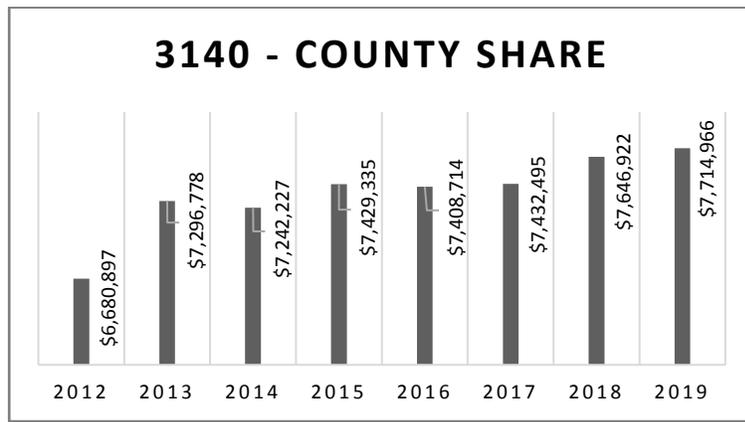


PROBATION

3140



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Albany County Probation Department is threefold. The Department is committed to providing quality services to all courts in Albany County by conducting Pre-Sentence and Pre-Disposition Investigations, Intake and Diversion Programs, supervising adult and juvenile offenders at levels determined by validated risk assessment tools, and by providing and participating in alternative sentencing programs. The Department also serves the community by including the victims of offender's crime in investigation, case planning and supervision. The Department also collects court imposed financial obligations such as restitution, court surcharges, and certain offender fees. Finally, the Department is committed to holding offenders accountable through the employment of graduated sanctions, as well as providing for and referral to skill-building programs and services that emphasize self-efficacy and positive social adjustment. The department also looks to employ merit credits as incentives for positive community adjustment and as a reward for sustained and measurable achievements.

WHO WE SERVE

We serve all Criminal Courts of Albany County, as well as the Family Court. Once a Defendant/Juvenile appears in court, a Pre-Sentence Report (PSI)/Pre Dispositional Investigation Report (PDI) report may be ordered, which we are required to complete. In 2017 we completed 132 Family Court ordered Investigations and 1481 Criminal Court Investigations. Once the report is completed offenders may be sentenced to Probation as a Juvenile or an Adult. Juvenile Probation supervision is generally for one year and may be extended for an additional year and Adult sentences range from one, three, five, six, ten years, or lifetime sentences of probation. The amount of Probationers may vary monthly, but we generally average 2200-2300 adult offenders at any given time. Juvenile Services is averaging 120 persons being supervised monthly under court order and another 400 who are diverted from Family Court on a yearly average. Adult Probation Officers generally carry regular supervision caseload less than 100. We also have specialized caseloads which average between 40 -60 probationers. These caseloads include Drug Court, DWI Offenders, Sex Offenders, Domestic Violence Offenders, Mental Health Probationers, Veteran Probationers and Greatest Risk Probationers. The specialized caseload requires more intensive supervision of Probationers who are at a higher risk of recidivism. Probation Officers who have these caseloads receive additional specialized training.

ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

We are considered a mid-size Probation Department in New York State. We have 103 staff employees of which most are Probation Officers. We continue in advancing Technology to improve the Probation mission and assist Probation Officers carrying out their job functions.

2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Albany County continues to be viewed as a leader across New York in the management of Probation. Albany County Probation is often asked by the New York State Probation Director to provide input and participate in new initiatives the field of Probation. Albany County Probation continues to help reduce crime through effective Probation management of offenders. We also continue to reduce Juvenile detention and placement in Albany County. New in 2018:

- Albany County was honored with the National Association of Counties (NACo) 2018 Achievement Award in the Category of Human Services for its "innovative and effective" Probation Driver's Licensing Program. This program aimed at assisting probationers in obtaining their driver's license thereby eliminating one of the obstacles that prevents them from successfully reintegrating back into their communities. By taking this program and obtaining their driver's license, probationers increase their chances of finding sustainable employment in the future.

