



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

JAMES J. ROWLEY
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES – MARCH 21, 2023 **MARK A. OLSON, CHAIR**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. McCarron, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Bush, Mr. Kinne

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Rowley; also see attached

Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Welcome Rich McCarron, thank you for joining the Committee and for your help and knowledge as we move forward.

The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed, and there were no objections to waiving the reading. There were no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes were approved.

1. **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** Daniel Wears, Commissioner
 - a. **Authorizing Execution of Intermunicipal Agreements for use of the Onondaga County Mobile Fire Training Trailer**



- Trailer came in 2 months ago; received training from vendor
- Trailer allows fire department to do forcible entry; bailout window training, vertical/horizontal ventilation
- Request to utilize trailer at no cost to agency requesting it, with exception of consumables
- Contract will lay out consumables they will receive
 - When trailer delivered, it will include plywood, studs, ceiling joist, etc.
 - Trailer will be returned with same quantity of material
- Working with Law Department to finalize

- Significant damage or negligence would be responsibility of agency using it
- County staff will deliver trailer to where it is requested to go
- Due to amount of set up time, encourage departments to use for 2-4 weeks and include mutual aid partners
- Trailer is 24 feet long, 10 feet wide before set up

Questions/Comments from Committee:

- Who is responsible for transporting the trailer?
 - County will transport and train on initial set up, how it works
 - County will dismantle, set up inspection process to identify damage
- Is that like train the trainer?
 - Yes
 - Took 2-3 hours to set up with vendor
- Who is the vendor?
 - FireVent
- Available only to Onondaga County?
 - That is the intended focus to start; not expecting to go outside county
 - Not a department in the county that will not benefit from use
 - If not being used, would consider allowing a close neighbor to use; however, not the focus
- Will be a waiting list to utilize trailer
 - Hosting open house with fire chiefs in April
 - Trailer will be set up to allow fire chiefs to see what it is used for and how it can be used

Question to Law Department:

- Who will pay if going outside the county?
 - This is for local, municipal corporations which would be interpreted as inside the county
 - Would need to come back with more terms and conditions if going outside the county
- Want to make sure taxpayers of Onondaga County are not paying for other counties

Additional Comments from Committee:

- Most things the trailer can be used for are annual recertification items
 - Do not foresee going out of county

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. McCarron, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. INFORMATIONAL: Update on the Army Reserves Building

- Legal contracts are out; Law is working on them with 3 different contractors
 - Mechanical, Electrical, General Contracting
- Hoping work will start this spring and wrap up early fall
- Biggest hold ups will be delivery delays on mechanical and HVAC equipment
- Lead time down from 40 to 17 weeks
- Waiting on Hazard Mitigation Grant from FEMA for generator
- Emergency Management is applying for a grant through congress for a command replacement vehicle
 - Current vehicle is 20 years old; near end of useful life

Questions/Comments from Committee:

Request: Rich McCarron to tour facility

- Who put out the bid?
 - Bids are done

- M.E.I.D. Companies got the electrical and general contracting
- Airside Technology Company got the plumbing, HVAC, electrical
- Have you considered any solar options with this renovation?
 - Not at this point
 - Would have to ask Facilities Management if there is a policy of trying to incorporate solar in projects
 - Not sure if considered by Engineer

2. **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT:** Carl Hummel, Commissioner

a. **INFORMATIONAL: HELP Program**



**Department of
Civil Service**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

TIMOTHY R. HOGUES
Commissioner

PAR-03-23

POLICY ADVISORY REPORT

TO: All Municipal Civil Service Agencies

FROM: Municipal Services Division

SUBJECT: Hiring Emergency Limited Placement Program (HELP Program)

DATE: January 13, 2023

In response to local agencies having significant challenges filling positions across local government due to the tight labor market, competition with private sector employers and eligible lists that have become exhausted, the New York State Department of Civil Service, Municipal Services Division (MSD), is pleased to announce the Hiring Emergency Limited Placement Program (HELP Program). This is a temporary program to help local government employers address the current staffing issues for critical health and safety titles.

The Department also worked with the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) who advocated for the program's establishment on behalf of Local Districts of Social Services (LDSS) statewide given the aggravated recruitment difficulty some LDSS are experiencing filling Caseworkers and Social Welfare Examiners on a permanent basis.

The Department solicited input from local agencies to determine the appropriate scope of the local HELP program. Your input made it clear that health and safety positions have the greatest number of vacancies or positions filled by provisional appointments.

The titles identified are found in the following examination holdings:

Holding Name	Number of Provisionals and Vacancies Statewide
Social Welfare Examiner	478
Caseworker	433
Social Work Services	227
Higher Level Caseworker	160
Human Services Paraprofessional	134
Public Safety Dispatcher	120
Public Health Sanitarian - Engineer	92
Child Support	57

Aging Services	27
Higher Level Social Welfare Examiner	19
Total	1,747

While the Department of Civil Service has been working diligently to fulfill requests for examination services submitted by local civil service agencies and converting examinations to training and experience format, agencies are indicating that they need to fill positions faster than the Department can currently accommodate.

