



**NYSAC**  
NEW YORK STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

## 9-1-1 SERVICES



# Funding 9-1-1 Services in NYS

AUGUST 2019

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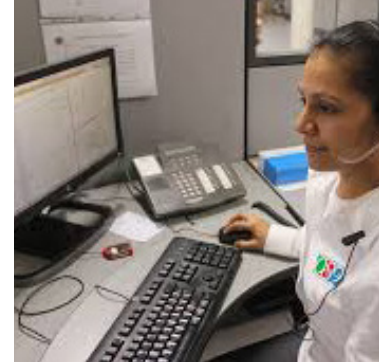
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**Background** | In 1968, the United States designated 9-1-1 as the universal telephone number for emergency assistance. At that time, cell phones, fiber optics, and global position systems (GPS) were purely science fiction. In New York State, our 9-1-1 systems have evolved with these technologies in order to continue dispatching emergency response services to citizens across the state. The administration and costs for the 9-1-1 program have evolved as well, from an initial function of the state police, to being county-operated and funded responsibility.

This report addresses the evolution of New York's 9-1-1 system, the role counties play in that system, the changes that are expected to take place over the next decade, and the challenges of appropriately funding those changes.



## Devolution to Consolidation

The 9-1-1 answering service was first established and operated locally by the state police for general emergencies, dispatching first responders to fires and accidents and incidents at street addresses. Over time, the administration of 9-1-1 was delegated to local governments that had police and fire departments.

Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are the centers where 9-1-1 calls are taken and emergency personnel are dispatched. PSAPs used to exist in multiple municipalities within each county. Across most of New York State, the majority of PSAPs have been consolidated over the last 10 years. Where once there were multiple PSAPs operated by several jurisdictions within a county, now most counties have a single PSAP, which accepts 9-1-1 calls placed anywhere within that county. From the central PSAP, local police stations, sheriff road patrol, EMS, State Troopers, Park Police and other agencies are dispatched to the location of the call, depending on the nature of the emergency. PSAP consolidation in New York has provided more efficient 9-1-1 operations and helped law enforcement adapt to the changing nature of 9-1-1 calls.

"Next Generation 9-1-1" (NG 9-1-1) refers to the upgrades needed to pinpoint the location of cell phone callers, or translate a text message at a 9-1-1 center. While the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has yet to mandate that PSAPs comply with NG 9-1-1 standards, emergency communication professionals predict that day will come soon, forcing counties to find the funding necessary to comply with the new standards.





## The Cost of Emergency Communication

With recent advances in technology, it has become increasingly expensive (but necessary) for 9-1-1 call centers to accommodate the expanding needs of callers, and to use the latest information systems for rapid emergency response. For counties that still face challenges with basic radio communication interoperability, these upgrades will take longer and be more complex.

The cost of providing this level of service is borne by local taxpayers in the county where the PSAP is located. The price tag in New York State for NG 9-1-1 is expected to be \$2.2 billion over the next 10 years. Until counties have access to a dedicated revenue stream to help pay for system upgrades and new communications equipment, becoming NG 9-1-1 capable will be out of reach for many areas.

According to the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials International (APCO), the oldest and most common form of funding for 9-1-1 services is a surcharge on telephone subscribers within a designated service area. The fee is collected by the telephone service provider, who then remits it to the State. New York State currently has three different surcharges in place to pay for 9-1-1:

### *Public Safety Surcharge on Contracted Cellphone Devices*

Identified on today's cell phone bills as the Public Safety Surcharge, a \$1.20 fee is imposed on each contract cellphone device. At the inception of this surcharge, the legislative intent was for revenues to cover all costs associated with providing 9-1-1 services and operating PSAPs. The first such revenue source was created in 1989. Since then, the name of the fee has changed, the amount of the fee increased, and the appropriated uses of funds collected changed. The fee is now known as the "Public Safety Surcharge." Under Section 186-f of the NYS Tax Law, \$.50 of this \$1.20 goes to the State's General Fund, and isn't dedicated to public safety. The remaining \$.70 goes to a variety of public safety programs, including state agencies, to supplant General Fund appropriations. Since 2003, surcharge revenues have more than tripled, from \$66 million to over \$200.2 million in 2018. During the last decade, from 2008 to 2018, the state diverted more than \$1.45 billion in public safety surcharge funds for unrelated purposes.



