

Schenectady County **Community Needs Assessment**

November 2021



Schenectady Community
Action Program

Creating Opportunity in Partnership

2021 Schenectady County Community Needs Assessment

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I. Introduction

The **Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP)** is Schenectady County's **Community Action Agency (CAA)**. Incorporated in 1965, with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status granted in 1966, SCAP was established to provide services and operate programs that address the causes and effects of poverty. **Community Action Agencies** are federally designated as the frontline resource for people living in poverty, providing direct services and support for low-income individuals and families. In addition to the direct services they provide, Community Action Agencies (CAAs) promote community economic development through partnerships and inter-agency collaborations.

Community Action Promise

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Regular assessment of needs and resources at the community level continues to be the foundation of Community Action and a vital management tool used to set the course for agency resources, confirming the need for existing programs and services, predicting future needs and guiding strategic initiatives. SCAP conducts an extensive Community Needs Assessment every three years, with annual updates in between. Results of the assessment are utilized to inform SCAP's **Community Action Plan**. The Community Needs Assessment is also utilized by multiple community-based organizations and groups, as well as local government entities, to guide program and planning efforts.

II. Strategic Planning

SCAP's current **Strategic Plan** is guiding the work of the agency through the year 2022. Revised mission and vision statements for SCAP were adopted during the development of this five year plan.

Mission:

In partnership with the community, SCAP develops and implements lasting solutions for people of all ages to move out of poverty.

Vision:

SCAP envisions a community without poverty where everyone's health, wellness and safety is a priority and where everyone:

- has safe and affordable housing;
- has quality education and learning experiences;
- seeking employment can earn a livable wage;
- is treated with dignity and respect; and
- feels invested in and connected to the community.

SCAP's Strategic Plan incorporates goals in **five focus areas**:

1. Integration
2. Community Engagement
3. Service Expansion/Sustainability
4. Assessment, Evaluation & Quality Improvement
5. Facilities/Space

SCAP's **Strategic Work Plan** is directing efforts to achieve identified goals. The Work Plan calls for the systematic utilization of this community assessment (and subsequent updates) to inform SCAP's work.

III. Executive Summary

This community needs assessment considers the indicators of need for Schenectady County and its low-income residents, as well as the strengths and resources in place to support residents. It includes both quantitative and qualitative data. It provides an overview of SCAP and its programs and an overview of the area served. It incorporates detailed demographics, an economic profile, and the most up-to-date data available regarding poverty, employment, education, housing, homelessness, early childhood, health, nutrition, food insecurity, and other community and social service need indicators. The data presented, combined with community engagement activities, as well as information regarding community resources, has provided the basis for a thorough analysis of community needs and presentation of key findings. The resulting conclusions and recommendations will guide SCAP operations for the next three years. The assessment will be updated annually to reflect any significant changes or developments.

Needs & Challenges

17,271 residents in Schenectady live below the federal poverty level, with 70% of these residents residing in the City of Schenectady; the city's poverty rate is 19.4%. The percent of residents outside the City of Schenectady County living in poverty is continuing to increase. Many residents, while they may have incomes above the poverty rate, struggle to make ends meet. County-wide, 18.4% of households make less than \$25,000 per year and over 26.9% make less than \$35,000. That percentage increases dramatically within the City of Schenectady where 27.7% of households make less than \$25,000 annually and 39% of households earn less than \$35,000 per year. Nearly half (45%) of the 55,262 households in Schenectady County earn more than the Federal Poverty Level but less than the basic cost of living in New York State. Housing, education, training, employment, health, nutrition, transportation and child care barriers affect the ability to achieve long-term economic stability and well-being. Challenges related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continue to affect the economic stability and well-being of many residents.

Strengths and Resources

Schenectady County providers engage in many strategic partnerships to provide support for low-income individuals and families. SCAP leads partnership efforts in each of the agency's service areas. SCAP's program development activities feature collaboration. Resource navigation, case management and therapeutic supports utilize evidence-based practices. Agency expertise includes coordinating resources with several eligibility requirements, in combination with more flexible funding resources to provide holistic support and complete solutions. One of SCAP's biggest strengths is the ability to adapt to changing needs quickly, problem solving as needed to address both immediate and longer-term community needs. Each household served has its own unique set of circumstances that contribute to its challenges. SCAP's integrated, whole family approach to service provision gives customers seamless access to a continuum of supports and programs, ranging from emergency assistance and resource navigation to longer-term early childhood, housing and behavioral health support. Involvement with a family may be over a short period to address a one-time need, or continue for an extended period of time to address multiple complex needs.

IV. Key Findings: *Conditions and Causes of Poverty*

- Schenectady County is populated by 158,061 people, with approximately 42% of residents living in the City of Schenectady. The towns of Glenville and Rotterdam are the most populated municipalities outside of the city. Overall, the total county population has increased by 11,506 people since the 2000 Census. The number of non-United States citizens residing in the county is 5,716, with 68% of these residents living in the City of Schenectady. Half of the foreign born residents living in the city were born in Guyana (5,588 residents born in Guyana).
- Age cohort projections by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) remain the same as noted in SCAP's 2015 and 2018 Community Needs Assessments. These projections estimated a decrease of 4,633 in the age cohort of 45-54 (from 2010 to 2020), from 24,220 to 19,587. Conversely, the 65 and over age cohort was predicted to increase by 4,474 people, from 23,083 to 27,557. While 2020 Census data is not yet available at this level of detail, the 2019 one-year American Community Survey estimates the population of residents ages 45 – 54 at 19,056 and the population of residents age 65 and over at 27,349, suggesting that the projections are on target.
- The poverty rate for Schenectady County is 11.4%, with 25.1% of individuals (38,785 individuals) living in households with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level. The highest level of poverty in Schenectady County is found in the City of Schenectady. Of all Schenectady County residents living below the poverty level, 70% reside in the City of Schenectady. This is three percentage points less than 73% reported in SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment and eight percentage points less than 78% reported in SCAP's 2015 Community Needs Assessment, indicating a significant increase in the share of impoverished residents living in other Schenectady County communities.
- The highest concentration of children under age five in poverty, 70%, is found in the City of Schenectady. This percentage, however, is more than 17 percentage points lower than the 87.4% reported in SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment, and over 20 percentage points lower than the 92% reported in SCAP's 2015 Community Needs Assessment. While the percent and number of economically disadvantaged students remains highest for the Schenectady City School District (76%, 7,066 students), overall the increase in the number of economically disadvantaged students attending public schools outside the city continues to grow. Between the 2016-2017 and 2019-2020 school years, the percent of economically disadvantaged students in the Rotterdam-Mohonasen District increased by 5% (41% to 46%); in the Scotia-Glenville District it increased by 5% (29% to 34%); and in the Niskayuna District it increased by 4% (12% to 16%).
- Many residents that are employed struggle to afford basic needs. According to the United Way's 2020 ALICE (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed) Report, 45% of all households in Schenectady County earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic costs of living.
- At 8.1%, Schenectady County's 2020 unemployment rate was the highest within the four county Capital District Region area (Schenectady, Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties). County-wide, 34.9% of residents over the age of 25 have only a high school diploma or less.
- Homelessness continues to be significant. The most recent annual Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) report available indicates that 2,227 individuals in 1,641 households in Schenectady County received one or more homeless-related supportive services, including 533 children under the age of 18. 304 of these households (18% of all households served) were chronically homeless. 1,235 people were served in emergency shelter or transitional housing programs, with an additional 992 served in rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs. 469 children enrolled in a

Schenectady County school district experienced homelessness at some point during the 2019-20 school year.

- Lack of safe and affordable housing within the City of Schenectady continues to be a primary concern. Contributing factors include cost burden and substandard housing stock. In SCAP's 2021 Community Needs Assessment surveys, both customers and staff identified **Safe, Affordable Housing** as the most pressing need, by far, faced by the low-income population in Schenectady County. Safe, affordable housing services available were also identified the most by both staff and customers as "not meeting the current demand".
- There are 9,031 children under age five living in Schenectady County, 1,856 of whom live in poverty. Twenty-four Census Tracts in Schenectady County have been designated as child care deserts, defined as areas with an insufficient supply of licensed child care; this represents 59% of all Census Tracts in the county. Overall, there is a shortage of infant and toddler care available in Schenectady County. Since 2018, the number of registered family child care/school-age programs in Albany, Schenectady and Rensselaer Counties has declined by 131, representing a decrease of 69%. 6,000 children age five or under in Schenectady County lack consistent regulated care; there is an average of 10 children per regulated child care slot in the county.
- The Schenectady Coalition for a Healthy Community continues to identify *Preventing Chronic Disease* and *Promoting Mental Health & Preventing Substance Abuse* as priority areas of need requiring focus.

V. Conclusions & Recommendations: *Summary Analysis of Qualitative and Quantitative Data*

- SCAP should continue to monitor demographic trends to identify and help ensure any associated areas of need are met.
- Resource development and expansion efforts should continue to consider poverty increases in areas outside the City of Schenectady.
- Employment supports remain essential as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and should continue to focus on training and education needed for in-demand career pathways that offer attainment of a livable wage.
- Services and supports to address and prevent homelessness should continue to focus on meeting the multifaceted, complex needs of this population. This includes ongoing support to prevent future crises.
- SCAP should continue working with community partners to address the priority need for safe and affordable housing.
- There continues to be a need for additional comprehensive, coordinated early childhood development and child care supports to adequately meet the needs of Schenectady County's low-income families with young children.
- SCAP should continue focusing on the development and implementation of mental and behavioral health supports that contribute to health and quality of life outcomes for low-income individuals and families.
- Services and supports should continue to be integrated and accessible to successfully address the multifaceted needs of low-income families, featuring a two-generation, whole family approach. Services must continue to be flexible; this should be a primary consideration for resource development efforts.
- SCAP should continue focusing on agency-wide integration, assessment and evaluation activities.

VI. Methodology

The qualitative and quantitative data collected for this 2021 Community Needs Assessment represents the most current and relevant information available related to the people and communities of Schenectady County. Data sources utilized to inform the assessment include:

- **Qualitative:** Surveys (102) and focus groups (four) conducted for this assessment, SCAP Early Learning 2020-21 Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Surveys, SCAP Career Readiness Class Surveys, SCAP 2020 Customer Technology Survey, Homeless Services Planning Board (HSPB) Strategic Plan (2018), SCAP Customer Outcome Matrices, and City of Schenectady 2020 – 2024 Consolidated 5-Year Strategic Plan.
- **Quantitative:** Local, statewide and national data sources, including: United States Census Bureau, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), National Low Income Housing Coalition, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Living Wage Calculator, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation), New York State Department of Education, New York State Department of Labor (DOL), New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), New York State Division of Criminal and Justice Services (DCJS), New York State Department of Health (DOH), New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS), New York State Kids' Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse, New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), Brightside Up, Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC), Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC), Healthy Capital District Initiative (HCDI), 2020 ALICE Report (United Way), Schenectady County, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), City of Schenectady, Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority (SMHA), and SCAP's centralized data collection and program management system (CAP60).

Key Sector Information

SCAP continually utilizes information from key sectors of the community to assess needs and resources. Key sectors that inform SCAP's assessment processes include:

- **Community-based Organizations/Entities/Coalitions:** Schenectady County Homeless Services Planning Board, One Schenectady, Brightside Up, Healthy Capital District Initiative, YWCA Northeastern NY, and United Way of the Greater Capital Region.
- **Faith-based Organizations:** Community Resource Network (CRN) faith-based partners, including Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM), City Mission, Catholic Charities, and area congregations.
- **Private Sector:** SCAP's Board of Directors' Program & Evaluation Committee, including private sector representation, participated in a meeting/discussion to help inform the assessment process. Private sector early childhood information is detailed in the Capital District Child Care Council's Child Care Landscape (2019).
- **Public Sector:** Information provided by both the City and County of Schenectady informed multiple areas of this assessment.
- **Educational Institutions:** New York State Department of Education, Schenectady City School District, and Rotterdam-Mohonasen Central School District.

VII. Schenectady Community Action Program Overview

SCAP serves the community and its residents in three program areas:

- **Community Services:** Community Resource Navigation/Emergency Services (Community Resource Network - CRN), Case Management, Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-housing, Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing, and Employment Services. Community Resource Navigation and Supportive Case Management are provided at SCAP's primary resource center at 913 Albany Street as well as multiple satellite locations throughout the community. Many customers come into SCAP with an emergency need and are first assisted through the CRN's Emergency Fund and/or SCAP's Homeless Prevention or Rapid Re-housing programs. Longer-term Case Management support, and Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing opportunities help households develop skills and strategies to effectively address and manage multiple family needs, permanently stabilize their living conditions and work towards greater self-reliance. Employment Services include assessment of skills and needs, career readiness training/soft skills development, educational and occupational training, goal planning, career counseling, reentry supports and job placement/retention supports. These services support career pathways that assist individuals and families achieve long-term economic self-reliance. In addition to the primary service area of Schenectady County, Employment Services are provided in neighboring Fulton and Montgomery Counties. SCAP offers a wide range of career readiness supports in these counties, and leads the Mohawk Valley Employer Resource Network (ERN).
- **Early Learning:** Head Start, Pre-K and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships for children from birth to age five. These early learning programs provide comprehensive education, special needs, health, nutrition, mental health, parent engagement and family development services for low-income children and families in Schenectady County. SCAP also collaborates with the Albany Community Action Partnership to facilitate Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership services in Albany County. SCAP's Project LAUNCH serves children from birth to age eight. Program components include: behavioral/mental health assessments and screenings, intervention and treatment, parent education and training, and professional development and support for staff in child-serving organizations.
- **Behavioral Health Services:** Provides a wide range of therapeutic mental and behavioral health resources for low-income individuals and families, as well as professional development and consultation support for case management staff.