PROBATION - 3140

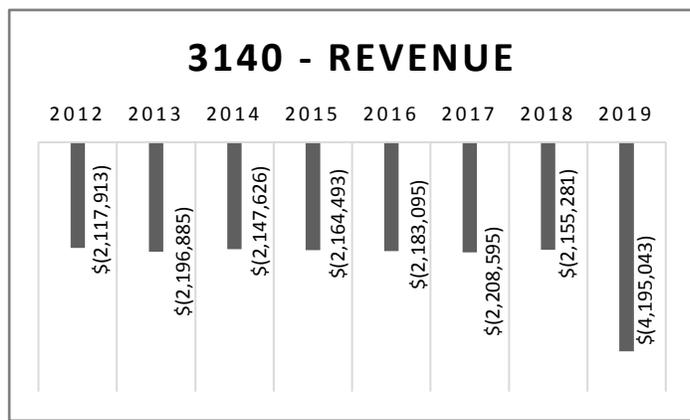
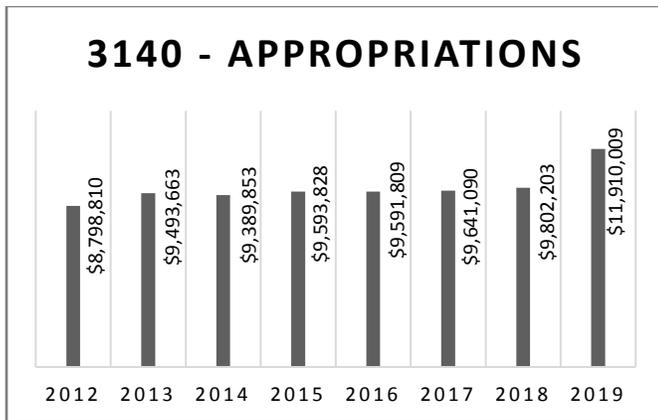
- Since the passage of the Raise the Age Legislation, the Department has been working with various stakeholders at the local, regional, and state level in an effort to plan and program for those 16 and 17 year old affected by this change in law. The Department continues to work with state and local partners in an effort to identify and implement meaningful and effective interventions for this population.
- The department continues to provide specialized programming for Probationers and family members, with no increase in staffing. The department facilitates specialized groups to target specific needs of our probationers. Officers who receive specialized training and/or certifications facilitate the following groups at the Probation Department:
 - Parent Project: A program geared to parents of ungovernable adolescents and teens, providing parenting strategies to regain parental control and influence.
 - Juvenile Community Accountability Board: A restorative justice program for juvenile delinquents, allowing community members to impart upon the youth the impact of the offense upon the community and increase juvenile offender accountability by developing action plans for the juvenile to repair the harm committed by the delinquency act.
 - Thinking for a Change: A cognitive behavioral change program, which seeks to amend probationers' thinking, social and problem solving skills to prosocial responses.
 - Ready Set Work: A program offered to probationers who need assistance in obtaining and maintaining employment, which focuses on job seeking and readiness skills, as well as job retention skills.
 - Financial Education Group: A program designed to help probationers address their financial issues and offers strategies to budget their finances in order to ensure their financial obligations to the victims, court and DWI supervision fees are met.
 - Project Growth: A vocational/employment skill building internship geared toward the trades for youth and young adults on Probation. Stipends maybe earned are designated for any outstanding restitution that may be owed.
 - Mental Health Peer Support & Advocacy: A program conducted in collaboration with Albany County Mental Health, offering diagnosed probationers the support of peers, as well as an opportunity to address issues with the help of Albany County Mental Health professionals, specialized mental health Probation Officers, and a peer support advocate from the Mental Health Empowerment Project.
- A member of the Department was part of a multidisciplinary team that attended and successfully completed a Georgetown University Certificate Program focusing on reducing racial and ethnic disparities in juvenile justice. While the program primarily addresses disparities in the juvenile justice system, it also included a focus on the relationship between disproportionality in the juvenile justice system and disparate treatment in other child serving systems, including child welfare and education. The team was able to develop and implement a Capstone Project and as a result of such, received and Executive Certificate from Georgetown University and membership into CJJR's Fellows Network.
- The department again in 2018 reached 100% compliance on the requirement that all department officers with Peace Officer status securing 21 hours of training in related Probation topics. Among other topics, Probation Officers received training in Motivational Interviewing, Implicit Bias, Crisis Intervention, and the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- The department continues to be requested to serve on committees by the NYS Department of Probation and Correctional Alternatives (OPCA) and other oversight agencies, providing input into the development of best practices in the field of Criminal Justice in the state. In 2018, department staff served on Raise the Age Planning Workgroup as well as a Rules Revision Workgroup and Caseload Explorer Update Workgroup. These Workgroups focused primarily on the changes needed to implement Raise the Age legislation.
- The department continues close collaboration with local government and community partners. For instance, with the Albany Police Department, the Department offers the GIVE VOID, GIVE MDT, GIVE Call-In, LEAD and the Youth Police initiatives. Additionally we partner on community safety special details. With the Department of Children, Youth and Families, the department partners on the JDAI initiative, the Regional Youth Justice Team, and the Juvenile Justice Steering Committee.