Counties in New York State can implement a surcharge up to \$.30 on contracted cell phones in their county at local option. Up until 2017, this local authority was permitted only with State legislative approval, as authorized under Article 6 of the County Law, "Enhanced Emergency Telephone System Surcharge." Counties can use this revenue more broadly than the Statewide Public Safety Surcharge funds.

### *Public Safety Surcharge on Pre-Paid Devices*

The 2017/18 Enacted Budget authorizes a public safety surcharge collection on prepaid devices. This legislation requires sellers to collect a surcharge on the sale of each prepaid wireless communications service or device sold within the state. The state is authorized to collect \$.90 on each transaction. In addition, each county has the authorization to impose a \$.30 local surcharge on prepaid wireless devices. The state public safety surcharge authority was effective December 1, 2017 and thereafter. The surcharge does not apply to “Lifeline” devices. The prepaid surcharge is collected at the point of sale under the state’s Sales Tax Law.



This legislation additionally allowed New York City and all counties the authority to charge the \$.30 local public safety surcharge on ALL prepaid and postpaid devices. All counties must act through their local legislative body to adopt a local law, ordinance or resolution. These became effective for purchases made beginning December 1, 2017 if the locality passed a local law or resolution and provided appropriate notice to Taxation and Finance of a change in the local Sales Tax Law.

### *Landline Surcharge for Enhanced 9-1-1*

The Public Service Commission (PSC) authorizes the imposition of a \$.35 charge per access line per month on landline phones. The authority for this surcharge was established in the County Law § 308 and § 309. This surcharge is imposed at local option. According to the DPS, the purpose of the fee is to pay for the cost of enhanced 9-1-1 systems. The City of New York, Tompkins County, and Onondaga County are authorized to impose a monthly charge of up to \$1.00. Broome County recently received authorization to impose a monthly charge of up to \$1.30. Madison County has legislation pending that would authorize a monthly charge of up to \$0.65. This fee is collected by the service provider through customer billing.

## **Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant**

As authorized by Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2010, the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), through its Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications (OIEC), is the primary State agency for all interoperable and emergency communications issues. It is responsible for coordinating and implementing a grant program to facilitate the developments, consolidation and/or operation of public safety communications and networks designed to support statewide interoperable communications for first responders.



The Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant (SICG) is a competitive grant funded by cellular surcharge revenue.

- 2018 Formula Grant - Total Awarded: \$45,000,000
- 2017 Formula Grant - Total Awarded: \$45,000,000
- 2016 Formula Grant – Total Awarded: \$45,000,000
- 2014-15 Round 4 SICG - Total Amount Awarded: \$50,000,000
- 2012-2013 Round 3 SICG - Total Amount Awarded: \$75,000,000
- 2011-2012 Round 2 SICG - Total Amount Awarded: \$102,000,000
- 2010-2011 Round 1 SICG - Total Amount Awarded: \$20,000,000

