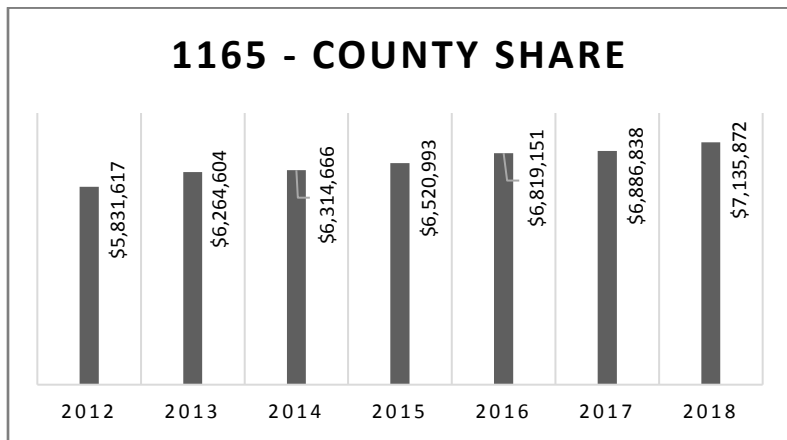


## DISTRICT ATTORNEY 1165



### MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of the Albany County District Attorney has the legal obligation to provide prosecutorial services to every municipality in the County of Albany as well as New York State and Federal Agencies who refer cases for which jurisdiction lies in Albany County.

### WHO WE SERVE

The District Attorney represents the interest of the people in local, county, appellate and state courts. Once an action is commenced, the prosecutors must obey timelines imposed by the courts in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Law of New York State. The nature of the offense, the proof in a case, the volume of pending cases, and the resources to prosecute each case are factors considered by a prosecutor when conveying an appropriate plea bargain offer. Decisions made by the District Attorney's Office impact on Corrections and Community Supervision, i.e., jail, probation, and state prison.

Policies focusing on expeditious case review, victim contact and negotiations implemented by the District Attorney's Office have a positive net effect on sister agencies within the county:

- With programs like Clean Slate, the Community Accountability Board and other Alternative to Incarceration programs the Albany County Correctional Facility population has steadily declined, saving taxpayer dollars.
- Expeditious prosecutions and coordination with the Albany County Probation Department have resulted in felony offenders going to state prison faster than ever before and not remaining in Albany County supported by local taxpayer dollars.

### ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

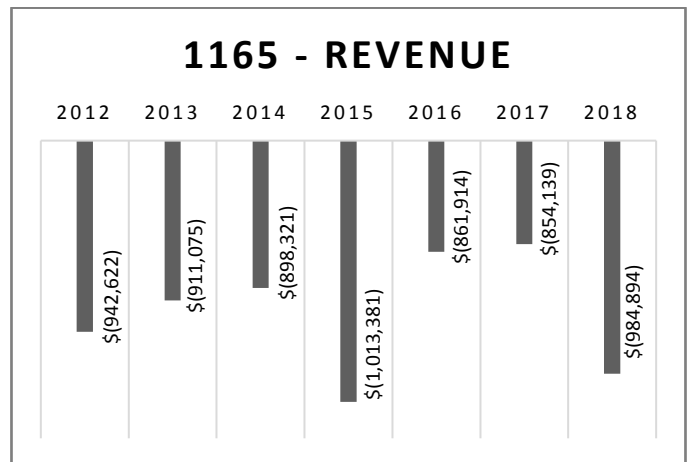
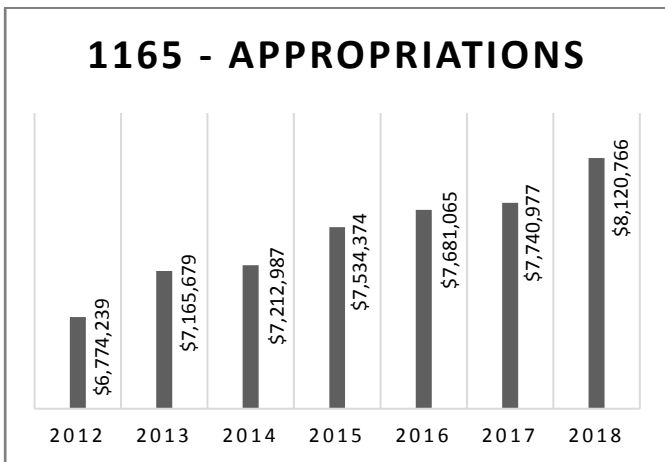
Albany County is home to eleven law enforcement agencies, not including state and federal agencies. Outside of New York City, Albany County has one of the greatest concentrations of law enforcement in the state. A police arrest or citation represents the primary method by which an individual is introduced into the Criminal Justice System. The budgets of all police departments in Albany County referring cases for prosecution to the District Attorney's Office amounts to more than \$120 Million dollars. This figure does not include cases referred by New York State or Federal Agencies, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles, Insurance Fund, Inspector General, Health Department, FBI, DEA, etc.