SCAP is governed by a tripartite Board of Directors that includes low-income representatives, business and community leaders, and local elected officials. This ensures SCAP is representative of Schenectady County's diverse communities and meets our obligation to the communities and low-income population we serve. SCAP's data and program management system, CAP60, is a confidential, centralized, fully integrated web-based data collection and assessment system. Services are provided utilizing the evidence-based **Family Development** model, an empowerment, strengths-based approach to working with families. SCAP also utilizes the evidence-based practice of **Trauma Informed Care**. This treatment framework involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Additional evidence-based practices implemented include Housing First, Peer Mentoring, Solution-Focused Therapy/Case Management, Two-Generation/Whole Family Approach, and ROMA (Results Oriented Management and Accountability). SCAP maintains several community partnerships to ensure comprehensive resources for customers, and is engaged in numerous key community initiatives.

Integration

SCAP is implementing an integration initiative that is transforming capacity to measure agency-wide outcomes. Internally, an **Integrated Services Committee** meets bi-weekly to oversee centralized and integrated program delivery. Internal referral systems have been enhanced to ensure customers accessing SCAP services participate in intake and assessment processes that ensure awareness of and access to all SCAP supports available.

All SCAP customers are now able to access services through and maintain updated information in SCAP's Online Portal, which is connected to SCAP's web-based CAP60 Data Management and Reporting System. The portal is accessible 7 days per week/24 hours per day, in multiple languages. Since SCAP began offering the online portal in July 2020, 94% of customers accessing services through the portal have been able to register themselves, with 86% reporting no concerns with the process.

While all SCAP programs have been, and will continue to be subject to specific service outcome measures, SCAP has developed an agency-wide outcome matrix to measure overall customer well-being progress in six domains – job skills, employment, housing, child care, health and income. This baseline matrix is being completed for every household served. Following completion of the baseline matrix, updates are completed at six-month intervals. Between July 2, 2020 and July 31, 2021, 1,548 baseline matrices were administered. From the summary of SCAP's **Outcome Matrix Year 1 Report** compiled by independent evaluator Dr. Ken Robin of Helgerson Solutions:

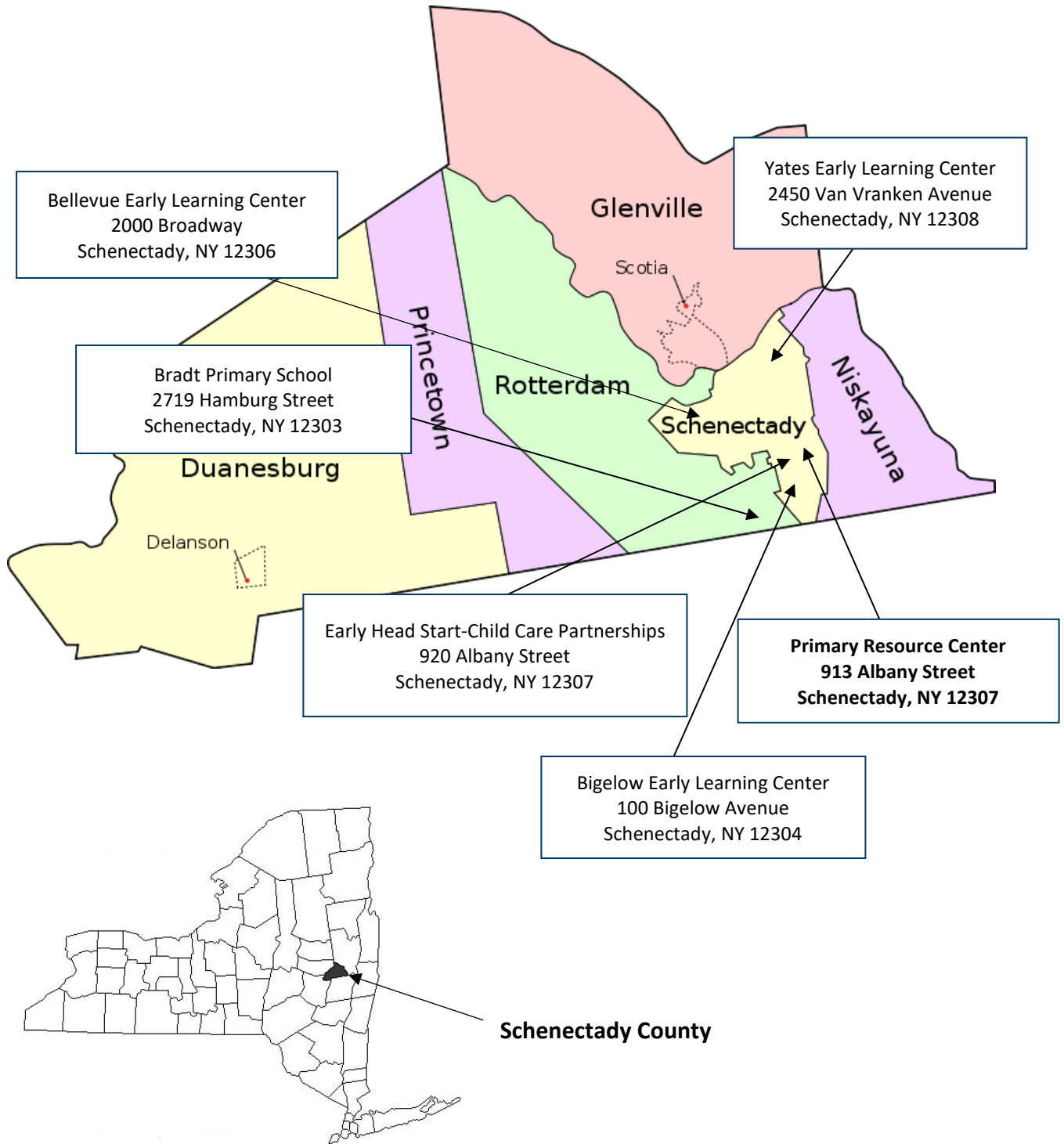
As part of an ongoing and multi-year data infrastructure project at SCAP, results suggest significant progress in collection, integration, and analysis capabilities. Further improvements to service records will strengthen and expand reporting options in the future. Initial findings show that most SCAP clients present with significant and complex needs across multiple domains when they engage with the agency. Need profiles differ somewhat by client demographics, but SCAP is clearly accessing a high-risk population.

After 6 months of service engagement, client-reported status improvement is uneven across domains, and most likely to be reported in the areas of Child Care, Housing, and Health. Clients with the most urgent need are those most likely to report improvement, suggesting that service prioritization may be targeted appropriately. Findings related to the "north star" metric of Income are promising, with nearly half of clients living in poverty at baseline reporting some improvement after 6 months of engagement with SCAP. This trend will continue to be tracked as clients complete a full year of service, and as the Agency Outcome Matrix follow-up sample grows.

SCAP is also working to align all program data tracking processes in CAP60 to increase capacity for agency-wide reporting and analysis functions, as well as planning and quality improvement activities.

Schenectady County

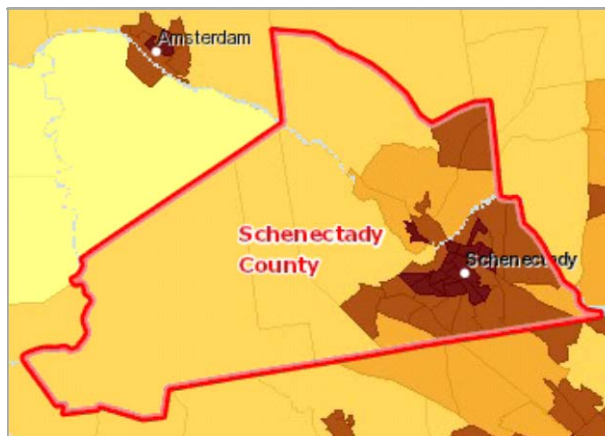
SCAP Primary Resource Center & Early Learning Locations



VIII. Community Overview

SCAP's primary service area of **Schenectady County** is geographically one of the smallest counties in New York State. It is the smallest most densely populated county in the eight county area covered by the Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC). Although the smallest county in size in the CREDC area, Schenectady County contains the region's second largest city. As estimated by the 2020 Census, the City of Schenectady is populated by 67,047 people. There are eight municipalities in Schenectady County:

- **Duanesburg:** The western-most town in the county, Duanesburg includes 73.5 square miles. It is bordered by Montgomery County in the north, Schoharie County in the west and southwest, and Albany County in the south. The **Village of Delanson** is located in the town.
- **Glenville:** Located north of the Mohawk River, the Town of Glenville covers an area of 50.9 square miles and includes the **Village of Scotia**.
- **Niskayuna:** At 15.1 square miles, Niskayuna is geographically the smallest town in Schenectady County. It is located in the southeastern part of the county, east of the City of Schenectady, and is the eastern-most town in the county.
- **Princetown:** Located in the central part of the county, west of the City of Schenectady, Princetown is bordered by Montgomery County to the north and Albany County to the south.
- **Rotterdam:** Also located in the central part of Schenectady County, bordering the City of Schenectady, Rotterdam covers 36.5 square miles. The Mohawk River defines the northeast town line and the New York State Thruway passes through the town.
- **City of Schenectady:** The county seat, the City of Schenectady covers 11 square miles. The most densely populated municipality in the county, it includes the following neighborhoods: Bellevue, Central State Street, Downtown, Eastern Ave, Hamilton Hill & Vale, Mont Pleasant, Northside, Stockade, Union Street, and Woodlawn.



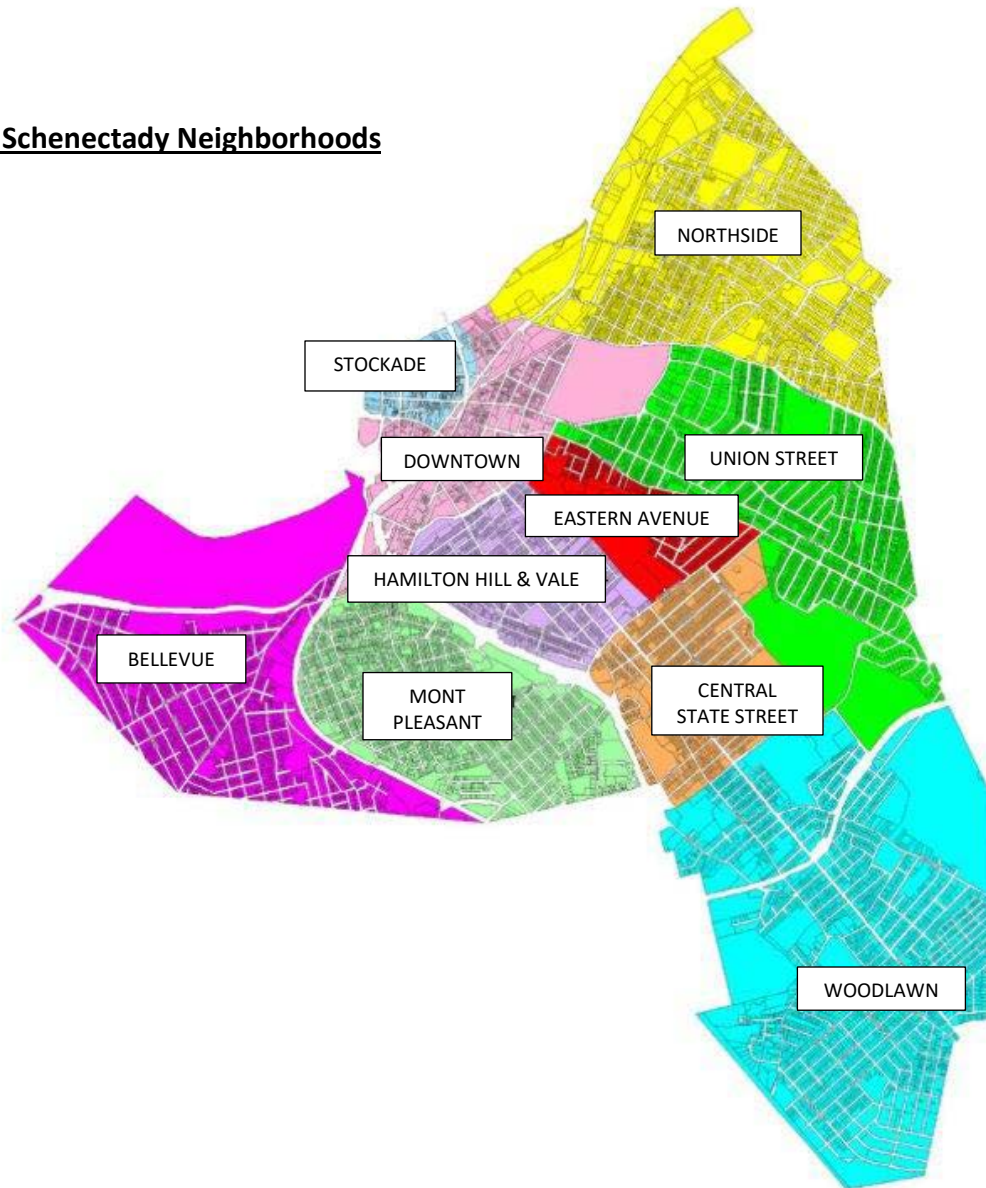
Schenectady County Population Density

Persons per square mile
by Census Tract

2015-2019 American Community Survey



City of Schenectady Neighborhoods



The **Capital Region Neighborhood Analysis Health Equity Report** published by the Healthy Capital District Initiative (HCDI) in September 2019, “examines the relationship between socioeconomic and health indicators by looking at the variation among the Capital Region’s 58 neighborhoods”. These neighborhoods (HCDI identified 58 zip-code aggregate neighborhoods) cover a six-county region: Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties. From the report:

Using summary indicators such as years of potential life lost (YPLL) and area deprivation index (ADI- 17 indicators including income, education, employment, and housing quality) the Capital Region’s 58 neighborhoods are ranked with detailed analysis to show the difference in the 6 high-need and 6 low-need neighborhoods.