PROBATION - 3140

- Members of the Department, along with other members of the community including representatives from the County Department for Children, Youth and Families, County Youth Bureau, County Family Court, City Police Department and City School District were invited to participate in a two day forum in March 2018 titled “The Mind Science of Bias, Anxiety and Threat: A Forum to Develop Local Implementation Plans”. This goal of this conference was to develop a cross system strategic plan to address the issue of racial and ethnic disparities that plague the child welfare system. Albany County was able to come up with a strong, comprehensive plan, the goals of which will be implemented over the next several months/years by all agencies involved

CHALLENGES

With the Raise the Age Legislation due to take effect this October, the Department continues to plan for what is expected to be a significant increase in the number of Juveniles being provided Probation services. The department will be charged with assessing the risk and needs of these offenders and providing the necessary level of supervision and services. This potentially will increase an addition 400 juveniles and young adults annually.



2019 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The goal of Probation is consistent with our mission to help probationers lead law abiding lives. Recognizing that our probationers have specific needs that must be addressed in order for them to lead productive and law abiding lives, the department remains committed to exploring how our services are delivered in order to best meet those needs.

- A goal in 2019 will be the continued focus on victim compensation through the collection of restitution money, and offender accountability through the collection of DWI fees. The department continues to offer electronic payment methods via gov-pay in an effort to make the payment process easier for offenders and to increase the probability of payment.
- With full implementation of Raise the Age Legislation, the Department will continue to assess the needs of this older juvenile population in an effort to provide the resources necessary to reduce their criminogenic risk factors and provide a greater opportunity for them to live law abiding and productive lifestyle. The Department will be seeking to increase the number of Probation Officers trained in the use of the YASI (youth assessment screening instrument) a tool designed to assist Officers in identifying areas of a juvenile’s life that is contributing to their criminal behavior. The Department will continue to strengthen our relationship with local, county, and state stakeholders in seeking best outcomes for these youth.
- The Department will continue to respond to the changing needs of the population we serve as well as the community as a whole and will do so by offering specialized training to our officers and by continuing and/or expanding the facilitation of workgroups in an effort to assist offenders with their rehabilitation efforts. Being mindful of the current opioid epidemic and the devastating effects such can have on our clients and their families, the Department will continue to have its officers trained in the use of Narcan and will work towards providing all officers with Narcan kits.

PROBATION - 3140

SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

With the implementation of Raise the Age on October 1, 2018, additional juveniles will be received at the Probation Department. Reimbursement for additional staff and resources to serve this population is available from New York State. Probation Staff are requested in the 2019 probation Budget to meet this increase.

A 42 year old female offender was sentenced to five years probation supervision as a result of a conviction of DWAI Drugs, E/Felony. This matter marked her 3rd alcohol and/or drug related driving offense within a six month period. She was addicted to the muscle relaxer Soma and alcohol. The probationer commented she often had blackouts when driving under the influence. She was initially assigned to an Intensive Supervision caseload where she remained for one year. Throughout that time, her assigned probation officer worked closely with her, her family and substance/alcohol and mental health treatment providers. She completed outpatient treatment at SPARC after 6 months and continued mental health services throughout. She became very invested in her sobriety; attended AA, became very involved in her church; started an NA meeting and was involved in a youth group at that church. She was never rearrested and there was no indication of driving illegally. Although the offender continued to struggle with cravings and withdraw symptoms throughout the beginning of the probation term, she never tested positive for any substance and appeared to maintain sobriety throughout the 5 year term. Upon completion of Intensive Supervision, the offender was supervised in the DWI unit. Some additional positives include obtaining and maintaining employment with a New York State agency and getting married. This offender adapted to a change in probation officers on three occasions and often spoke of being grateful that she did not hurt or kill someone when she drove impaired. She gained much insight into her addiction and over time, changed her thinking and behavior relative to her addictions. Over the course of supervision, with the assistance/support and direction of her probation officers and treatment providers, this probationer was successful in that she acknowledged her addictions and dangerous driving behaviors, made positive changes in her life including family and pro-social, sober activities. She made extensive progress throughout her term and became a sober, law abiding citizen. She successfully completed her term of supervision.