County Name	2010-11 Round 1	2011-12 Round 2	2013-14 Round 3	2014-15 Round 4	2016 Formula	2017 Formula	2018 Formula
Albany		\$6,000,000			\$1,000,417	\$1,272,530	\$1,276,449
Allegany			\$5,951,039		\$911,523	\$958,841	\$889,690
Broome			\$6,000,000		\$674,824	\$718,401	\$678,019
Cattaraugus			\$6,000,000		\$663,916	\$726,536	\$674,160
Cayuga			\$5,251,690	\$2,525,492	\$838,244	\$778,135	\$806,629
Chautauqua		\$6,000,000			\$657,306	\$647,798	\$639,301
Chemung		\$6,000,000			\$566,034	\$543,685	\$541,201
Chenango					\$456,553	\$0	\$534,819
Clinton		\$2,152,080			\$584,478	\$664,424	\$646,188
Columbia				\$3,500,000	\$516,279	\$516,018	\$476,985
Cortland	\$4,000,000	\$6,000,000			\$995,456	\$978,349	\$964,140
Delaware	\$1,078,000	\$3,404,000			\$447,657	\$480,891	\$497,400
Dutchess				\$2,048,758	\$682,199	\$630,120	\$616,793
Erie		\$830,405		\$2,132,185	\$1,096,094	\$1,072,420	\$1,106,090
Essex	\$2,000,000	\$2,251,759		\$420,814	\$798,157	\$799,637	\$782,665
Franklin			\$3,407,921		\$701,096	\$703,803	\$681,121
Fulton			\$2,327,780		\$437,407	\$429,721	\$471,118
Genesee	\$228,309	\$5,435,095		\$3,065,120	\$705,023	\$579,558	\$664,778
Greene	\$893,000			\$3,500,000	\$464,037	\$468,265	\$438,850
Hamilton			\$2,530,385		\$471,640	\$540,339	\$544,803
Herkimer			\$899,462		\$637,534	\$639,876	\$595,532
Jefferson			\$6,000,000		\$659,672	\$647,104	\$612,697
Lewis			\$6,000,000		\$539,653	\$653,718	\$682,650
Livingston			\$5,994,854	\$3,500,000	\$598,108	\$589,682	\$667,855
Madison	\$1,997,812	\$4,194,189		\$3,500,000	\$821,280	\$782,596	\$763,731
Monroe		\$5,468,173		\$3,493,045	\$1,459,024	\$1,727,572	\$1,683,479
Montgomery			\$1,685,554		\$447,091	\$463,291	\$423,415
Nassau	\$877,729			\$3,500,000	\$856,563	\$899,859	\$1,009,797
New York City		\$3,543,309			\$5,680,831	\$5,326,241	\$5,448,636
Niagara	\$2,000,000	\$742,164			\$673,193	\$711,170	\$669,712
Oneida				\$3,500,000	\$637,360	\$773,684	\$857,631
Onondaga	\$331,446	\$4,959,000			\$1,404,362	\$1,360,003	\$1,274,666
Ontario		\$2,202,885			\$716,143	\$682,338	\$621,204
Orange		\$5,998,000			\$757,344	\$864,231	\$802,256
Orleans		\$2,000,000			\$448,993	\$420,587	\$403,172
Oswego			\$6,000,000		\$886,284	\$846,320	\$844,821
Otsego	\$1,128,000				\$797,694	\$684,650	\$796,814
Putnam				\$3,500,000	\$482,829	\$454,708	\$460,753
Rensselaer		\$5,066,512		\$3,500,000	\$798,760	\$736,407	\$746,423
Rockland		\$5,500,000			\$853,925	\$852,018	\$825,122

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## Statewide Interoperable Communications Grant

Saratoga			\$2,280,500	\$2,961,221	\$874,563	\$834,169	\$812,919
Schenectady					\$610,436	\$518,618	\$669,427
Schoharie	\$858,000	\$433,500		\$2,406,500	\$436,557	\$485,123	\$455,260
Schuyler		\$4,271,900			\$398,500	\$381,179	\$382,595
Seneca			\$6,000,000		\$476,901	\$441,439	\$411,692
St Lawrence			\$2,679,690		\$759,073	\$937,148	\$811,132
Steuben	\$1,523,264	\$3,169,693		\$2,946,865	\$862,857	\$804,996	\$776,687
Suffolk		\$6,000,000			\$1,118,377	\$1,069,314	\$1,007,048
Sullivan	\$1,198,000	\$841,833			\$680,727	\$757,308	\$685,016
Tioga		\$2,342,000			\$442,981	\$453,399	\$450,221
Tompkins		\$2,854,312			\$738,565	\$704,018	\$680,422
Ulster	\$978,000				\$521,553	\$524,993	\$575,721
Warren	\$736,939				\$523,375	\$550,861	\$522,261
Washington	\$171,501				\$709,086	\$837,216	\$771,550
Wayne		\$2,036,700			\$514,825	\$541,839	\$488,881
Westchester			\$5,991,125		\$677,239	\$608,545	\$569,661
Wyoming		\$1,771,236			\$474,197	\$473,355	\$456,166
Yates		\$531,255			\$355,205	\$350,954	\$351,776
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$20,000,000</b>	<b>\$102,000,000</b>	<b>\$75,000,000</b>	<b>\$50,000,000</b>	<b>\$45,000,000</b>	<b>\$45,000,000</b>	<b>\$45,000,000</b>



## Public Safety Answering Point Grants

The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services awards grant funding to counties across the State. This grant is intended to reimburse counties for costs associated with Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) operations, consolidation, and improvements.