Two neighborhoods in Schenectady County, both in the City of Schenectady, were rated among the top six high-need neighborhoods (of the 58): Hamilton Hill and City/Stockade. No Schenectady County neighborhoods were rated among the six lowest need neighborhoods. The Hamilton Hill neighborhood had the highest ADI (93%) of all 58 neighborhoods ranked.

Immigration: The number of non-United States citizens residing in Schenectady County is estimated at just over 5,700, with 68% residing in the City of Schenectady. Of note is that 75% of United States citizens born in Puerto Rico or United States island areas live in the City of Schenectady.

Nativity and Citizenship Status

	Schenectady County	City of Schenectady
Total Population	154,859	65,334
US Citizen, born in the US	135,574	52,676
US Citizen, born in Puerto Rico or US Island Areas	1,183	885
US Citizen, born abroad of American Parent(s)	913	506
US citizen by naturalization	11,473	7,376
Not a US Citizen	5,716	3,891

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table B05001

Foreign Born Population: 17,189 residents in Schenectady County were born outside of the United States. Over half of these residents, 11,267, reside in the City of Schenectady. It is notable that 5,588 of these residents were born in Guyana. (Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table B05006)

IX. Demographics

According to 2020 Decennial Census data, Schenectady County is populated by **158,061** people, with approximately 42% of residents living in the City of Schenectady. The towns of Glenville and Rotterdam are the most populated municipalities outside of the city. Overall, the total county population has increased by 11,506 people since the 2000 Census. American Community Survey population data provides a reference point for more detailed data not yet released from the 2020 Census.

Total Population: Decennial Census

Municipality	2020 Census	2010 Census	2000 Census
Schenectady County	158,061	154,727	146,555
City of Schenectady	67,047	66,135	61,821
Duanesburg	5,863	6,122	5,808
Village of Delanson	335	377	385
Glenville	29,326	29,480	28,183
Village of Scotia	7,272	7,729	7,957
Niskayuna	23,278	21,781	20,295
Princetown	2,024	2,115	2,132
Rotterdam	30,523	29,094	28,316

Total Population: American Community Survey

Municipality	ACS 2010-2014	ACS 2011-2015	ACS 2012-2016	ACS 2013-2017	ACS 2014-2018	ACS 2015-2019
Schenectady County	155,178	154,796	154,845	155,239	154,883	154,859
City of Schenectady	66,055	65,735	65,554	65,705	65,482	65,334
Duanesburg	6,218	6,280	6,407	6,573	6,501	6,477
Village of Delanson	367	390	379	352	376	333
Glenville	29,560	29,489	29,490	29,506	29,371	29,292
Village of Scotia	7,742	7,744	7,732	7,775	7,715	7,667
Niskayuna	22,022	22,050	22,177	22,243	22,225	22,267
Princetown	2,124	2,068	1,953	1,797	1,856	1,896
Rotterdam	29,199	29,174	29,264	29,415	29,448	29,593

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey Selected Characteristics of Total Population, Table S0601

Age Distribution: According to the 2015-2019 American Community Survey, 48.8% of Schenectady County's population is male and 51.2% is female. The lowest median age occurs in the City of Schenectady. The highest median age occurs in Princetown. While the City of Schenectady continues to have the greatest number of individuals in each age category, municipalities with the highest percentage of their total population by age category varies. The three highest percentages in each category are found in the following municipalities (not including Villages of Delanson and Scotia):

- **Under 5 years:** Rotterdam (6.3%), Niskayuna (6.2%) and City of Schenectady (6.1%)
- **5-17 years:** Niskayuna (19.4%), Duanesburg (18.7%) and Glenville (17.6%)
- **18-64 years:** City of Schenectady (66.0%), Duanesburg (62.8%) and Rotterdam (61.3%)
- **64 years and above:** Princetown (24.7%), Glenville (20.8%) and Niskayuna (19.6%)

Age cohort projections by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) remain the same as noted in SCAP's 2015 and 2018 Community Needs Assessments. These projections estimated a decrease of 4,633 in the age cohort of 45-54 (from 2010 to 2020), from 24,220 to 19,587. Conversely, the 65 and over age cohort was predicted to increase by 4,474 people, from 23,083 to 27,557. While 2020 Census data is not yet available at this level of detail, the 2019 one-year American Community Survey estimates the population of residents ages 45 – 54 at 19,056 and the population of residents age 65 and over at 27,349, suggesting that the CDRPC projections are on target.

Age Distribution and Percent of Population

Municipality	Under 5 Years	% of Total	5 – 17 Years	% of Total	18 – 64 Years	% of Total	65 Years and Above	% of Total	Median Age (Years)
Schenectady County	8,983	5.8%	24,150	15.8%	92,782	61.6%	24,932	16.8%	39.7
City of Schenectady	3,957	6.1%	9,097	14.1%	40,604	66.0%	8,612	13.8%	36.2
Duanesburg	390	6.0%	1,209	18.7%	4,063	62.8%	815	12.6%	36.6
Village of Delanson	19	5.7%	70	21.0%	224	67.2%	20	6.0%	36.6
Glenville	1,338	4.6%	5,122	17.6%	16,685	57.0%	5,650	20.8%	42.5
Village of Scotia	500	6.5%	1,251	16.3%	4,667	60.9%	1,225	16.3%	38.4
Niskayuna	1,377	6.2%	4,282	19.4%	12,191	54.8%	4,209	19.6%	44.1
Princetown	80	4.2%	242	13.8%	1,087	57.4%	467	24.7%	48.1
Rotterdam	1,841	6.3%	4,198	14.4%	18,152	61.3%	5,179	17.9%	42.4

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey Selected (estimates using Tables S0601 and S1701)

Race and Ethnicity: The City of Schenectady remains a diverse community, while Schenectady County residents outside the city continue to identify primarily as White. The municipality with the most diversity outside the City of Schenectady is Niskayuna.

Race and Ethnicity

(Race alone or in combination with one or more other races)

Municipality	White		Black / African American		Asian		Some Other Race		Hispanic/ Latino (any race)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Schenectady County	123,528	79.8%	19,811	12.8%	9,286	6.0%	10,145	5.8%	10,165	6.6%
City of Schenectady	40,180	61.5%	16,008	24.5%	5,766	8.8%	8,768	13.4%	7,040	10.8%
Duanesburg	6,384	98.6%	77	1.2%	28	.4%	79	1.2%	436	6.7%
Village of Delanson	323	97.0%	7	2.1%	3	.9%	0	0%	14	4.2%
Glenville	28,314	96.7%	789	2.7%	520	1.8%	424	1.4%	1,196	4.1%
Village of Scotia	7,400	96.5%	318	4.1%	51	.7%	43	.5%	422	5.5%
Niskayuna	19,353	86.9%	705	3.2%	2,384	10.7%	377	1.7%	695	3.1%
Princetown	1,892	99.8%	8	.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Rotterdam	27,405	92.6%	2,224	7.5%	588	2.0%	497	3.4%	1,565	5.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey Demographic and Housing Estimates, Table DP-05

Veterans: There are 8,584 Veterans living in Schenectady County, representing 7.1% of the civilian population over the age of 18. Veterans with disabilities constitute 27.9% of the Veteran population. (2015-2019 American Community Survey)

X. Economic Profile

Schenectady County's median household income of \$65,499 is below the New York State median income of \$68,486. There is significant variation in median incomes across municipalities within the county. The median income of the municipality with the highest income (Niskayuna – \$110,855) is more than double the median income of the municipality with the lowest median income (City of Schenectady – \$45,438).

Median Household Income by Municipality

Municipality	Median Income
Schenectady County	\$65,499
City of Schenectady	\$45,438
Duanesburg	\$88,601
Glenville	\$79,037
Niskayuna	\$110,855
Princetown	\$91,389
Rotterdam	\$71,835

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1903

The City of Schenectady's median income of \$45,438 is far above what its residents with low-income earn. For example, a family of four, supported by one full-time minimum wage earner (at New York State's minimum wage, which increased to \$12.50/hour December 31, 2020), earns just \$26,000 annually, which is slightly below the federal poverty level of \$26,500 for a family of this size.

Household Income by Municipality

	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200K+
New York State	6.6%	4.8%	8.5%	7.9%	10.6%	15.2%	12.0%	15.7%	8.1%	10.7%
Schenectady County	4.7%	5.0%	8.7%	8.5%	11.9%	16.7%	13.8%	17.8%	7.1%	5.6%
City of Schenectady	7.6%	7.7%	12.4%	11.3%	15.0%	17.5%	11.3%	12.0%	3.6%	1.6%
Duanesburg	2.5%	.1%	5.1%	4.5%	5.0%	20.3%	20.7%	21.5%	12.3%	8.1%
Village of Delanson	5.9%	2.0%	5.9%	8.9%	2.0%	23.8%	23.8%	15.8%	9.9%	2.0%
Glenville	2.1%	5.1%	6.7%	7.8%	10.9%	15.6%	15.3%	20.6%	9.5%	6.6%
Village of Scotia	2.4%	9.2%	11.5%	6.7%	17.5%	11.6%	15.7%	17.3%	5.9%	2.3%
Niskayuna	2.0%	.8%	2.8%	4.0%	7.0%	13.2%	11.6%	26.5%	13.7%	18.3%
Princetown	1.4%	3.2%	1.2%	9.9%	5.9%	14.7%	22.5%	22.1%	8.6%	10.5%
Rotterdam	3.7%	3.1%	8.2%	7.4%	11.6%	18.6%	17.7%	20.2%	6.4%	3.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey Selected Economic Characteristics, Table DP-03

Countywide, 18.4% of households make less than \$25,000 per year and 26.9% make less than \$35,000. These percentages increase dramatically within the City of Schenectady where 27.7% of households make less than \$25,000 annually and 39% of households earn less than \$35,000 per year. After the City of Schenectady, communities with the highest percent of households with income less than \$25,000 per year are the Village of Scotia (23.1%), Village of Delanson (21.5%) and Town of Rotterdam (15%).

Regional Economic Development Councils

The 10 Regional Economic Development Councils established by New York State in 2011 to implement long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions remain in place. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. Through New York State's annual **Consolidated Funding Application (CFA)** process, which incorporates review by the Regional Councils, applicants are considered for multiple funding sources for economic development projects through submission of one application. The **Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC)** represents eight counties: Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties.

CREDC Vision

"To foster an ecosystem in which the private sector, academia, and government work in harmony to stimulate economic growth. Locally collaborative. Globally competitive. Economically vibrant."

New York State's **Workforce Development Initiative**, established in 2019, utilizes a similar Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process to support strategic regional efforts that meet short-term workforce needs, address long-term industry needs, improve regional talent pipelines, enhance flexibility and adaptability of local workforce entities, and expand workplace learning opportunities.

Schenectady County Economic Development

Schenectady County's Economic Development and Planning Department provides advice and technical assistance to the County Manager, the Schenectady County Legislature, and municipal governments. The Schenectady County **Metroplex Development Authority** was established in 1998 as a public benefit corporation by the State of New York to institute a comprehensive, coordinated program of economic development activities in the Route 5 and Route 7 corridors of Schenectady County, with a focus on downtown Schenectady. The mission of the Schenectady Metroplex Development Authority is to:

- enhance the long-term economic and social vitality as well as overall quality of life in Schenectady County through a comprehensive, coordinated program of economic development within the Metroplex service district with particular emphasis on downtown Schenectady;
- attract, incentivize (when necessary) and leverage private investment through various forms of financial assistance;
- assist with site acquisition assemblage, development and revitalization; and
- provide cooperative technical assistance and support through its participation in projects, programs and other initiatives.

Opportunity Zone Community Development Program

New York State continues to participate in the federal Opportunity Zone community development program, offered through the **Tax Cuts and Job Acts of 2017**. An **Opportunity Zone** is an economically-distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated by the state and that nomination has been certified by the Secretary of the United States Treasury via delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service. In Schenectady County, three census tracts have been designated as Opportunity Zone areas; **all are within the City of Schenectady: 202, 210.01 and 335.**

XI. Poverty

The poverty rate for Schenectady County is 11.4%, with 25.1% of individuals (38,785 individuals) living in households with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level. The highest level of poverty in Schenectady County is found in the City of Schenectady. According to the 2015-2019 ACS Five-Year Estimates, the percent of people living below the poverty level in New York State is 14.1%. While this rate is higher than the rate of 11.4% reported for Schenectady County residents, both rates are significantly lower than the 19.4% of residents in the City of Schenectady that live below the poverty level. Of all Schenectady County residents living below the poverty level, 70% reside in the City of Schenectady. This is three percentage points less than 73% reported in SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment and eight percentage points less than 78% reported in SCAP's 2015 Community Needs Assessment, indicating a significant increase in the share of impoverished residents living in other Schenectady County communities.