The Municipal Services Division sought approval from the Commission at its January 11, 2023, meeting to establish the HELP Program for local government employers.

The HELP Program is a tool that is available on a temporary basis for agencies that believe eliminating the competitive examination will speed up the hiring process for critical titles that meet the HELP Program's criteria. Using this tool, local civil service agencies can place competitive class positions in the non-competitive class on a temporary basis.

Local agencies experiencing emergency staffing issues can seek a 12-month approval from the Commission to implement the HELP Program for titles that meet the program's criteria. The 12-month duration of this program begins when the rule making takes effect (filing with the NYS Department of State).

To assist with expedited processing of positions that could be filled through the HELP Program, this PAR contains a sample rules resolution package that you can use to request the temporary placement of positions in the non-competitive class. Positions removed from the competitive class as a result of this program must have the parenthetical (HELP Program) as part of the title to help differentiate them from their counterparts in the competitive class.

Participation in the HELP Program must be done by following the procedures detailed in section 20 of the Civil Service Law and by submitting a rules resolution to amend your local Civil Service Rules to the Municipal Services Division for presentation to the State Civil Service Commission. The Commission approved the program and established a deadline of December 31, 2023 for the submission of initial rules resolutions from local civil service agencies to "opt-in" to the program.

HELP Program Criteria

Titles appropriate for hiring under the local HELP Program will be limited to positions that provide critical services, which if left unfilled, would result in the basic health, safety, and daily needs of New Yorkers being unmet. As mentioned above, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) are supportive of the HELP Program for positions in local social services districts such as Caseworkers and Social Welfare Examiners.

To ensure the integrity of the merit system, titles for which agencies can make appointments under the HELP Program must meet all the below criteria:

Criteria 1: Titles are deemed to be critical, direct care, health and safety titles. Employees serving in these titles provide services or care directly to clients, consumers, patients, or the public. Titles tested in the examination holdings listed above meet this criterion.

Criteria 2: A severe shortage of candidates exists, evidenced by an inability to attract sufficient qualified candidates to fill vacancies despite extensive and exhaustive recruitment efforts. It is the responsibility of the civil service agency to demonstrate this criterion.

Criteria 3: Titles are filled via open-competitive examination only. Titles are excluded from this program if they can be filled via promotion examination. It is the responsibility of the civil service agency to demonstrate this criterion.

HELP Program Implementation

If the Commission approves the non-competitive jurisdictional classification of positions that meet the above criteria, below outlines the requirements for implementation:

Minimum Qualifications: Agencies must ensure that candidates meet the minimum qualifications for the title and any other conditions of employment.

Diversity and Inclusion: Agencies must ensure that diversity, inclusion, and equity principles are utilized when filling positions.

Vacancy Postings: Agencies must publicly post vacancies with minimum qualifications included.

Local Websites: Local agencies must alert qualified candidates on how to apply for employment to positions that fall under the HELP Program.

Decentralized Continuous Recruitment Examinations: Local civil service agencies can continue using decentralized, continuous recruitment examinations to fill positions on a competitive basis during the HELP Program.

Promotion Examinations: Employees may be eligible to participate in promotion examinations if they meet the qualifications and time in title as provided for in section 52(12) of the Civil Service Law.

Competitive Class Status: At the end of the 12-month period, employees occupying positions filled through the local HELP Program will be granted competitive class status without the need to participate in a competitive examination. Local civil service agencies will need to submit a rules resolution to delete the HELP Program titles from the non-competitive class which will have the effect of conveying competitive class status upon individuals appointed pursuant to the HELP Program. It is recommended that your agency record the dates the HELP Program titles are filed with the Department of State so you can track appointments and be aware when your agency would need to submit a rules resolution to delete these titles from your rules. Staff of the Municipal

Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 1, Albany, NY 12239 | 518-457-2487 | www.cs.ny.gov

Services Division will be sending reminders as your agency approaches the end of your one-year approval period.

Provisional Employees: Employees serving provisionally at the time the HELP Program title is approved for use in the non-competitive class may be appointed non-competitively into their incumbent title, and then be included in the cover in process.

We will hold an informational webinar on **Thursday, January 19th at 10:00 am** to go over the HELP Program with any agencies that are interested in participating.

<https://meetny.webex.com/meetny/j.php?MTID=meabb8a4221c05646c934dacc2401f46c>

Meeting number (access code): 161 979 3028

Meeting password: VASiNt3xz89

Please contact Maria Kenneally at (518) 473-6048 or maria.kenneally@cs.ny.gov with any questions about this Program. Please submit your rules resolutions for the HELP Program to commops.mun@cs.ny.gov for expedited processing.