- 2018-19 PSAP Operations Grant Awarded – Total Amount Awarded: \$10,000,000
- 2017-18 PSAP Operations Grant Awarded – Total Amount Awarded: \$10,000,000
- 2016-17 PSAP Operations Grant Awarded – Total Amount Awarded: \$10,000,000
- 2015-16 PSAP Operations Grant Awarded – Total Amount Awarded: \$10,000,000
- 2014-15 PSAP Operations Grant Award - Total Amount Awarded: \$10,000,000
- 2013-14 PSAP Grant Award - Total Amount Awarded: \$9,000,000
- 2012 PSAP - Total Amount Awarded: \$9,000,000

# Public Safety Answering Point Grants

County Name	2012 PSAP Grant	2013-14 PSAP Grant	2014-15 PSAP Grant	2015-16 PSAP Grant	2016-17 PSAP Grant	2017-18 PSAP Grant	2018-19 PSAP Grant
Albany			\$205,465	\$233,382	\$222,070	\$202,379	\$217,355
Allegany	\$155,954		\$165,914	\$161,547	\$181,551	\$174,590	\$156,944
Broome	\$988,662	\$89,253	\$200,182	\$209,703	\$181,551	\$200,949	\$194,069
Cattaraugus	\$199,918	\$89,253	\$179,784	\$172,605	\$177,254	\$175,764	\$191,310
Cayuga		\$584,234	\$168,619	\$170,907	\$173,311	\$202,548	\$167,647
Chautauqua	\$93,516	\$89,253	\$188,236	\$178,323	\$185,422	\$174,310	\$174,353
Chemung		\$487,869	\$180,464	\$188,222	\$192,584	\$197,248	\$187,569
Chenango	\$74,051		\$174,953	\$170,855	\$166,657	\$167,545	\$179,215
Clinton		\$83,738	\$153,949	\$141,883	\$142,066	\$138,273	\$134,736
Columbia		\$62,477	\$160,221	\$160,509	\$151,710	\$159,428	\$154,217
Cortland		\$89,253	\$174,670	\$151,001	\$154,339	\$137,308	\$147,915
Delaware	\$179,209		\$117,264	\$154,732	\$162,103	\$170,800	\$168,096
Dutchess	\$63,892		\$169,410	\$165,211	\$147,028	\$166,073	\$163,100
Erie	\$967,981	\$299,065	\$210,388	\$209,112	\$200,972	\$215,639	\$209,229
Essex		\$446,305	\$181,398	\$166,248	\$170,972	\$215,872	\$228,820
Franklin	\$365,000		\$181,880	\$170,378	\$170,493	\$193,268	\$174,770
Fulton			\$194,039	\$206,892	\$213,816	\$167,791	\$220,197
Genesee		\$89,253	\$178,771	\$187,377	\$187,497	\$203,168	\$204,071
Greene		\$513,497	\$151,468	\$151,052	\$146,033	\$139,634	\$175,930
Hamilton	\$144,472		\$165,040	\$127,582	\$128,970	\$93,664	\$95,264
Herkimer			\$202,926	\$197,534	\$194,498	\$194,366	\$179,146
Jefferson	\$295,523		\$192,240	\$198,520	\$205,628	\$212,011	\$203,999
Lewis	\$808,615		\$182,637	\$179,053	\$184,555	\$138,118	\$168,685
Livingston	\$305,767	\$89,253	\$169,874	\$167,362	\$205,512	\$214,981	\$203,799
Madison		\$89,253	\$160,933	\$158,368	\$173,544	\$163,643	\$160,880
Monroe		\$89,240	\$234,317	\$219,607	\$214,772	\$231,492	\$224,980
Montgomery			\$161,128	\$147,163	\$174,345	\$142,049	\$147,857
Nassau		\$89,253	\$140,437	\$137,286	\$159,969	\$148,789	\$145,826
New York City		\$500,000	\$192,313	\$214,199	\$213,108	\$196,319	\$189,628
Niagara	\$620,000	\$82,387	\$189,204	\$195,149	\$174,498	\$172,664	\$171,295
County Name	2012 PSAP Grant	2013-14 PSAP Grant	2014-15 PSAP Grant	2015-16 PSAP Grant	2016-17 PSAP Grant	2017-18 PSAP Grant	2018-19 PSAP Grant
Oneida		\$405,563	\$222,396	\$207,580	\$182,873	\$200,167	\$187,141
Onondaga	\$187,591		\$195,771	\$206,016	\$188,364	\$177,652	\$191,407
Ontario		\$25,705	\$153,455	\$158,945	\$170,810	\$198,524	\$196,826