Percent below Poverty Level by Municipality

Municipality	Below Poverty Level	Percent Below Poverty Level 2015-19 ACS (2021 CNA)	Percent Below Poverty Level 2012-16 ACS (2018 CNA)	Percent Below Poverty Level 2009-13 ACS (2015 CNA)
Schenectady County	17,271	11.4%	12.0%	12.7%
City of Schenectady	12,057	19.4%	21.1%	23.9%
Duanesburg	549	8.5%	5.1%	3.2%
Village of Delanson	48	14.4%	4.2%	4.9%
Glenville	1,659	5.8%	5.2%	4.7%
Village of Scotia	699	9.1%	7.7%	3.9%
Niskayuna	756	3.4%	5.4%	3.8%
Princetown	90	4.8%	3.9%	6.7%
Rotterdam	2,160	7.4%	6.0%	5.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table S1701

Age

When compared to Schenectady County's other municipalities (city and towns), the City of Schenectady has the largest percentage of individuals living in poverty in all age categories: children under 18 years (30.6%), adults ages 18 to 64 (17.2%) and residents 65 and over (12.3%). The municipalities with the highest percentage of total population in each age category living in poverty are:

- **Under 18 years:** City of Schenectady (30.6%), Duanesburg (13.6%) and Glenville (9.9%)
- **18 to 64 years:** City of Schenectady (17.2%), Duanesburg (6.9%) and Rotterdam (6.9%)
- **65 and over:** City of Schenectady (12.3%), Princetown (11.3%) and Rotterdam (6.4%)

Poverty by Age

Municipality	Under 18 years			18 to 64			65 and Over		
	Total	# Below Poverty Level	% In Poverty	Total	# Below Poverty Level	% In Poverty	Total	# Below Poverty Level	% In Poverty
Schenectady County	33,133	5,594	16.9%	92,782	9,789	10.6%	24,932	1,888	7.6%
City of Schenectady	13,054	3,996	30.6%	40,604	6,999	17.2%	8,612	1,062	12.3%
Duanesburg	1,599	218	13.6%	4,063	282	6.9%	815	49	6.0%
Glenville	6,480	642	9.9%	16,685	781	4.7%	5,650	236	4.2%
Niskayuna	5,659	142	2.5%	12,191	456	3.7%	4,209	158	3.8%
Princetown	322	16	5.0%	1,087	21	1.9%	467	53	11.3%
Rotterdam	6,039	580	9.6%	18,152	1,250	6.9%	5,179	330	6.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

Low-income Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool Age Children

The table below utilizes 2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) poverty data to estimate the number of birth to two, and three- and four-year old children in Schenectady County living in poverty. There are **9,031** children under age five in the county, **1,856** of which live in poverty. The highest concentration of children under age five in poverty, 70%, is found in the City of Schenectady. This percentage, however, is more than 17 percentage points lower than the 87.4% reported in SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment, and over 20 percentage points lower than the 92% reported in SCAP's 2015 Community Needs Assessment (does not include children in group quarters).

Children Under Age Five in Poverty

Municipality	Total # of Children		% < 5 in Poverty	Estimated # in Poverty	
	0-2 years	3 & 4 years		0-2 years	3 & 4 years
City of Schenectady	2,539	1,436	32.7%	830	470
Town of Duanesburg	223	167	42.1%	94	70
Town of Glenville	779	559	8.3%	65	46
Town of Niskayuna	846	540	1.2%	10	6
Town of Princetown	59	21	--	--	--
Town of Rotterdam	1,069	793	14.2%	152	113
Total:	5,515	3,516	-----	1,151	705

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Gender

There are 2,711 more females than males in Schenectady County living in poverty:

Poverty by Gender

	Male	Female
Total in Poverty	7,280	9,991
% of Total Males/Females	9.9%	12.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

Single Parent Families (female head of household): Poverty rates for single parent female head of household families are significantly higher than those for married couple families; 32.3% of Schenectady County’s single parent female head of household families with related children under 18 years old live in poverty. This percentage increases to 46.6% in the City of Schenectady and 57.3% in the Town of Duaneburg.

Percentage of Families Living in Poverty by Type and Municipality

Municipality	All Families	% in poverty	With Related Children < 18	% in poverty	Married Couple Families	% in poverty	With Related Children < 18	% in poverty	Families w/Female Head of Household	% in poverty	With Related Children < 18	% in poverty
Schenectady County	32,715	7.4%	13,838	13.2%	23,914	2.1%	8,676	2.8%	6,284	22.9%	3,768	32.3%
City of Schenectady	11,751	13.5%	5,017	24.9%	7,049	3.4%	2,304	6.3%	3,324	31.5%	1,957	46.6%
Duaneburg	1,476	5.0%	733	10.1%	1,205	.2%	534	.4%	161	41.6%	117	57.3%
Glenville	6,800	3.9%	2,889	7.5%	5,368	.8%	2,975	.7%	1,179	12.6%	759	17.5%
Niskayuna	5,515	1.5%	2,356	1.5%	4,844	1.3%	1,965	1.0%	485	3.3%	307	5.2%
Princetown	465	1.9%	131	3.1%	412	1.2%	117	0%	32	12.5%	14	28.6%
Rotterdam	6,708	6.1%	2,712	9.2%	5,063	2.9%	1,781	3.4%	1,103	14.4%	614	14.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1702

Race and Ethnicity

Schenectady County Poverty by Race: Percent in Poverty

	White	Black/African American	Native American/ Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Multiple Races
% in Poverty	8.0%	28.1%	17.1%	10.1%	42.9%	19.3%	25.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

At 42.9%, the race in Schenectady County with the highest poverty rate is Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, followed by the Black/African American population at 28.1%. Over 28% of the county’s Hispanic population lives in poverty, compared to less than 11% of the non-Hispanic population in poverty.



Poverty by Ethnicity Alone

Total Population Hispanic/Latino in Poverty	Total Population Not Hispanic/Latino in Poverty	Percent Hispanic/Latino Population in Poverty	Percent Not Hispanic/Latino Population in Poverty
3,048	14,223	28.4%	10.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

Minority populations continue to disproportionately live in the City of Schenectady. The poverty rate for Black/African Americans in the City of Schenectady is 31.7%, well over twice the rate of 13.1% for people who identify as White. At 38% and 33.6% respectively, the poverty rates for residents in the City of Schenectady who identify as Hispanic and Two or More Races are even higher.

Poverty Status in the Past 12 months, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin

Area	White			Black/African American		
	Total	# in Poverty	%	Total	# in Poverty	%
New York State	12,153,073	1,268,529	10.4%	2,951,917	621,618	21.1%
Schenectady County	114,886	9,168	8.0%	15,175	4,269	28.1%
City of Schenectady	34,537	4,539	13.1%	12,827	4,071	31.7%
Duanesburg	6,293	546	8.7%	48	2	4.2%
Village of Delanson	323	48	14.9%	7	0	0%
Glenville	27,340	1,431	5.2%	397	9	2.3%
Village of Scotia	7,231	668	9.2%	194	0	0%
Niskayuna	18,622	600	3.2%	508	21	4.1%
Princetown	1,868	86	4.6%	4	4	100%
Rotterdam	26,266	1,966	7.5%	1,391	162	11.6%
Area	Hispanic/Latino			Two or more races		
	Total	# in Poverty	%	Total	# in Poverty	%
New York State	3,635,757	808,858	22.2%	598,240	113,084	18.9%
Schenectady County	10,727	3,048	28.4%	7,241	1,860	25.7%
City of Schenectady	6,856	2,604	38.0%	4,940	1,660	33.6%
Duanesburg	436	1	.2%	91	0	0%
Village of Delanson	14	0	0%	0	0	0%
Glenville	1,196	331	27.7%	654	174	26.6%
Village of Scotia	422	283	67.1%	145	8	5.5%
Niskayuna	685	38	5.5%	552	12	2.2%
Princetown	0	0	0%	4	0	0%
Rotterdam	1,554	74	4.8%	1,000	14	1.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

Educational Attainment and Poverty: The more education residents have, the less likely they are to have incomes below the federal poverty level. While the percentage of residents in Schenectady County municipalities living in poverty that have not graduated from high school ranges from 3.9% up to 33.7%, with the percentage for four of the municipalities over 25%, the range for residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher living in poverty is much smaller (0% to 7%).

Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Over)

Area	Less than High School Graduate			High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)		
	Total	Below Poverty Level	%	Total	Below Poverty Level	%
New York State	1,738,871	486,352	28.0%	3,458,023	503,589	14.6%
Schenectady County	9,548	2,202	23.1%	30,883	3,650	11.8%
City of Schenectady	6,653	1,707	25.7%	14,721	2,377	16.1%
Duanesburg	205	8	3.9%	1,389	78	5.6%
Village of Delanson	18	6	33.3%	40	1	2.5%
Glenville	881	114	12.9%	5,009	326	6.5%
Village of Scotia	339	77	22.7%	1,421	165	11.6%
Niskayuna	234	70	29.9%	2,179	160	7.3%
Princetown	117	32	27.4%	510	42	8.2%
Rotterdam	1,458	271	18.6%	7,066	667	9.4%
Area	Some College, Associate's Degree			Bachelor's Degree or Higher		
	Total	Below Poverty Level	%	Total	Below Poverty Level	%
New York State	3,274,549	335,743	10.3%	4,962,602	243,168	4.9%
Schenectady County	30,721	2,846	9.3%	34,122	1,203	3.5%
City of Schenectady	12,502	1,935	15.5%	9,579	674	7.0%
Duanesburg	1,440	97	6.7%	1,015	23	2.3%
Village of Delanson	88	8	9.1%	61	1	1.6%
Glenville	6,084	292	4.8%	8,195	222	2.7%
Village of Scotia	1,648	40	2.4%	1,945	107	5.5%
Niskayuna	3,174	194	6.1%	9,642	167	1.7%
Princetown	439	0	0%	401	0	0%
Rotterdam	7,082	328	4.6%	5,290	117	2.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1701

Income and Disabilities: Individuals with disabilities are more likely to have low incomes. The differential in median income for residents with disabilities vs. those who are not disabled is substantial.

Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months by Disability Status by Gender for the Civilian Non-institutionalized Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings

	New York	Schenectady County
Median Earnings	\$39,911	\$36,065
With a disability	\$25,859	\$20,271
Male	\$29,741	\$22,073
Female	\$22,386	\$17,355
Without a disability	\$40,644	\$37,020
Male	\$46,085	\$42,951
Female	\$35,201	\$31,522

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

SSI (Supplemental Security Income): While many individuals with disabilities can support themselves through work, many cannot and must rely on public support. As of August 2021, **5,455** individuals in Schenectady County were receiving SSI. Maximum SSI benefit amounts for 2021, which include both federal and state SSI benefits, are shown below (not all recipients receive maximum benefit amount).

Maximum Monthly SSI Payments effective January 1, 2021

Category	Maximum
Individual Living Alone	\$881
Individual Living with Others (paying own expenses)	\$817
Individual Living with Others (receiving free or subsidized food & shelter)	\$552.34
Couple Living Alone	\$1,295
Couple Living with Others (paying own expenses)	\$1,237
Couple living with Others (receiving some amount of free or subsidized food & shelter)	\$840

Source: NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Living Wage: The 2020-2021 living wage for Schenectady County shows the hourly rate an individual must earn to support their family if they are the sole provider and working full-time (2,080 hours per year). The poverty rate is typically quoted as gross annual income. In the chart that follows, it has been converted to an hourly wage for the sake of comparison.

Schenectady County Hourly Living Wage: 2020-2021 Update

Hourly Wages	1 Adult	1 Adult, 1 Child	1 Adult, 2 Children	1 Adult, 3 Children	2 Adults (1 working)	2 Adults (1 working), 1 Child	2 Adults (1 working), 2 Children	2 Adults (1 working), 3 Children
Living Wage	\$15.12	\$31.42	\$40.18	\$21.79	\$23.79	\$28.47	\$32.16	\$34.53
Poverty Wage	\$6.13	\$8.29	\$10.44	\$12.60	\$8.29	\$10.44	\$12.60	\$14.75
NYS Minimum Wage (as of 12/31/20)	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50

Source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator

Income/Public Benefits: As reported in August 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, the number of SNAP, TANF and Safety Net Assistance recipients in Schenectady County continued to decrease, following steady increases from 2012 to 2014. While the number of TANF and Safety Net Recipients continued to decrease with the August 2020 Report, the total number of SNAP recipients rose slightly.

Schenectady County Public Benefits, August 2012 – 2020

Program	August 2012	August 2013	August 2014	August 2015	August 2016	August 2017	August 2018	August 2019	August 2020
SNAP Total Recipients	24,483	25,519	25,673	24,764	23,259	22,096	21,009	20,528	20,930
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Total Recipients	3,659	4,174	4,536	4,207	3,738	3,522	3,279	3,016	2,352
Safety Net (SN) Assistance Total Recipients	1,681	1,815	2,072	1,899	1,681	1,601	1,391	1,317	1,069
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Total Recipients	5,477	5,570	5,758	5,971	6,027	5,885	5,875	5,846	5,796

Source: NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

ALICE Report

ALICE is a United Way initiative to raise awareness of the challenges faced by low-income working families and to help initiate strategies and policies that alleviate them. ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed – households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). As reported in United Way's 2020 ALICE Report, **45%** of 55,262 households in Schenectady County "earn more than the Federal Poverty Level but less than the basic cost of living for the state (**ALICE Threshold**)".

