101 WAYS

Counties Serve New Yorkers and Strengthen the Quality of Our Communities
NEW YORK COUNTIES
Serve New Yorkers and Strengthen the Quality of Our Communities

General Government

1. Protect the health, safety and welfare of New Yorkers through the passage of local laws, resolutions and ordinances

2. Were first established in 1683 as regional colonial governments designed to uphold public safety, maintain infrastructure, and keep vital records, more than 100 years before New York became a state.

Health and Human Services

3. Contribute a local share to the State’s Medicaid Program, to the tune of $7.6 Billion annually, more than what 46 states spend out of their general fund for their respective Medicaid programs, and more than what 35 individual states spend in total funds (state, federal and local dollars) on their Medicaid programs

4. Fund and/or administer nearly all federal health and human service mandates

5. Coordinate all foster care services in New York and encourage the adoption of children in need of families

6. Investigate all domestic violence allegations and ensure the safe placement of at-risk children

7. Provide child support, visitation, custody and paternity petitions

8. Provide child care subsidies to low income families

9. Help families in need access emergency services, including housing, food stamps, day care, and heating and cooling assistance

10. Distribute Farmers Market coupons to eligible residents in need

11. Operate Meals-on-Wheels and other special services for the aged and homebound

12. Connect adults over 60 years of age with essential community based services and lifesaving programs
13. Ensure, through its local offices for the aging, that elders and their caregivers have access to assistance to avoid higher, and costlier, publicly financed levels of care

14. Coordinate veterans’ programs and services for our former armed service men and women

15. Operate long term health care facilities

16. Promote an atmosphere of trust for consumers in the marketplace by protecting consumers against illegal or deceptive trade practices

17. Provide indigent burial assistance for individuals with families that are unable to provide for a decent interment.

**Mental Health**

18. Oversee, manage and plan for services for adults and children with mental illness, substance use disorders and/or developmental disabilities in their communities

19. Operate mental health and substance abuse clinics

20. Work in partnership with the state mental hygiene agencies comprised of the Office of Mental Health (OMH), Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

21. Work with the community service board to provide oversight and planning for the substance abuse, developmental disability and mental illness needs of the county

22. Sponsor and promote education and training to advance the use of evidence-based treatment practices and promotes public understanding and awareness of behavior health disabilities to reduce stigma and promote meaningful and productive community relationships and involvement
Environment/Economic Development

23. Maintain hundreds of parks, beaches, forest preserves, museums and related cultural and recreational facilities

24. Maintain, monitor and operate waste management, landfill facilities

25. Provide recycling and alternative waste management systems for communities

26. Reduce waste by harvesting methane from landfills and turning it into clean energy for municipal buildings

27. Develop, maintain and distribute geographic digital data for the public’s use

28. Promote historical and tourism destinations in NYS, including the I LOVE NY campaign

29. Facilitate economic development through IDA’s and the creation of agricultural districts.

30. Provide training and support for local planning units, including grant writing, land use and environmental permitting services assistance

31. Assist towns in zoning permit approvals and processing

32. Provide invasive species management and coordination between local government units

33. Provide management and training expertise to farmers and landowners through cooperative extension

34. Provide incentives for residents and businesses to pursue energy efficiency projects

35. Revolutionize lighting, heating and electrical systems, making conversions to more energy efficient technologies in government buildings
Public Health

36. Conduct health and safety inspections of swimming pools, summer camps, beaches and other recreational venues

37. Monitor and control insect-borne disease such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease

38. Provide programs to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases

39. Run programs to help prevent or reduce major causes of death and chronic disease such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma and cancer

40. Send specimens for rabies testing

41. Test for lead in homes of children identified as having lead poisoning

42. Provide maternal and infant community health services designed to improve the health and well-being of high need women through their reproductive life years

43. Provide tobacco prevention and control programs

44. Monitor and test the safety of community water supply in New York State through county public health departments

45. Issue permits for food service restaurants ensuring the public health is protected

46. Conduct restaurant health and food safety inspections
Judiciary

47. Construct and pay for state and county courthouses across New York

48. Provide lawyers for the poor accused of crimes by coordinating and funding indigent defense and public defense services in the state