Orange			\$180,272	\$177,823	\$156,854	\$165,658	\$162,755
Orleans	\$133,090		\$134,050	\$133,385	\$134,049	\$122,218	\$137,772
Oswego	\$836,009		\$180,517	\$180,103	\$179,865	\$180,679	\$178,432
Otsego	\$866,051	\$500,000	\$161,700	\$157,260	\$164,201	\$157,687	\$157,615
Putnam		\$89,253	\$127,915	\$126,883	\$124,811	\$121,076	\$114,462
Rensselaer	\$17,823	\$589,253	\$176,560	\$177,913	\$193,544	\$193,615	\$164,784
Rockland		\$89,253	\$198,875	\$227,942	\$175,641	\$234,789	\$264,151
Saratoga		\$587,162	\$165,862	\$148,969	\$126,529	\$127,221	\$133,450
Schenectady		\$89,253	\$167,970	\$170,290	\$172,058	\$177,760	\$192,939
Schoharie		\$144,752	\$144,752	\$149,001	\$144,715	\$113,600	\$119,667
Schuyler			\$118,716	\$165,569	\$163,084	\$193,631	\$177,321
Seneca		\$496,000	\$167,119	\$166,635	\$172,597	\$180,736	\$167,874
St Lawrence		\$62,522	\$162,596	\$178,002	\$189,066	\$202,461	\$200,279
Steuben			\$188,793	\$185,710	\$190,105	\$195,340	\$187,541
Suffolk	\$250,381		\$168,290	\$153,970	\$179,649	\$169,591	\$173,668
Sullivan	\$799,000	\$584,887	\$161,772	\$155,289	\$154,978	\$167,204	\$162,123
Tioga	\$28,711		\$171,971	\$160,339	\$147,475	\$153,299	\$128,678
Tompkins		\$500,000	\$150,506	\$149,235	\$150,076	\$148,478	\$148,036
Ulster		\$89,253	\$162,798	\$154,511	\$155,526	\$144,340	\$141,457
Warren	\$425,000		\$174,787	\$168,835	\$173,608	\$169,396	\$169,025
Washington		\$500,000	\$186,194	\$185,509	\$178,799	\$167,728	\$163,861
Wayne	\$193,783	\$89,253	\$169,703	\$171,874	\$175,335	\$146,239	\$163,422
Westchester			\$164,751	\$165,620	\$158,487	\$165,722	\$166,828
Wyoming			\$157,216	\$155,000	\$153,848	\$126,349	\$140,071
Yates		\$555,267	\$156,569	\$170,021	\$175,108	\$188,139	\$167,513
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$9,000,000</b>	<b>\$9,000,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>

# The Future of 9-1-1 in NYS

Counties are anticipating and planning for future investments in emergency communications systems. The financial strains on 9-1-1 centers and first responders to pay for needed equipment often overtake available resources. Furthermore, a federal effort to expand broadband communications to public safety users, known as FirstNet, is the wave of the future for emergency communications technology. While FirstNet will take years to emerge, states have begun work to understand the capacity of the current infrastructure in relation to the public safety broadband network of the future. Amid these discussions on the future of public safety communications, counties also face the challenge of meeting current communications needs, while positioning themselves to be ready for future investments and demands.

NYSAC continues to advocate for a greater county share of the funding collected for 9-1-1, so that counties can maintain and expand emergency communications systems. The systems are used by local, state, and federal agencies. Personnel and system upkeep and upgrades benefit all public safety agencies, enabling them to serve the public during emergencies.