2021 Self-Sufficiency Standard

The **Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York 2021**, prepared by the Center for Women’s Welfare at the University of Washington (March 2021), includes calculations for over 700 family types for all New York Counties. This standard is a measure of income adequacy based on the costs of the following basic needs for working families: housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, and miscellaneous items, as well as the cost of taxes and the impact of tax credits. It is more comprehensive than the federal government’s official poverty measure, based only on the cost of food:

“The Self-Sufficiency Standard is a unique measure of income adequacy that uses a modern, comprehensive, and detailed approach to determine what it takes for today’s families to make ends meet.”

The following table from this publication shows the 2021 Self-Sufficiency Standard for select family types in Schenectady County. It is followed by a comparison as a percentage of other benchmarks of income for two family types.

2021 Self-Sufficiency Standard for Schenectady County

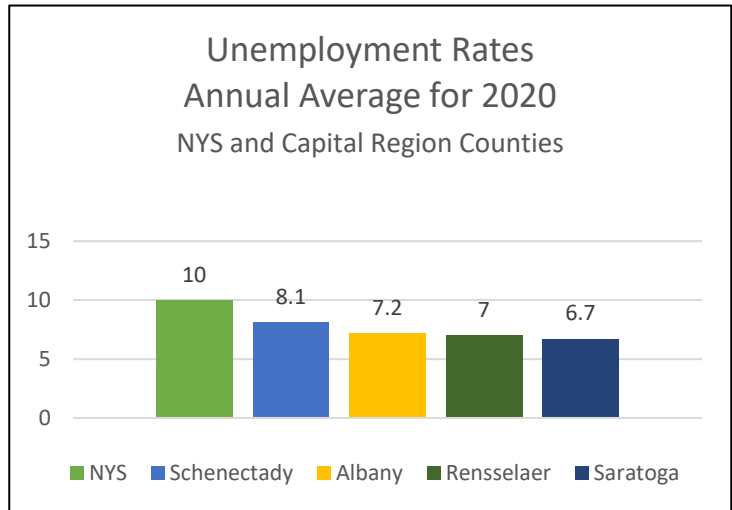
	Adult	Adult Preschooler	Adult Infant Preschooler	Adult Preschooler School-age	Adult School-age Teenager	2 Adults Infant	2 Adults Infant Preschooler	2 Adults Preschooler School-age
MONTHLY COSTS								
Housing	\$871	\$1,067	\$1,067	\$1,067	\$1,067	\$1,067	\$1,067	\$1,067
Child Care	\$0	\$1,028	\$2,103	\$1,638	\$610	\$1,075	\$2,103	\$1,638
Food	\$288	\$436	\$573	\$659	\$765	\$681	\$804	\$887
Transportation	\$313	\$322	\$322	\$322	\$322	\$617	\$617	\$617
Health Care	\$194	\$485	\$496	\$505	\$537	\$544	\$554	\$563
Miscellaneous	\$167	\$334	\$456	\$419	\$330	\$398	\$515	\$477
Taxes	\$378	\$719	\$1,108	\$871	\$558	\$861	\$1,192	\$1,006
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$75)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)
Child Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)	(\$333)	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)
SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE								
Hourly	\$12.56	\$23.72	\$32.34	\$28.68	\$20.90	\$14.28 per adult	\$18.24 per adult	\$16.54 per adult
Monthly	\$2,211	\$4,174	\$5,692	\$5,047	\$3,679	\$5,026	\$6,419	\$5,821
Annual	\$26,535	\$50,087	\$68,302	\$60,564	\$44,150	\$60,318	\$77,027	\$69,856
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly)	\$44	\$96	\$197	\$146	\$108	\$56	\$74	\$71

Self-Sufficiency Standard as Percentage of Other Benchmarks of Income

	SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR ONE ADULT + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE				SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR TWO ADULTS + ONE PRESCHOOLER + ONE SCHOOL-AGE			
	Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:			Annual Self-Sufficiency Standard	As Percentage of:		
		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income		Federal Poverty Guidelines	Minimum Wage	Median Family Income
Schenectady County	\$60,564	279%	229%	68%	\$69,856	267%	265%	70%

XII. Employment & Education

Unemployment: The annual unemployment rate for Schenectady County (8.1% for 2020), as reported by the New York State Department of Labor, was the highest within the four county Capital Region area including Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties.



Data for Schenectady County (2015-2019 ACS) with workforce implications includes:

- 9.7% of residents speak a language at home other than English
- 34.9% of residents over age 25 have only a high school diploma or less
- High level of poverty within the City of Schenectady (19.4%)

The New York State Department of Labor reports unemployment data for the following municipalities within Schenectady County. The only municipality with a rate higher than the county’s annual average for 2020 was the City of Schenectady:

- City of Schenectady – 10.7%
- Rotterdam – 7.2%
- Glenville – 6.2%

The following data from the New York State Department of Labor highlights the significant increase in unemployment associated with the COVID-19 pandemic:

Unemployment Rate			
	City of Schenectady	Schenectady County	New York State
2021 (first six months)	8%	6%	8.3%
2020	10.7%	8.1%	10%
2019	4.4%	3.7%	3.8%

Source: NYS Department of Labor

Education: As indicated in the chart that follows, the four-year graduation rate for the Schenectady City School District continues to be the lowest in the county. With regard to economically disadvantaged students, overall the increase in the number of economically disadvantaged students attending public schools outside the city continues to grow. Between the 2016-2017 and 2019-2020 school years, the percent of economically disadvantaged students in the Rotterdam-Mohonasen District increased by 5% (41% to 46%); in the Scotia-Glenville District it increased by 5% (29% to 34%); and in the Niskayuna District it increased by 4% (12% to 16%).

The New York State Department of Education defines economically disadvantaged students as “those who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs, such as the free or reduced-price lunch programs, Social Security Insurance (SSI), Food Stamps, Foster Care, Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If one student in a family is identified as low income, all students from that household (economic unit) may be identified as low income.”

2019-2020 New York State School Report Card Data

Student Group	Schenectady CSD	Niskayuna CSD	Duanesburg CSD	Rotterdam-Mohonasen CSD	Schalmont CSD	Scotia-Glenville CSD	Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake CSD
2016 Cohort Four – Year Graduation Rate – as of August 2020 (all students)	74% of 714	94% of 370	98% of 57	88% of 239	90% of 157	88% of 198	96% of 258
Total # of students in district	9,243	4,294	651	2,798	1,799	2,371	3,082
White	1,890 / 20%	2,952 / 69%	611 / 94%	2,130 or 76%	1,535 / 85%	2,127 or 90%	2,839 / 92%
Black/African American	2,718 / 29%	197 / 5%	6 / 1%	127 / 5%	35 / 2%	93 / 4%	30 / 1%
Multiracial	740 / 8%	206 / 5%	7 or 1%	185 / 7%	83 / 5%	4 / 0%	85 / 3%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	1,798 / 19%	695 / 16%	6 / 1%	99 / 4%	33 / 2%	36 / 2%	45 / 1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	17 / 0%	10 / 0%	0 / 0%	9 / 0%	5 / 0%	3 / 0%	1 / 0%
Hispanic or Latino	2,080 / 23%	234 / 5%	21 / 3%	248 / 9%	108 / 6%	108 / 5%	83 / 3%
English Language Learners	436 / 5%	118 / 3%	-----	37 / 1%	6 / 0%	9 / 0%	8 / 0%
Students with Disabilities	1,610 / 17%	483 / 11%	70 / 11%	388 / 11%	239 or 13%	355 / 15%	475 / 15%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	7,066 / 76%	708 / 16%	171 / 26%	1,282 / 46%	537 / 30%	802 / 34%	402 / 19%

Source: NYS Department of Education

As indicated above, the Schenectady City School District (SCSD) continues to have the lowest graduation rate of any district in the county. SCSD graduation rates by student group vary:

Student Group	% Grad Rate (2016 cohort as of August 2020)	Student Group	% Grad Rate
Female	80%	General Education Students	80%
Male	69%	Students with Disabilities	53%
Black/African American	72%	English Language Learners	43%
Hispanic	66%	Not Economically Disadvantaged	81%
White	76%	Economically Disadvantaged	71%

Source: NYS Department of Education

XIII. Housing & Homelessness

Housing

Housing Occupancy, Conditions and Affordability: In Schenectady County, the most recent five-year American Community Survey estimates indicate that 46% of all housing units are located in the City of Schenectady. The city also contains the largest percent (59.2%) of the county's vacant units. Of note is the fact that 73.4% of the city's housing stock was constructed prior to 1960, with 54.2% of the housing stock constructed prior to 1940. 2020 Census data indicates a slight increase in the total number of housing units in the county (70,794) with slight increases in every town and a slight decrease in the City of Schenectady, from 31,890 to 30,634.

Housing Occupancy

County	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
Schenectady County	69,615	54,302	15,313	2.0%	7.2%
City of Schenectady	31,890	22,824	9,066	3.4%	7.5%
Duanesburg	2,433	1,909	524	0.9%	0.0%
Glenville	13,072	10,606	2,466	1.3%	8.8%
Niskayuna	8,727	7,761	966	0.2%	9.7%
Princetown	854	648	206	3.3%	0%
Rotterdam	12,639	10,554	2,085	2.4%	3.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table DP04

Current Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data published by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, which demonstrates extent of housing problems and housing needs by income bracket, is based on the Census Bureau’s 2013 – 2017 American Community Survey:

- 53,825 occupied housing units in Schenectady County are inhabited by 36,520 homeowner and 17,305 renter households (32.2% rental households). In the City of Schenectady, the percentage of rental units is higher than countywide; 22,810 occupied units include 11,840 homeowner units and 10,975 rental units (48.1% rental units).
- The percentage of households in the City of Schenectady with incomes at 80% or below the HUD Area Median Family Income (61.2%) is significantly higher than the percentage of Schenectady County households with incomes below 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income (45.6%).
- 29.8% of all households in Schenectady County are cost-burdened, defined as over 30% of income expended on housing related costs. In the City of Schenectady, 37.7% of households are cost-burdened. Approximately 48.6% of renters in the county and 51.8% of renters in the city are cost-burdened. Comparatively, 21.0% of homeowners in the county and 24.8% of homeowners in the city are cost-burdened.
- 77.1% of the lowest income households in Schenectady County – 6,135/7,960 households with incomes at or below 30% of the HUD Area Median Family Income – experience at least one of four “housing problems”, defined as incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than one person per room, and cost burden greater than 30%. The majority of these lowest income households, 65.4%, are located in the City of Schenectady.
- Renters in the City of Schenectady are more likely to experience housing problems than homeowners. 52.7% of renters experience housing problems, and 32.0% of renters experience severe housing problems. 25.8% of homeowners experience housing problems and 10.6% of homeowners experience at least one of four “severe housing problems”, defined as incomplete kitchen facilities, incomplete plumbing facilities, more than one person per room and cost-burden greater than 50%.

As a result of the age of the City of Schenectady’s housing stock, lead-based paint hazards have been prevalent in many dwellings. The city and county continue to work collaboratively on this issue, utilizing funds received through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to address lead hazards; most recently, in 2020 the City was awarded additional federal funds, in the amount of \$3,406,500 million, to address this issue in 203 housing units.

Fair Market Rents (FMR) are estimated annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

FY2021 Fair Market Rents (FMR) for Schenectady County & Albany-Schenectady-Troy MSA and Hourly Wage to Afford a Fair Market Rent

	Efficiency	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	4 Bedrooms
FMR	\$809	\$912	\$1,117	\$1,389	\$1,515
Hourly Wage Needed for FMR	\$15.56	\$17.54	\$21.48	\$26.71	\$29.13

Sources: HUD and National Low Income Housing Coalition

The hourly wage needed to afford an apartment at FMR defines affordable as not more than 30% of gross income spent on gross housing costs. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's **2021 Out of Reach** report, the maximum affordable monthly rent for Schenectady County families with an annual income at 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) is \$717 per month. The 2021 FMR for a two-bedroom unit in Schenectady County is \$1,117. A family in Schenectady County would need to earn at least \$44,680 per year, with an hourly wage of \$21.48, to afford a two-bedroom rental unit at Fair Market Rent. However, the county's hourly mean renter wage is only \$14.62.

Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority (SMHA): SMHA operates seven conventional public housing developments in the City of Schenectady, managing over 1,000 units of public housing. Three properties (Schonowee Village, Ten Eyck Apartments and Lincoln Heights) serve the elderly and disabled, while the four other properties (Yates Village, Steinmetz Homes, MacGathan Townhouses and Maryvale Apartments) serve families with children. SMHA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program serves 1,387 households, helping residents afford apartments by paying a portion of their rent directly to the landlord on their behalf. There is a long waitlist for this program, which is not currently accepting applications. Most recently, applications for the waitlist were accepted electronically from April 7, 2020 through April 10, 2020. During these three days, SMHA received 1,751 applications.

2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing: The City of Schenectady's 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing found the following impediments to fair housing in the city:

- Large stock of aging, substandard and/or inadequately maintained housing;
- Presence of lead hazards in a significant number of City housing units;
- Limited number of single family units priced for low to moderate income households;
- Significant number of abandoned and vacant properties causing blight, limited new housing development due to high cost of demolition for replacement housing; and
- High tax burden on residents.

As highlighted in the 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing: "According to HUD, a neighborhood can be a R/ECAP (Racial or Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty) if it has a poverty rate that exceeds 40% or is three or more times the average tract poverty rate for the metropolitan/micropolitan area, whichever threshold is lower. Census tracts with this extreme poverty that satisfy the racial/ethnic concentration threshold are deemed as R/ECAPs." The analysis identifies three census tracts within the city that meet the criteria to be considered a R/ECAP: 209, 210.01 and 210.02.

No action has ever been taken against the City of Schenectady with regard to fair housing. As stated in the analysis recommendations, the city plans to continue to support existing initiatives and further Fair Housing opportunity through:

- Incentives which encourage affirmative housing actions among lenders, realtors, and landlords;
- Continued efforts to eradicate the presence of lead hazards in city homes;
- Land Bank activities to reduce the number of vacant and abandoned properties causing blight in city neighborhoods; and
- Continuation of the city's support of affordable housing development, city and partner led homebuyer and homeowner programs, and the development of additional initiatives that target the impediments identified in this report and create employment and transportation linkages.

Affordable Housing Development and Rehabilitation: Local entities that focus on affordable housing development and rehabilitation activities in the City of Schenectady and Schenectady County include **Better Community Neighborhoods, Inc. (BCNI)** and **Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County**. BCNI is the result of a 2020 merger between two New York State-designated Neighborhood Preservation Companies, Community Land Trust of Schenectady and Better Neighborhoods, Inc. Additional entities currently or recently involved in housing development efforts to increase affordable and supportive housing opportunities in Schenectady’s distressed neighborhoods include DePaul Properties, The Community Builders’ (TCB’s), Home Leasing and Pennrose.

The **Land Reutilization Corporation of the Capital District (Capital Region Land Bank)** works to promote the redevelopment and revitalization of derelict properties in the City of Schenectady and Schenectady County (as well as the City of Amsterdam). The Capital Region Land Bank’s mission is to strengthen neighborhoods by mitigating blight. The land bank’s operational objectives include:

- Identify and remove environmental factors that are considered blighting influences on a neighborhood such as condemned, burned and otherwise unsalvageable buildings, abandoned cars, trash and debris.
- Work with cross-regional and local municipal governments to assure enforcement of property maintenance standards and the development of affordable housing and commercial activity which will foster enhanced economic development.

The threat of eviction for low-income renters is a significant concern, particularly in the City of Schenectady. Many Schenectady residents are unstably housed. While there has been a moratorium on evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the past 5 years there have been an average of 2,858 evictions filed in City Court annually, with an average of 917 evictions executed each year.

The City of Schenectady’s **2020 – 2024 Consolidated plan**, which outlines strategies for utilization of federal CDBG, HOME and ESG funds allocated to the city, includes three goals, one of which (in bold below) focuses specifically on housing:

- 1) **Goal: Housing Opportunities**
- 2) Goal: Expand Economic and Workforce Development
- 3) Goal: Strengthen Local Neighborhoods

The city’s housing opportunity objectives include:

- **Support Housing Rehabilitation** – Provide loan and grant programs for homeowners and landlords in key areas of the city to remedy blighted conditions.
- **Emergency Housing Services** – Work with social service organizations that provide rental assistance, utility assistance, and emergency shelter to residents to reduce homelessness throughout the city.
- **Provide Wraparound Services for Public Housing Residents** – Assist with housing support services (case management) related to mental health, addiction, independent living skills, employment and education.
- **Address Dilapidated Properties** – Support neighborhood stabilization, technical assistance and code enforcement activities. Provide home repair assistance to homeowners as a preventative measure. Provide funding to manage vacant city owned properties and to assure they do not become health and safety risks.
- **Offer Homeownership Incentives** – Support programs that enable homeownership, including down payment assistance, low interest loans and housing counseling.

Homelessness

The most recent annual Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) report available, for the federal fiscal year of 2020 (October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020), indicates that 2,227 individuals in 1,641 households in Schenectady County received one or more homeless-related supportive services, including 533 children under the age of 18. From the report:

- 304 households (18% of all households served) were chronically homeless.
- 1,235 people were served in emergency shelter or transitional housing programs, with an additional 992 served in rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing programs.
- 1,111 households served reported conditions that met the criteria to be considered a disability.
- 135 children under the age of five spent time in emergency or transitional housing arrangements.

According to the **Point in Time (PIT)** count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January in Schenectady County, for the past five years, the following number of people were either in an emergency shelter, a transitional housing situation or unsheltered:

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
274	393	372	434	266

The following compares detailed PIT data over the past three years:

Point-in-Time Overview					
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
2021	189	57	246	20	266
2020	363	46	409	25	434
2019	300	50	350	22	372

The New York State Department of Education reports that during the 2019-2020 school year, 469 children enrolled in a Schenectady County school district experienced homelessness at some point during the school year. 394 of these children were enrolled at the Schenectady City School District.

Schenectady County's **Homeless Services Planning Board (HSPB)** governs Schenectady County's Continuum of Care (coordinating body for federal funding for homeless related services). The HSPB works to identify community needs and service gaps for the target population, maintain an awareness of available supports and services, and oversee a coordinated entry process for households seeking support through a Schenectady County Continuum of Care (CoC)-funded entity. SCAP maintains a leadership role on Schenectady's Homeless Services Planning Board (HSPB) and participates on multiple HSPB committees. The HSPB's current Strategic Plan, approved by the HSPB Board of Directors in May 2018, includes the following goals:

- **Goal #1:** Expand community engagement among service providers county-wide to increase and enhance service delivery at a systems level.

- **Goal #2:** Develop resources to support increasing the supply of Permanent Supportive Housing units, and continue to develop effective access to these units and Intensive Case Management by prioritizing the most vulnerable.
- **Goal #3:** Increase development of and access to quality affordable housing.
- **Goal #4:** Engage additional partners and seek additional resources to identify and provide necessary support services to homeless households and previously homeless households.
- **Goal #5:** Identify methods to prevent and divert homelessness when appropriate.
- **Goal #6:** Ensure a strong, sustainable, and comprehensive community system of services for homeless households, from providing appropriate emergency housing to permanent housing options.
- **Goal #7:** Advocate as a community to address barriers to success in meeting the above goals.

XIV. Early Childhood

Child Care & Development Programs/Education

According to **The Capital Region’s Child Care Landscape** (2019, Brightside Up), licensed/registered child care capacity in Schenectady County includes:

	Number of Programs	Enrollment Capacity
Child Care Centers	38	3,133
Family Child Care Homes	57	456
Group Family Child Care Homes	43	670
School Age Programs	21	1,062

None of Schenectady’s Child Care Centers or School Age Programs offer care during non-traditional hours. Only 8 of the Group Family Child Care Homes and 10 of the Family Child Care Homes offer care during non-traditional hours. Twenty-four Census Tracts in Schenectady County have been designated as child care deserts, defined as areas with an insufficient supply of licensed child care; this represents 59% of all Census Tracts in the county. Overall, there is a shortage of infant and toddler care available in Schenectady County. Since 2018, the number of registered family child care/school-age programs in Albany, Schenectady and Rensselaer Counties has declined by 131, representing a decrease of 69%.

According to Brightside Up’s **Restoring the Grid** (2019):

- 6,000 children age five or under in Schenectady County lack consistent regulated care.
- There is an average of 10 children per regulated child care slot in the county.
- 700 children ages five or under do not have a well care visit.
- There is only one pediatrician for every 2,412 children.

Pre-Kindergarten: There are four school districts in Schenectady County that currently have New York State funding for pre-kindergarten programs: Schenectady City School District (SCSD), Rotterdam-Mohonasen Central School District, Duanesburg Central School District and Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District. According to the current allocations lists from the New York State Department of Education, these districts have funds allotted for the following slots:

- **Schenectady City School District (SCSD):** 40 full-day slots for three year old children, 242 part-day slots for four year old children, and 341 half-day slots for four year old children.
- **Rotterdam-Mohonasen Central School District:** 66 full-day slots for four year old children
- **Duanesburg Central School District:** 26 full-day slots for four year old children.
- **Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District:** 70 full-day slots for four year old children.

There continues to be room for expansion within SCSD's pre-kindergarten program, accompanied by the need to focus on the coordination of program waitlists to ensure accuracy of waitlist information and maximum benefits for eligible children through incorporation of **continuity of care** considerations. SCAP's Head Start program has a large waiting list for three-year old Head Start slots, indicating that future pre-school expansion efforts should consider incorporating more pre-kindergarten options for three-year old children. This would enable SCAP's Early Learning component to maximize support for the city's low-income families.

Head Start and Early Head Start: As Schenectady County's Head Start provider, SCAP is funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services for 287 center-based and 10 home-based slots. As an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP) grantee, SCAP works with YWCA Northeastern NY and licensed group family day care providers in the City of Schenectady to provide EHS-CCP services for 62 children and their families (32 additional SCAP EHS-CCP slots are located in Albany County). Parsons Child & Family Center is funded for 94 Early Head Start slots (72 center-based and 22 home-based) in Schenectady County.

Education: The Prekindergarten, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Schenectady County collaborate to promote an aligned approach to early learning and smooth transitions between programs. In the City of Schenectady, SCAP, Parsons Child & Family Center, YWCA Northeastern NY, Rosa Venerini, Schenectady Day Nursery, and EHS-CCP group family day care providers utilize the Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system to address early learning needs. Professional development opportunities related to early learning are aligned.

Home-Based Services: Home-based services available in Schenectady County include the 10 home-based slots available through SCAP's Head Start Program, the 22 home-based Early Head Start services available through Northern Rivers (Parsons Child & Family Center) and Healthy Schenectady Families (HSF). HSF is a free and voluntary home visiting program for pregnant women and parents of infants and toddlers. HSF services, which may continue for three to five years, provide support, nurturing, and education to help parents with the changes and needs of their family that can accompany the birth of a child. HSF provides home visitors in collaboration with Schenectady County Public Health Services and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schenectady County.

Project LAUNCH: In 2019, SCAP received a Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health (Project LAUNCH) grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The goal of this program is to prepare children to thrive in school and beyond. Service components include: behavioral/mental health assessments and screenings, intervention and treatment, parent education and training, and professional development and support for staff in child-serving organizations. SCAP is working closely with project partners to:

- Screen 500 individuals for mental health or related interventions annually (2,500 over five-years).
- Refer 300 individuals annually to mental health or related services with 250 receiving services.
- Provide 75 staff in early education settings with training in relevant areas each year (150 over project period).

Ellis Medicine, SCAP’s primary treatment partner, uses multiple evidence-based practices to provide screening and treatment support. Additional project partners include:

- **Early Learning Providers:** Brightside Up, YWCA Northeastern NY, Schenectady Day Nursery, and two Group Family Day Care Providers
- **Schenectady County Public Health Services:** Healthy Schenectady Families, Early Intervention and WIC
- **Hometown Health Centers:** Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)

Minimum Wage Impact: New York State has adopted a minimum wage plan that is having a significant impact on Head Start and Early Head Start programs in this state. While the federal minimum wage remains \$7.25 per hour, as of December 31, 2020, the New York State minimum wage for the geographic area that includes Schenectady County is \$12.50 (with different hourly rates for workers in the fast food industry and those who receive tips). Minimum wage increases are scheduled to continue annually until the rate reaches \$15 per hour. These increases will affect the ability of low-income working families to meet income eligibility for enrollment in Head Start and Early Head Start.

Child Care Subsidies: The eligibility threshold for low-income child care subsidies through Schenectady County’s Department of Social Services is 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Assistance is also provided for eligible working families through the Workforce Development Institute’s (WDI’s) Child Care Subsidy Program. To qualify, each parent in the household must work a minimum of 25 hours a week, have children under 13 years of age, and have a household income that falls within the following income guidelines (effective June 1, 2021 – May 31, 2022):

Eligibility Threshold for Child Care Subsidies

Family Size	Maximum Income
2	\$47,905
3	\$60,390
4	\$72,875
5	\$85,360
6	\$97,854

Expectant Mothers

The most recent vital statistics available through the New York State Department of Health indicate a total of **2,550 pregnancies** in Schenectady County, in the following age groups:

Pregnancies in Schenectady County: 2018								
Total	< 18	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45+
2,550	56	106	522	725	718	344	70	8

Source: NYS Department of Health

157 pregnancies in teens between the ages of 15 and 19 equated to a rate of 33.3 per 1,000, which is significantly higher than the NYS rate of 23.3. Only three other counties in the state – Bronx, Chemung and Jefferson Counties – had higher rates. The overall pregnancy rate for women of all ages in Schenectady County was 86.1/1,000; this was notably higher than the NYS rate of 79.3. The teen birth rate for Schenectady County for 2016 – 2018 (15.5/1,000) was significantly higher than the NYS rate (1.9/1,000).



Teen Births

	Age < 15	Age 15 to 17	Age 18 to 19	Total Live Births	Total Births to Teens	% Births to Teens
Schenectady County	2	18	59	1,768	79	4.47%
New York State	57	1,641	5,191	225,162	6,889	3.06%

Source: NYS Department of Health (2018)

Foster Care

In 2020 there were 1,185 reports of child abuse regarding children in Schenectady County; 458 of these reports were indicated. **141 children** were **admitted to foster care**, with a total of 209 in care at some point during the year. The number of children in foster care equates to a rate of 5.0/1,000, higher than the average rate of 3.7 for the 15 New York State counties in the comparison group established by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to permit meaningful comparison between counties with similar child welfare populations. Sixty (**60**) of the children admitted to care in 2020 were **age five or under**, with 78 of the children in care during the year belonging to this age group.

Disabilities & Early Intervention

Preschool Special Education and Early Intervention services in Schenectady County are coordinated through the county's Children with Special Needs Program. To be eligible for **Early Intervention** services, children must be under 3 years of age and have a confirmed disability or established developmental delay, as defined by New York State, in one or more of the following areas of development: physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, and/or adaptive. **Preschool Special Education** services are available for children ages three to five who are approved by their individual school district's Committee on Preschool Special Education as eligible for services in accordance with Part 200 of the New York State Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. During the 2020-2021 program year, **38** of the 125 children between the ages of 3 and 5 served through SCAP's Head Start program (30%) had an **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**, indicating that they had been determined eligible to receive Preschool Special Education and related services. During the 2019-2020 program year, **67** of the 312 children served (21.5%) had an **IEP**.

According to the 2019-20 NYS School Report Cards, public school districts with students in Schenectady County provided **Preschool Special Education** services for a total of **361** children:

District	Preschool Students with Disabilities: 2019-20
Burnt Hills- Ballston Lake Central School District (CSD)	45
Duanesburg CSD	6
Niskayuna CSD	49
Rotterdam-Mohonasen CSD	46
Schalmont CSD	21
Schenectady City School District	152
Scotia-Glenville CSD	42
Total	361

Source: NYS School Report Cards

The New York State Department of Health reports that in 2019, .8% of children in Schenectady County under the age of 1 year, and 3.7% of children under the age of three received Early Intervention support. At the estimated number of 5,515 children under age three in Schenectady County (2015-2019 ACS), 3.7% is equal to approximately 204 children receiving Early Intervention support. Seven (7) of the 84 children enrolled in SCAP's Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships program during the 2020-2021 program year had an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Family Schedules

Most families seeking early learning services from SCAP are single parent families; 68% of Head Start families and 88% of EHS-CCP families are headed by single parents (2020-2021 program year). Seventy percent (70%) of families served by SCAP Head Start during the 2020-2021 program year had at least one caregiver employed. EHS-CCP services provide full-day, full-year support to accommodate work schedules. Head Start center-based slots are full-day, with both extended day and summer program options to accommodate family schedules.

XV. Health & Nutrition/Food Insecurity

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's **2021 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps** program, Schenectady County is ranked in the lower middle range of all counties in New York for Health Outcomes and in the higher middle range for health factors. The county ranks **40** out of New York State's 62 counties for **Overall Health**, which considers length and quality of life. The county's ranking for **Health Factors**, which includes health behaviors, clinical care, social & economic factors, and physical environment is **21**.

As reported by the New York State Department of Health, the leading cause of death in Schenectady County, for each year from 2009 through 2018 has been heart disease, followed by cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases and cerebrovascular disease. The fifth leading cause of death has primarily alternated between diabetes and Alzheimer's Disease, with unintentional injury identified as the fifth leading cause during one of the years (2016).

During SCAP's most recent agency-wide reporting year, 408 (5.6%) out of 7,243 customers did not have health insurance. County-wide, 4.8% of residents are uninsured. Approximately 18% of SCAP customers had one or more disability. For the 2020-2021 program year, 88% of all children ages zero to five enrolled in SCAP's Head Start and EHS-CCP programs were up-to-date on a schedule of preventative and primary health care, and 97% of children had an ongoing source of continuous accessible health care.

Health Insurance

Area	Population Under Age 65	Insured	Uninsured	Percent Uninsured
Schenectady County	125,776	119,744	6,032	4.8%

Source: 2019 Small Area Health Insurance Estimates

There are 3.45 Physicians, Physician Assistants/Specialist Assistants per 1,000 persons in Schenectady County; the statewide average is 4.69 per 1,000 persons. (US Census Bureau American Community Survey & NYS Education Department, 2020)

The Healthy Capital District Initiative's **2019 Capital Region Community Health Needs Assessment** includes summary health needs information for Schenectady County:

Chronic Disease

- Schenectady County adult asthma prevalence of 12.9% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (10.4%);
- Schenectady's asthma emergency department visit rate (56.7/10,000), and ED visit rate for the 1-4 year old population (122.6) were higher than NYS excl. NYC (47.6, 105.8);
- Hamilton Hill had 5.2 times the asthma ED visit rate and 2.1 times the asthma hospitalization rate as NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady's adult smoking rate of 19.9% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (17.0%) but a slight decrease from its rate in 2013-14 (20.3%);
- The County's CLRD (chronic lower respiratory disease) ED visit rate (116.2/10,000), hospitalization rate (24.4) and CLRD mortality rate (39.7/100,000) rate were higher than NYS excl. NYC (71.9, 23.7, and 35.0);
- Hamilton Hill had 5 times the CLRD ED visit rate, while City/Stockade and had 2.7 times the CLRD hospitalization rate compared to NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady County's adult obesity rate of 28.5% (30,744 adults), and child and adolescent obesity rate of 18.8% (4,725 children) were both higher than NYS excl. NYC (27.5%, 17.3%);
- Schenectady County adult diabetes prevalence of 9.0% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (8.5%);
- Schenectady's diabetes mortality rate of 18.3/100,000 was higher than NYS excl. NYC (15.3);
- The County's diabetes short-term complication hospitalization rate (5.2/10,000) was higher than NYS excl. NYC (4.1);
- Hamilton Hill neighborhood had 6.5 times the diabetes ED rates, and 3 times the diabetes hospitalization rates compared to NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady's heart attack hospitalization rate of 18.0/10,000 was higher than NYS excl. NYC (14.8);
- The County's congestive heart failure hospitalization (21.6/10,000) and mortality (19.9/100,000) rates were higher than NYS excl. NYC (21.4, and 16.9);
- Schenectady's stroke hospitalization (27.0/10,000) and mortality (31.2/100,000) rates were higher than NYS excl. NYC (23.1, and 28.6);
- Hamilton Hill neighborhood had 1.4 times the coronary heart disease hospitalization rate, 1.8 times the congestive heart failure hospitalization rate, and 1.6 times the stroke hospitalization rate compared to NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady's colorectal screening rate of 76.2% was better than NYS excl. NYC (69.7%), while the county's colorectal cancer mortality rate (13.1/100,000) was slightly higher than NYS excl. NYC (12.9);
- Schenectady's mammography screening rates were lower than NYS excl. NYC for women 50-74 years of age (78.6% vs 79.2%);
- Schenectady County had higher female breast cancer incidence (144.8/100,000) and late stage incidence (51.5) than NYS excl. NYC (139.5, 43.0).

Healthy and Safe Environment

- Schenectady's incidence rate of elevated blood lead levels (10+ug/dl) in children under 6 years of age of 14.9/1,000 was over twice as high as NYS excl. NYC (6.0);
- The County's lead screening rates for children 9-17 months (76.9%) and 2 screens by 36 months (59.2%) were both higher than NYS excl. NYC (71.7%, 55.9%);
- The percent of Schenectady's low income population with low access to a supermarket of 5.72% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (3.93%);

- Schenectady's assault ED visit (62.1/10,000) and hospitalization (3.1) rates were higher than NYS excl. NYC (35.0, 2.2);
- Hamilton Hill neighborhood had 6.3 times the assault ED visits and 5.7 times the assault hospitalization rates compared to NYS excl. NYC.

Healthy Women, Infants, and Children

- Schenectady's teen (15-17 years) pregnancy rate of 21.5/1,000 was markedly higher than NYS excl. NYC (9.9), but has decreased 35% from 2009 to 2016;
- Hamilton Hill neighborhood's teen pregnancy (15-19 years) was 5.5 times higher NYS excl. NYC; Schenectady County had a slightly higher late or no prenatal care rate (4.6% compared to NYS excl. NYC (4.4%);
- Schenectady's rate of premature births (< 37 weeks gest.) of 9.8% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (9.1%);
- The County's rate of low birthweight (< 2.5 kg.) of 8.8% was higher than NYS excl. NYC (7.7%);
- Schenectady County's infant mortality rate of 9.1/1,000 live births was higher than NYS excl. NYC (5.0);
- Hamilton Hill neighborhood had 1.4 times the rate of premature and 2 times the rate of low birthweight births compared to NYS excl. NYC;
- For Schenectady's children (0-21 years) on public insurance, the well-child visit rate of 67.7% having the recommended number of visits was lower than NYS excl. NYC (72.7%).

Infectious Disease

- Schenectady's gonorrhea case rates in the 15-44 year population of 418.5/100,000 for females and 321.0 for males were markedly higher than NYS excl. NYC (197.1 and 230.0);
- Schenectady's chlamydia case rate for women 15-44 years of 1943/100,000 was higher than NYS excl. NYC (1352); with a 25% increase from 2009 to 2013;
- The County's gonorrhea rate increased 130% and the chlamydia rate 25% from 2013 to 2017;
- Schenectady's 65 + years population had a lower influenza vaccination rate (55.5%) than NYS excl. NYC (59.6%).

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- About 14.9% of adult Schenectady residents indicated that they had 14+ poor mental health days in the past month, and higher than NYS excl. NYC (11.2%);
- Schenectady's mental disease and disorder ED visit rate (235.8/10,000), and hospitalization rate (97.1/10,000) were higher than NYS excl. NYC (147.8, 64.1);
- Schenectady's suicide mortality rate of 11.7/100,000 was higher than NYS excl. NYC (9.6), but a 7% decrease since 2011-13;
- The self-inflicted injury ED visit rate for Schenectady residents 15+ years of age of 12.6/10,000, and self-inflicted injury hospitalization rate of 9.5/10,000 were higher than NYS excl. NYC (7.1, and 5.3);
- City/Stockade neighborhood had 4.8 times the mental disease and disorder ED visit rates, and 5.2 times the mental disease and disorder hospitalization rates than NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady residents had higher rates of opioid overdose mortality (20.8/100,000), and opioid overdose ED visits (81.2) compared to NYS excl. NYC (19.4, 79.7);
- Schenectady County's opioid overdose mortality rate increased over 200%, and the ED visit rate increased 160% from 2013 to 2017;
- Hamilton Hill had 2.7 times the opiate-related ED visit rate and opiate-related hospitalization rate than NYS excl. NYC;
- Schenectady's cirrhosis mortality rate (9.1/10,000) was higher than NYS excl. NYC (7.2).

As selected by the **Schenectady Prevention Agenda Prioritization Work Group** for the 2019 Capital Region Community Health Needs Assessment, prevention priority areas for Schenectady County remain the same as those chosen by the Schenectady Coalition for a Healthy Community as focus areas through 2018:

- I. PRIORITY AREA: **Prevent Chronic Diseases**
Focus Area: Tobacco Prevention
- II. PRIORITY AREA: **Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders**
Focus Area: Mental and Substance Use Disorders Prevention

Nutrition/Food Insecurity

In 2019, 23.2% (7,771) of all children up to age 18 in Schenectady County received SNAP benefits. This was slightly higher than the statewide rate of 21.5%. 9,732 children in grades K – 12 received free or reduced-price school lunches (*Kids' Well-Being Indicators Clearinghouse*). SCAP assisted 389 individuals access SCAP benefits during the most recent agency-wide reporting year.

From Feeding America's **Map the Meal Gap** study:

"Food insecurity refers to USDA's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food-insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time. Food insecurity may reflect a household's need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods."

In 2019, 10.3% of Schenectady County residents, 16,020 people, experienced food insecurity. Estimated eligibility information for these 16,020 residents indicated that 38% had income levels above the 200% poverty threshold.

The **Greater Capital Region Food System Assessment** published by Capital Roots in February 2021 examined four food related sectors: consumption, distribution, processing and production. The two top recommendations resulting from the research conducted were:

- **Equity:** Build community food security by ensuring healthy food access at retail outlets for all residents.
- **Economic Resilience:** Grow the local food economy by building capacity in wholesale market channels in the region to purchase more local food.

XVI. COVID-19

Schenectady County Public Health Services maintains a COVID-19 dashboard on the county's website that update each weekday. Data as of November 4, 2021 at 8:00pm indicated the following for the county:

Total Confirmed Cases: 17,247
 Deaths: 183
 Active Cases: 399
 Residents Hospitalized: 34
 Residents in Isolation or Quarantine: 940
 Recoveries: 16,592
 Total Vaccinations (first dose): 16,990
 Total Number of Tests Administered: 540,618

The county hosts weekly vaccination PODs in multiple locations, including at SCAP's primary resource center location.

As an early response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the **Schenectady County COVID-19 Emergency Response Coalition** was a coordinated effort between county government services and community stakeholders. The coalition operated a hotline and provided emergency food and basic supplies for residents, primarily for residents under quarantine or isolation, seniors, and others at high-risk unable to provide for their basic needs. Representatives from the County Department of Social Services assisted with shelter, temporary assistance programs and Medicaid issues. Members of the Schenectady County COVID-19 Emergency Response Coalition included: Bethesda House, Better Community Neighborhoods, Boys & Girls Club, Capital Roots, City Mission, Food Pantries for the Capital District, Foundation for Ellis, Habitat for Humanity, Hometown Health, Mohawk Opportunities, Peter Young Housing, Industry & Treatment, Regional Food Bank, Safe Inc., Salvation Army, Save Our Streets, Schenectady ARC, SCAP, Schenectady City School District, Schenectady County, Schenectady JCC, Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority, Schenectady Community Ministries, Schenectady Foundation, Scotia Relief, Union College, YMCA, YWCA, and Animal Protective Foundation. The Schenectady Foundation launched a **Rebuilding Families Fund** and continues to provide financial resources to help keep people safely in their homes, while getting them the food and supplies they need.

Weekly, and sometimes daily coordination of the Coalition members resulted in a streamlined, efficient and non-duplicative response to Schenectady County's emergency needs. As of August 16, 2021, SCAP had provided 11,156 service supports and distributed \$416,510 to assist with resident needs. As a key member of the Coalition and leader of Schenectady's Community Resource Network, SCAP was, and continues to be, responsible for providing more in-depth assessment of individual and family needs beyond the emergency food, hygiene and household products provided through the Response Hotline. COVID-19 assistance in Schenectady County remains coordinated, with the emergency coalition continuing to operate as "**One Schenectady**" to ensure maximum support without duplication of resources.

Unemployment claims in Schenectady County and New York State's Capital Region experienced large increases as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NYS Department of Labor's online filing system experienced multiple issues as a result of unprecedented increases statewide. SCAP's employment services component has provided support for individuals submitting claims. The component also developed a distance learning platform to support the provision of online career readiness instruction; this platform continues to operate.

As a result of COVID-19, SCAP created new ways to operate safely, initially utilizing a remote workforce while at the same time responding effectively to community needs. Significant IT related work was undertaken to promote remote customer interaction. All SCAP programs have remained operational, fully staffed and serving customers throughout the pandemic. An agency-wide, integrated online registration system was created, providing customers with 24/7 access to all SCAP services. While SCAP's gradual transition back to a full onsite presence at multiple program sites was completed by the end of March 2021, the virtual opportunities created remain in use as viable options for agency customers on a long-term basis.

XVII. Other Community/Social Service Need Indicators

There are multiple other indicators which influence the need for a range of support services in Schenectady County.

Ability to Speak English

A significant number of residents in Schenectady County speak a language other than English, 36.1% of which speak English less than very well. The majority of residents that speak English less than very well (60.2%) reside in the City of Schenectady.

Language Spoken at Home and Ability to Speak English

Subject	Schenectady County	City of Schenectady
Population 5 years and over	145,804	61,335
Speak language other than English	14,085 / 9.7%	7,638 / 12.5%
Speak English less than "very well"	5,079 / 3.5%	3,058 / 5.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, DP02

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

There are a notable number of grandparents in Schenectady County living with their grandchildren under 18 years of age.

Grandparents as Caregivers

	Schenectady County	City of Schenectady	Duanesburg	Glenville	Niskayuna	Rotterdam	Princetown
# grandparents living w/own grandchildren < 18	2,565	1,209	65	398	315	605	4
Responsible for grandchildren	790	496	26	101	5	169	4

Source: US Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Table S1002

Crime

New York State and the FBI use seven Index crime categories as indicators of overall crime trends: murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault, which are classified as violent crimes; and the property crimes of burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft. As reported by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the 2020 Overall Crime Rate per 100,000 for Schenectady County (2,479.3) is the third highest rate of all NYS counties (Broome County ranks as highest, Bronx County ranks 2nd).

The Schenectady County Jail housed an average of **139** inmates on a daily basis in 2020, gradually decreasing from a ten year high of 338 in 2015:

Jail Population in Schenectady County									
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
319	314	326	322	329	338	292	275	228	139

Source: NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services

The number of county residents sentenced to jail and prison (adult status) annually has decreased during the past three years:

Sentences: Adults in Schenectady County Felony and Misdemeanor Categories

	2018		2019		2020	
	Felony	Misdemeanor	Felony	Misdemeanor	Felony	Misdemeanor
Prison	224	3	171	1	115	1
Jail	187	245	127	181	59	30
Time Served	200	510	194	385	134	257
Jail & Probation	41	4	31	5	14	3
Probation	138	49	115	42	73	8
Fine	72	444	69	464	69	325
Conditional Discharge	57	210	73	162	39	77

Source: NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services

According to the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), the annual number of individuals from Schenectady County released from prison for the first time in 2019 was **221** (*most recent data*). The average age of offenders released was **37**. Many of those released from incarceration face homelessness.

Community Resource Network

Schenectady County's Community Resource Network (CRN) utilizes a clearinghouse approach to provide coordinated crisis intervention and resource navigation that maximizes capacity to provide services without duplicating effort and resources. As lead agency for the CRN, SCAP collaborates extensively with multiple community partners. SCAP utilizes Community Resource Navigators to coordinate and provide assessment, prevention and intervention supports both virtually and at multiple SCAP and community locations. The CRN Emergency Fund is a flexible fund that provides financial support when no other resources are available, helping with fundamentals such as rental assistance/security deposits, utility assistance/emergency fuel, prescription co-payments, work clothing, and transportation, as well as other essential items. It helps to prevent homelessness and stabilize households.

Each household served has its own unique set of circumstances that contribute to its challenges. SCAP's

integrated approach to service provision gives customers seamless access to a continuum of supports and programs, ranging from emergency assistance and resource navigation to longer-term support. Involvement with a family may be over a short period to address a one-time need, or continue for an extended period of time to address multiple needs. Extended case management support assists families in establishing goals and developing skills and strategies to effectively manage family needs, permanently stabilize their living conditions and work towards greater self-reliance.

XVIII. Community Engagement

Community Needs Assessment Focus Groups

Four focus groups (three in-person and one virtual) were conducted with a total of **18** SCAP customers:

- Employment Services – Career Readiness Class (virtual)
- Sojourn House Customers (in person)
- Residents at Joseph L. Allen Apartments (in person)
- Residents at Hillside View Apartments (in person)

Each focus group considered the same four questions posed in the focus groups conducted for SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment:

1. What are the greatest needs in Schenectady County?
2. What will meet those needs?
3. What resources are in place to meet those needs?
4. What are some of the barriers?

Focus group discussions identified the following as needs and barriers, with many identified by multiple groups. The first six listed in **BOLD** were also identified during the focus groups conducted in 2015:

- **Transportation**
- **Affordable, Safe Housing**
- **Child/Youth Programs**
- **Child Care** (including extended hours)
- **Jobs** (w/livable wage)
- **Parent Education/Support**
- **Flexible Services** (w/out cut-off when employment obtained)
- **Respectful Support**
- Food Insecurity
- Veterans Programs
- Dental Care (including funds to cover cost)
- Emergency Supplies
- Access to programs for those with disabilities
- Help with Savings
- Community Engagement/Get Everyone Involved
- Knowledge of Resources

Community Needs Assessment Surveys

A total of **101** surveys were completed:

- **50** surveys were completed by SCAP customers
- **51** surveys were completed by employees of SCAP

For comparison purposes, survey questions were similar to the survey administered as part of SCAP's 2018 Community Needs Assessment process. Respondents were asked to identify what they thought were the most pressing individual and family needs, as well as areas where services were not meeting the community demand, using the following list:

Safe, Affordable Housing
 Child Care Services
 Education Services
 Nutrition / Food Services
 Health Care Services
 Mental Health Services
 Substance Use Recovery Services
 Disability Services
 Veteran's Services
 Financial Literacy Services
 Transportation Services
 Youth Programming
 Services for Senior Citizens
 Safety / Crime Prevention
 Social Justice Services
 LGBTQ+ Services
 Economic Development
 Other

Both customers and staff overwhelmingly identified **Safe, Affordable Housing** as the most pressing need, by far, faced by the low-income population in Schenectady County. Safe, affordable housing services available were also identified the most by both staff and customers as "not meeting the current demand". Other services identified the most by customers as not meeting the current demand included safety/crime prevention, social justice services and youth programming. Other services identified the most by staff as not meeting the current demand included mental health, child care, transportation and substance use recovery services.

The second and third needs identified most by customers as one of the top three individual and family needs were safety/crime prevention and nutrition/food services, respectively, compared to 2018 when the second and third needs identified most by customers as one of the top three individual and family needs were child care and transportation, respectively. The second and third needs identified most by staff as one of the top three individual and family needs were child care and mental health services, respectively, compared to 2018 when the second and third needs identified most by staff as one of the top three individual and family needs were child care and transportation, respectively.

Most Pressing Needs Identified by Customers: Ranked in Top Three



Most Pressing Needs Identified By Staff: Ranked in Top Three



Additional Community Input

Multiple existing customer and community engagement activities have also informed this assessment process:

- **Early Learning Program Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Survey**
At the conclusion of each program year, parents and guardians of children enrolled in SCAP's Early Learning Programs are asked to complete a satisfaction survey. The survey assesses education services and program satisfaction. For the 2020-2021 school year, **34** parents and guardians participated in the survey (smaller number of parents participating as a result of COVID-19 pandemic):
 - *Able to communicate with teacher:* **97%** agree/strongly agree
 - *Overall satisfied with services:* **100%** agree/strongly agree
 - *Greater understanding of importance of involvement in child's education:* **100%** agree/strongly agree
 - *Positive changes in life as a result of program:* **85%** agree/strongly agree
 - *Family Service Worker helped me meet my goals:* **85%** agree/strongly agree

- **Career Readiness Class Surveys**

At the conclusion of all Career Readiness courses held at SCAP, students are asked to complete a program evaluation. The survey allows participants to provide feedback on their experience with the class as well as personal growth. Responses from participant sessions held between January 2021 and July 2021 indicated that 95% of the students felt that they were more self-sufficient after completing the class.

- **Technology Survey**

In 2020, SCAP conducted a Technology Survey with 452 agency customers to assess technology related needs. Responses indicated the following with regards to customer access:

- **72%** always have WiFi access
- **83%** always have access to a telephone
- **75%** always have access to a smartphone
- **44%** always have computer access
- **45%** always have access to other WiFi enabled devices, i.e. tablets, e-readers

- **City of Schenectady 2020 – 2024 Consolidated 5-Year Strategic Plan**

The City of Schenectady’s 2020 – 2024 Consolidated 5-Year Strategic Plan incorporates public and service provider input; this input was instrumental in developing the plans goals and objectives, and the identification of the following high priority needs: Housing, Youth Engagement, Workforce Development and Public Infrastructure. The plan’s three goals include:

GOAL #1: Housing Opportunities – Priority 1

Support programs that provide quality, affordable housing options and initiatives for rehabilitation of the existing housing to help stabilize neighborhoods and meet the needs of all residents.

GOAL #2: Expand Economic & Workforce Development – Priority 2

Assist small businesses and non-profit organizations located in the target areas to remove major barriers to the City’s growth and prosperity by supporting and increasing access through infrastructure upgrades and programs that provide training, technical assistance and work opportunities.

GOAL #3: Strengthen Local Neighborhoods - Priority 3

Enhance community assets and advance cultural and recreational initiatives to engage residents, improve health, safety and education, while creating jobs.

XIX. Community Resources

SCAP’s Resource Navigation component maintains up-to-date knowledge of the range of resources available in Schenectady County; staff in all departments have access to information about the full range of services and supports available. Led by SCAP, Schenectady’s Community Resource Network (CRN) assists thousands of local residents annually in meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, utilities, medical care, employment supports, and transportation. The objective is to maximize resources available while reducing the duplication of services, thereby eliminating the frustrating search for assistance that people in crisis often endure. The network’s Emergency Fund helps support individuals and families experiencing crisis when no other community resources are available.

The INFO-OP Community Resource Directory originally created in 2009, was updated by SCAP in 2015 and again in 2021. Schenectady County has also published a Resource Book of Schenectady County services (most recent update was December 2017).

Schenectady County is part of the United Way of the Greater Capital Region's 2-1-1 initiative. 2-1-1 provides free online assistance and confidential telephone referrals that connect users with resources providing food, shelter, rent assistance, clothing, child care options and other types of community assistance. Trained referral specialists are multi-lingual and available to help individuals find the help they need. 2-1-1 is available throughout this region, covering Schenectady, Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schoharie, Warren, and Washington counties. SCAP participates in this initiative.

XX. Fulton and Montgomery Counties

SCAP has provided employment services and supports in Fulton and Montgomery counties since 1978. SCAP's work in these counties complements the work of the **Fulmont Community Action Agency**, which provides the following services for residents of Fulton, Montgomery and surrounding counties:

Fulton County Senior Transportation
A joint program of the Fulmont Community Action Agency, Inc. and Fulton County Office for the Aging to provide free transportation to Fulton County Senior Citizens for medical appointments, day care, food sites, shopping, banking and social events.
Early Childhood Services
Comprehensive preschool program that provides children ages 3-5 and their families a wide range of services. All families who are enrolled receive services in the areas of education, health, nutrition, disabilities and family services.
Community Services
Food pantry, clothing, baked goods, and information and referrals to Fulmont programs – WIC, Early Childhood Services (Head Start, UPK), HEAP application assistance (Montgomery County only), Emergency Food and Shelter, Family Development, Weatherization, Employment Support, and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) – as well as referrals to other programs within the community.
Energy Services
Energy Services, including Weatherization and EmPower New York for HEAP eligible households in both Fulton and Montgomery counties. These services are open to both homeowners and renters.
Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
Supplemental food program for pregnant, breast-feeding and post-partum Women, Infants & Children up to the age of five (5). WIC provides nutrition education and nutritious foods to income eligible families.

Source: fulmont.org/departments

Fulmont Community Action's **2020 Community Needs Assessment** provides extensive information about the issues, opportunities and challenges in Fulton and Montgomery counties, informing SCAP's employment related work in these areas. The assessment and additional information about Fulmont Community Action can be viewed at: <http://www.fulmont.org>. Fulmont's mission is *to improve and expand human services and programs in order to promote self-sufficiency and improve the quality of life of the socially and economically disadvantaged, as well as provide services to promote economic efficiency and stability in Fulton, Montgomery and Surrounding Counties.*