### 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- This past year has continued to challenge the criminal justice system with the ongoing issues of Raise the Age, Juvenile Justice Reform, Mental Health Reform and Community Police Relations. As a result of the best practices utilized within Albany County, the Office of District Attorney has been called upon to participate in several nationwide multi-disciplinary teams including serving as a founding member of Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration with former President Barack Obama, serving as a member of Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP), serving as a member of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, serving as the President Elect of the District Attorneys Association of New York State, and serving as the New York State Representative for the National District Attorneys Association.
- During 2017, the Office launched Clean Slate, a diversion program that aims to reverse engineer the flow of young adults away from the traditional Criminal Justice System, both aiming to avoid criminal conviction and address the harsh realities that ex-offenders often face after re-entering society. The partners in our Clean Slate Program are currently shepherding nine young adults through the Restorative Justice Process to break free from the stigma of a felony criminal conviction.

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- In 2005, Albany County was ranked 61<sup>st</sup> out of 62 counties for the ease of pleading down a DWI charge. Under the leadership of DA Soares Albany County is now ranked 15<sup>th</sup> and the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee has selected the Office as a recipient of New York State’s Highway Traffic Safety Program grant award.
- The Office has partnered with the New York State Prosecutors Training Institute (NYPTI) to invest in technology aimed at expediting digital discovery practices across New York State. Once integrated into the new case management system, the update will be available to all District Attorneys at no cost to aid in the process of “going green” and providing the courts and defense bar discovery documents as early as possible in the criminal justice process. The paperless cloud system will ultimately result in expedited processing of cases which will reduce county expenses in the correctional facility.
- The Office has continued to develop one of the most recognized alternatives to incarceration programs in the state. The Community Accountability Board and Felony Diversion Board consists of volunteer community members who meet with nonviolent offenders and work out restorative dispositions. Hundreds of cases are resolved through this restorative justice model and thousands of community service hours are liquidated in the community as a result of this program, reducing the local jail population by one-third and freeing up jail cells to increase revenues and reduce probation caseload. In the past few years we expanded the CAB program throughout Albany County and now have more than 50 active Board Members dispensing Justice and empowering citizens in our community.
- By continuing our enhanced focus on Financial Crimes, the Office of the District Attorney has recovered more than \$2.5 million in restitution to Albany County and New York State since the inception of the Crimes Against Revenue Program, and this year received the New York State Department of Labor Special Award of Merit for returning more than \$1 million to the state as a result of unemployment insurance fraud prosecutions.
- Through the use of social media, the District Attorney has taken an aggressive stance on human trafficking with the launch of Frontpage. The Frontpage website posts pictures of convicted John who take advantage of victims, and offers victims information and help to find a way out of the sex-trafficking culture that unfortunately exists in Albany County and all around the world.
- Through the Making Crime Pay Program we have continued to help our young people succeed by enlisting students in the fight against bullying through the WORDS Campaign to recognize bullying and stand up against aggressive and threatening behavior wherever and whenever it occurs.
- The inconvenient truth is that most crimes are committed by young men between the ages of 15 and 23. Utilizing grant funding and assets seized from criminals, we have implemented several programs that target this volatile population to prevent our youth from becoming involved in the criminal justice system. These programs keep our children safe and have removed more than 450 guns from our community as well as built trust between our youth population and our law enforcement community. This trust has helped our office solve and successfully prosecute some of our county’s most violent crimes.
- The Office has expanded the Animal Cruelty Taskforce by ensuring that all first responders are employing best practices in responding to crime committed against animals and by prioritizing prevention strategies in every community to educate the public about what they can do to help.



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## 2018 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- Continue to enhance our Community Justice Outreach Programs by expanding Alternatives to Incarceration and Diversion Initiatives to guide our youth away from criminal activity and towards educational and enrichment opportunities.
- Eliminate the largest narcotic pipeline leading to the Capital Region by continuing our partnership with the Office of the Special Prosecutor in New York City. Significant investments have been made in technology enabling greater information sharing and collaboration to immediately identify and stop drug trafficking from New York City into Albany County.
- Continue to Go Green! By utilizing technology and best practices to reduce the use of paper, ink and other costly resources as well as improve efficiency in the Albany County Criminal Justice System.
- Continue to bring best practices into Albany County through membership in Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the District Attorneys Association of New York State and the National District Attorneys Association.

## SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

As a result of the increasing cost of supplies, trial expenses and contractual expenses, the Office has requested increases in those lines for the first time to continue to seek justice for victims of crime and the residents of Albany County.

The District Attorney's Office fights crime in the courtroom every day. We then highlight our cases to the public so everyone can see when someone has committed an act of violence or harmed another. However, we no longer want to only highlight acts of violence - we want to also highlight the acts of kindness that exist in our community - and our WORDS campaign has done just that during 2017.

The Albany County District Attorney's Office asked the public to highlight the ACTS OF KINDNESS being done by youth in our communities, with an emphasis on the theme that WORDS CAN HURT OR WORDS CAN HEAL.

Participants were then asked to record their act of kindness via artwork, photo, or video and submit them to our office. Weekly winners were selected and monthly prizes were awarded to the child receiving the highest number of online votes. The Office has received hundreds of submissions and is thrilled to continue rewarding our youth for making Albany County a better place every day!