Starting today and continuing into the years ahead, the following policy changes should be made:

- The state should release ALL funds authorized so far and ensure that future authorizations are released in full in the budget year they are appropriated.
- The state should include language that clarifies this funding be provided to counties annually.
- Facilitate a fair funding process—New York State’s plan for funding 9-1-1 should be straightforward. Overly burdensome processes and administrative red tape waste taxpayer dollars. Counties and the State should work together to ensure that the process by which counties access funds for public safety communications projects is fair, efficient, and serves to achieve county-wide operability, and statewide interoperability.
- Provide coordination and leadership for regional investments in 9-1-1—For years, counties have worked to form consortiums (regional partnerships with neighboring municipalities) in order to jointly and more efficiently make investments in public safety communications infrastructure. While counties do this, they look to the State to provide leadership and guidance as to interoperability across the state. The State must address and facilitate clearer communication and a unified vision for consortiums.







## What New Yorkers Need to Know About 9-1-1

- 1 9-1-1 has celebrated its 50th anniversary, and much has changed since 1968.
- 2 County governments are financially and functionally responsible for today's 9-1-1 systems
- 3 Pinpointing caller location and translating text messages are enhanced capabilities under Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) systems.
- 4 NG911 system and technology upgrades will cost an estimated \$2.2 billion over the next 10 years.



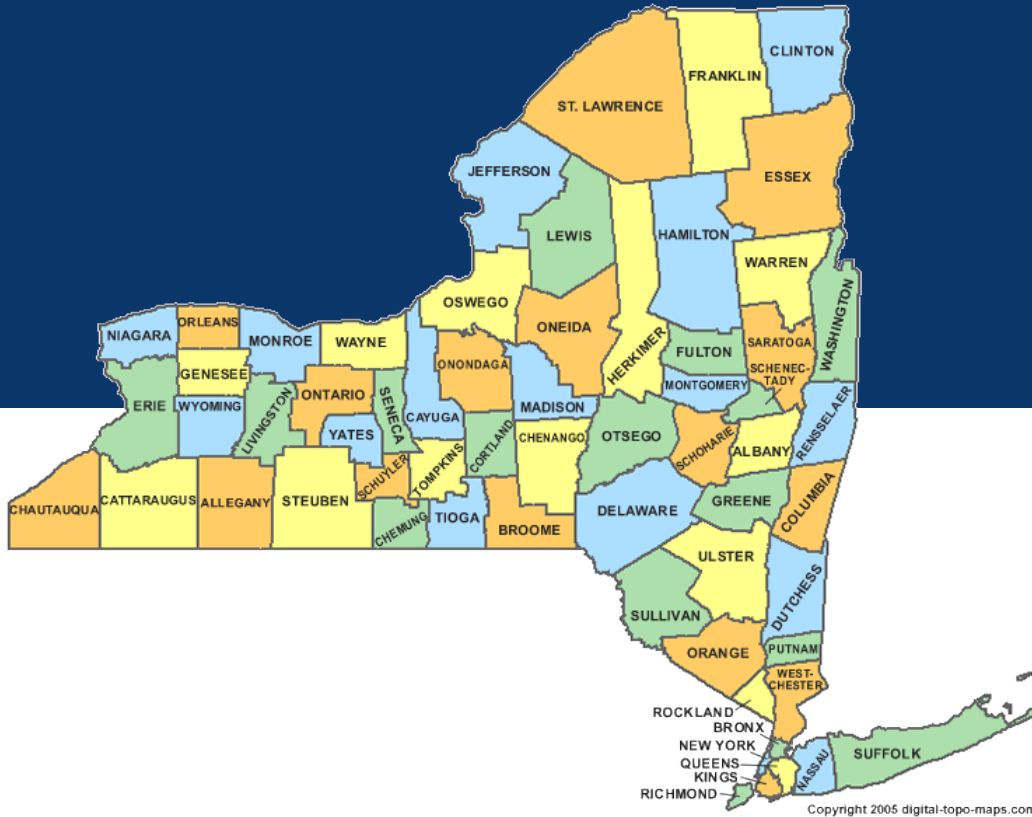
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