Field\\_Ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov](mailto:otda.sm.Field_Ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov)

Claiming Questions (Region 6): Michael Simon, (212) 961-8250 or via email at: [Michael.Simon@otda.ny.gov](mailto:Michael.Simon@otda.ny.gov)

#### **IV. Necessary Action**

Each district must complete the 2023 SYEP District Designation Form (Attachment B) to indicate if funds need to be transferred to the district’s FFFS plan, and whether New York State SYEP funds will be retained by the district or assigned to the LWDB. Districts must also complete the 2023 District Performance Goal Form (Attachment C) with anticipated program performance goals, estimated total expenditures, and plan detail. Both are due by **June 2, 2023**. Forms not received timely will result in delayed remittance of advances. Email the completed forms to Iwona Ostrowska-Sheedy at [SYEP@otda.ny.gov](mailto:SYEP@otda.ny.gov).

For those districts opting to assign funds to the LWDB, the appropriate LWDB will be notified of the amount of funds available to serve TANF eligible participants from each respective county within their Local Workforce Investment Area. The LWDBs that operate the 2023 New York State SYEP will receive program guidelines, including the necessary claim forms and claiming instructions, via email once the District Designation Form is received. If opting to assign 2023 SYEP funds to the LWDB, the district and the LWDB are expected to work closely to develop appropriate referral

mechanisms to serve at-risk and vulnerable youth, including youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and youth with a disability.

**Forms must be submitted by June 2, 2023.**

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**Issued By:**

**Name:** Valerie T. Figueroa

**Title:** Deputy Commissioner

**Division/Office:** Employment and Income Support Programs/Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance