

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

July 14, 2025

Present: Jessica Moser, Chair; Thomas Kalamas, Vice-Chair; Josh Leviker; Vincent Nortz and Barry Lyndaker.

Legislator Moser called the meeting to order at 1:58 p.m.

Legislator Moser moved to approve June 17, 2025, committee meeting minutes as recorded, seconded by Legislator Nortz, and carried.

Threat Assessment Management Plan – Matthew Morrow, Director of Probation

Matthew Morrow discussed the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Plan, which was developed in response to the May 2022 attack in Buffalo. The plan requires New York State counties to establish a behavioral threat assessment and management team to prevent targeted violence. Morrow emphasized that targeted violence is often premeditated, providing opportunities for intervention.

The formation of a Threat Assessment Management (TAM) team was outlined, emphasizing its role in identifying and managing potential threats. The team will consist of diverse community stakeholders, including law enforcement and social services, and will implement a mechanism for receiving tips. The TAM model includes four components: identify, investigate, assess, and manage.

The difficulties of information sharing in the context of FERPA and HIPAA regulations were highlighted, noting that exceptions exist for serious threats to health or safety. A relevant anecdote was shared about a student stealing food due to neglect at home, which was only uncovered when social services intervened. This example underscored the harmful effects of siloed information.

The assessment process aimed at preventing targeted violence was discussed, focusing on evaluating risk factors such as history of violence, mental health issues, and life stressors. The management strategy involves de-escalation, monitoring, and potential interventions, while also addressing the vulnerabilities of potential targets and modifying their environment to enhance safety.

Security Guard Prevailing Wage Increases – Jennifer Jones, Commissioner of Social Services

Jennifer Jones, Commissioner of Social Services, discussed the implications of the New York State Department of Labor's new prevailing wage rates for security services. The bifurcation of security rates for upstate counties has led to a local share cost increase of \$6,500. Jones highlighted that this increase is manageable and underscored the state's substantial support for security in high-target areas like the Department of Social Services.

The origin of the 25% prior share was questioned, indicating that it involves various factors, including changes to the SNAP program. Concerns were raised about shifting the contract cycle to July 1st, which was confirmed to not pose any issues. It was added that the Department of Labor's delay in publishing was due to an oversight rather than any legislative or policy changes.

Insights on security measures were shared, noting that incidents have occurred where law enforcement was not immediately available. The adequacy of current safety protocols was questioned, particularly regarding the lack of an emergency lockdown button. It was explained that employees are trained to follow specific protocols during emergencies, including securing themselves behind locked doors.

Issues were raised regarding the cost-effectiveness of employing law enforcement for security at the DSS lobby, noting difficulties in staffing and the financial burden of training and equipment. The importance of understanding the financial implications of federal changes was highlighted, and it was proposed that the discussion be tabled until next month. The group agreed to gather more information and explore options with the sheriff's department before making a decision.

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Moser moved to adjourn at 2:43 p.m., seconded by Legislator Nortz, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board