- NYS Department of Civil Service realized there is trouble hiring around the state
- HELP (Hiring Emergency Limited Placement) Program allows County to hire people into non-competitive titles that are traditionally competitive class
 - Competitive titles require exam
- HELP Program will start as soon as state approves list of titles created by Legislature
 - Program will last 1 year from the date of state approval
 - At end of that year, anyone listed in designated titles serve a probationary period
 - After probationary period, will mature into competitive class without having to take exam
 - Program ends at the end of year and start giving exams again
- In the future, state may consider T&E (Training and Experience) exams instead of written
- Identified 18-19 titles in County
 - Will submit once resolution passes Legislative Session
 - Create identical positions with parenthesis (HELP Program)
 - When year ends, move into title without parenthesis

Questions/Comments from Committee:

- Probationary; not provisional?
 - Correct
 - Too many provisional appointments, state cannot process exams quickly enough
 - Anyone in provisional title now will move into an approved HELP position; will not need to sit for an exam
 - Hopeful this will alleviate good portion of hiring problems
 - Will look similar to hiring practice of public sector
- What if person in a position is not cutting it?
 - Still probationary appointment
 - Program runs for 12 months from beginning of program, not 12 months from hire
 - Still have same abilities to evaluate employees in first year of employment
 - Probationary period is 8-52 weeks
- People that are provisional that worked 50 weeks, will then serve a 2 week probation?
 - Probationary period is a minimum of 8-52 weeks
 - If someone has been provisional for a year, they then move into one of the new positions, can become permanent after 8 weeks
 - There is no probationary period for a provisional position
- There is a state civil service issue, but do not think county pays rank and file people enough money
- County needs to increase pay and reflect that in upcoming contracts so people want to work here
- Negotiations will not go well with CSEA
 - This (referring to HELP Program) does not address that (referring to wages)
 - This is one element of hiring issue
 - Labor force has changed; people are not willing to wait 6 to 12 months for the process to get a job
 - This (referring to recruitment) is one piece of the puzzle; the other is wages, which is part of negotiations
 - Cannot comment on current negotiations with union
- People might want to wait if worthwhile (referring to wages)
- There is an immediate need that this addresses
- Need to fill positions so help can be provided to those we are tasked to help
- Agree there is an immediate need; critical shortage in 911 right now
- Also agree that it will help with retention (referring to wages)
 - People leaving 911 center after 10, 15 years on the job
 - Both issues have merit

A motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Ryan to adjourn the meeting.

Additional Comments from Committee:**KEN BUSH JR.**

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Jordan, NY 13080

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Onondaga County Legislature

13th District

(Town of Elbridge, Town of Van Buren, part Town of Camillus)

Police Departments in Onondaga County

City of Syracuse	148,620
Onondaga County Sheriff	467,515
Baldwinsville village	7,766
Jordan village	1,229
Liverpool village	2,242
Marcellus village	1,745
North Syracuse village	6,739
Skaneateles village	2,542
Solvay village	6,584
Camillus town	25,345
Cicero town	31,435
DeWitt town	26,074
Geddes town (minus Solvay)	10,504
Manlius town	33,712

Total population served by town & village Depts. 155,917

Police departments outside the City of Syracuse serve
49% of the county population outside of the City.

- Information sheet follows up the County Executive's State of the County address referring to public safety
 - Looks at public safety from a countywide perspective based on population
- When sales tax was taken away from local governments, it had a tremendous impact on bottom line
 - Municipalities talk about sales tax running county government
 - Towns and villages are run by property tax
 - Challenging to support a police department with property tax
- County pays towns and villages to plow roads
- County needs to see how they can help towns and villages with their police protection as a partner with the sheriff's
 - County has a responsibility of helping municipalities with their local policing
- Nearly 50% of the population outside the City of Syracuse is served by local police departments
 - This number will grow with Micron, increased population in northern towns
- This is the start of an informational program put forth to help educate people as to what is being done by the town and village police departments and how they are not being funded

Questions from Committee

- Are you talking about increasing funding or have Sheriff's Department absorb town and village police departments?
 - Talking about direct county funding to municipalities for financial support
 - For example, if a Sheriff has to go to Tully, those folks are fortunate because the Sheriff is not in Baldwinsville or Cicero

- It is a partnership of sharing facilities, policing
 - It is a question of sharing resources to help facilitate that share
- Great relationships with towns, villages, sheriff's, troopers
- County needs to recognize and financially support
- Start talking about it now before get into Budgets

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. McCarron to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**
DATE: **MARCH 21, 2023**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
MELISSA BERLINSKI	DCSO
JEFF PASSINO	DCSO
Dan Wears	EM
Carl Hummel	Personnel
Darcie Lesniak	Leg
Jim Beebe	Leg
John Desantis	J
Tammy Barber	J
Tim Frateschi	Counsel
Ben Yaus	Law Dept