49. Serve as the official clerk of the court for the State Supreme Court

Public Safety/Emergency Management

50. Prosecute all felony crimes in county courts

51. Prosecute criminal cases in local criminal courts, including DWI and misdemeanor drug offenses

52. Fight the current heroin addiction epidemic that intersects our sheriff, probation, district attorney, mental health, and public health departments

53. Monitor the use of ignition interlock devices required of those convicted under the state’s DWI laws through probation, sheriffs and district attorneys

54. Provide supervision for adult and juvenile offenders

55. Provide crime victim assistance, advocate for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and provide rape crisis services

56. Run STOP DWI programs

57. Prepare communities to address the consequences of terrorism

58. Facilitate communication through emergency management software amongst state and local governments during disasters

59. Deliver maximum communication support to all residents, businesses and public agencies requiring immediate fire, police or ambulance responses
60. Coordinate disaster preparedness, as well as the response, recovery and rebuilding efforts from weather-related or hazardous material spills and other states of emergencies

61. Responsible for the efficient deployment of firefighting resources and overall coordination of fire departments through the administration of NYS Fire Training Program NYSAC

62. Provide training and education programs for fire departments and administer the county fire mutual aid plan

63. Provide fire investigation, hazardous materials response and technical rescue response

64. Provide county law enforcement road patrol

65. Provide correction officers to staff the county jail ensuring the public’s safety

66. Provide coroner and medical examiner services investigating cases of suspicious deaths

67. Provide k-9 assistance for bomb detection and narcotic enforcement 68. Patrol waterways and shorelines

69. Train municipal police on firearms handling and other essential job skill training responsibilities

70. Provide criminal and arson background checks

71. Process pistol permits on behalf of the state

72. Are responsible for the safety and protection of abused and neglected animals

**Infrastructure**

73. Own and maintain (with local governments) 85 percent of the roads and 50 percent of the bridges in New York State, 33 percent of all local bridges are structurally deficient and in need of costly repair

74. Own and operate both commercial service and general aviation airports

75. Create and manage green infrastructure projects that reduce rainwater and storm water runoff on roads, parking garages and other municipal structures.

76. Own and manage all bridges over 25’ in length

77. Own and operate mass transit systems
Special Education

78. Fund the largest local share of a preschool special education program out of any state in the nation, now approaching $1 billion a year

79. Finance summer school programs for special needs children in Kindergarten through Grade 12, at a cost of nearly $40 million a year

80. Provide services for developmentally delayed and physically handicapped children from birth through 5. Services include speech, occupational, physical therapy, nutrition, social work

Higher Education

81. Create, sponsor and fund community college costs, and pay a share of their residents’ community college tuition

82. Provide citizens certificates of residency for community college students

83. Train and develop skills for those seeking employment in the workforce

Youth Programs

84. Coordinate persons in need of supervision (PINS), runaway and homeless youth

85. Promote positive youth development through integrated community-based planning for ages 0-21. Work with after school programs to reduce truancy and encourage graduation

87. Provide independent living services to youth and young adults to help prepare them for life on their own as adults

88. Provide intensive direct services in secure settings for youth in pending juvenile delinquency cases in family court

Weights and Measures

89. Ensure that a gallon of gas equals actually one gallon, and a pound of deli meat equals exactly one pound
Elections

90. Process voter enrollment applications, and absentee and overseas ballots

91. Operate and fund all federal, state and local primary and general elections

92. Hire and train election inspectors to ensure a safe and secure election process

Fiscal Services

Tax and Finance

93. Make school districts and most local governments whole when a homeowner or business does not pay their property taxes

94. Auction foreclosed homes and other surplus properties

95. Receive and distribute sales tax revenues to municipalities

Maintain Vital Records

96. Record and file property deeds and all mortgages

97. Operate community DMV offices, collecting nearly $400 million in revenue for the state

98. Maintain vital personal records, such as birth and death certificates

99. Assist county residents seeking genealogy information

100. Maintain detailed property tax records to help homeowners understand their rights and how the property assessment process works

Recreation

101. Own, operate and maintain convention centers and sports venues, which help foster tourism, economic development and community pride
The New York State Association of Counties is a bipartisan municipal association serving the counties of New York State including the City of New York.

Organized in 1925, NYSAC’s mission is to represent, educate and advocate for member counties and the thousands of elected and appointed county officials who serve the public.