

WHAT IS COUNTY GOVERNMENT?

States established the county system of government as a way to deliver services more efficiently on a grass roots basis. There are 3,067 counties in the United States. Only Connecticut and Rhode Island have no functioning county governments. All county governments are led by an elected body. Westchester, one of New York State's original ten counties, was first led by the Board of Justices which sat for the first time on November 1, 1683. The legislature then became the Board of Supervisors and is now called the Westchester County Board of Legislators.

The 17-member County Board is the lawmaking branch of county government. It sets policies that protect and serve Westchester's nearly one million residents and allocates the money needed to operate county programs and services. It has oversight responsibility of the executive branch which was created in 1939 to carry out its policies. Each County Legislator, elected to a two-year term, represents a district of about 50,000 residents.

Westchester County's Budget

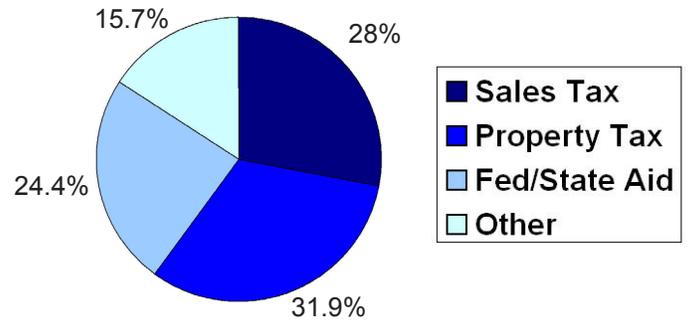
About two-thirds of Westchester County government's workload consists of delivering services and programs mandated by the state of New York. Some of those services are entirely funded by the state. The state shifts a significant part of the cost of other programs, notably Medicaid, to the counties to fund. The County Board controls how less than one-third of the county budget, considered discretionary or non-mandated, is spent. *(Please see the chart on the flip side of this page for a breakdown of mandated and discretionary services).*

WHERE DO YOUR PROPERTY TAXES GO?

Contrary to popular perception, county services do not account for a large piece of the property tax dollar.



SOURCES OF COUNTY REVENUE



County/Town Revenue Sharing

Counties, unlike NYC or NYS, collect no income taxes. Westchester shares over \$100 million of its sales tax revenues with towns and school districts.

Citizen involvement is critical to the success of county government.

County government belongs to the people of Westchester. The legislative process is open, transparent and accessible to all Westchester residents. County Board and Committee meeting calendars and agendas are posted on the Board's Web site at: www.westchesterlegislators.com. Your county legislators have been the voice of the people of Westchester for 325 years. To best represent your interests and ensure your voice is heard, they need and would like to hear from you.

WHAT DOES THE COUNTY DO?

About two-thirds of the county's operating budget goes toward paying for services mandated by the state. The cost to deliver social services—\$548 million—accounts for about 40% of the mandates. County government provides a regional, cost-effective solution for delivering services that local municipalities would have to otherwise provide and fund through property taxes. The bottom-line—county government offers efficiencies that save taxpayer dollars.

Public Health (\$164.5 M)

- Communicable Disease Control
- Environmental Health
- Community Health
- Early Intervention
- Inspections: *restaurants, hotels, day camps; water, solid waste systems*

MTA Surcharge (\$25.7 M)

Corrections (\$126.3 M)

- County Jail
- Penitentiary

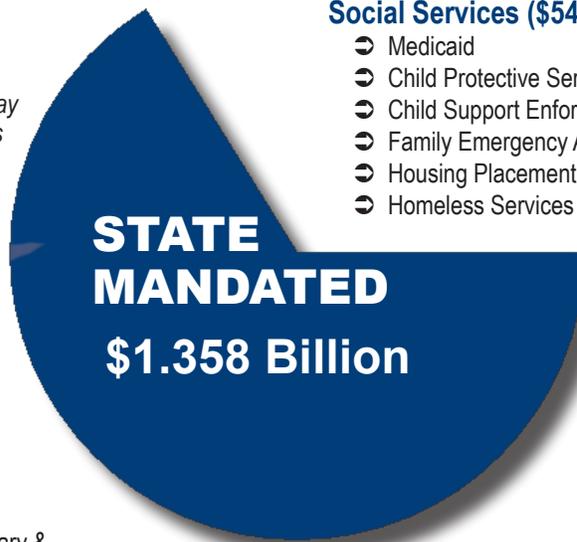
Probation (\$21.8 M)

- Family Court
- Criminal Court

Board of Elections (\$13.2 M)

- Voter Registration
- ALL county, village, water, fire, library & school district elections

Illustrative of Mandated Depts/Services (2009 County Budget)



Social Services (\$548.5 M)

- Medicaid
- Child Protective Services
- Child Support Enforcement
- Family Emergency Assistance
- Housing Placement
- Homeless Services

County Clerk (\$8.6 M)

- Land Records
- Legal Documents
- Passports
- UCC filings

NYS Court Facilities (\$20.3 M)

District Attorney (\$25.6 M)

- Prosecutions
- Special Bureaus: Environmental Crimes; Narcotics; Gang & Gun; Stop DWI; High Tech Crime; Child Abuse; Domestic Violence Bias Crimes; Economic Crimes

County Sales Tax Distribution (\$101 M)

- Distributed to Municipalities (\$74 M)
- Distribution to School Districts (\$27 M)

Westchester Community College (\$24.3 M)

Environmental Facilities Department — a consolidated services model

- 7 wastewater treatment plants
- 194 miles of sewers
- 4,000 manholes
- 42 pump stations
- Water Filtration Systems
- 4 water districts
- Kensico Dam
- Charles Point Trash Disposal
- Materials Recycling Facility

What happened to those old incinerators?

They were forced closed by court order in 1982. The county built the Charles Point Recovery Facility in Peekskill which today handles solid waste from 36 of the county's 43 municipalities or about 90% of the county's population.

Please note: sewer and refuse services are not included in the county's operating budget.

About 1/3 of the county's operating budget goes toward funding non-mandated or discretionary services.

Illustrative of Non-Mandated Depts/ Services (2009 County Budget)

Labs & Research (\$1.5 M)

- Medical Examiner
- Public Health Labs
- Forensics; Crime Labs
- Environmental Labs

Public Safety (\$30.3 M)

- Highway patrols; DWI program
- Training facilities for local depts.
- Units: Environmental Security, Bomb Squad, Aviation, Special Ops., Canine, Narcotics

Planning (\$4.6 M)

- Affordable Housing
- Land Use- Westchester 2025
- Water Quality
- Farm Protection
- Community/Economic Development
- Open Space



Transportation (\$101.6 M)

- Bee Line Bus System (89 routes)

Mental Health (\$12.1 M)

- Case Management
- Depression Help Line
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health Court
- Alternative to Incarceration

Invest-in-Kids Programs (\$2 M)

Westchester Library System (\$1.1 M)

Parks, Recreation & Conservation (\$55 M)

- 18,000 acres of open space
- 6 golf courses
- 17 Parks
- 5 Conservation areas
- Rye Playland
- Westchester County Center
- New ballfields
- Historic Sites
- Bronx River Conservancy

Emergency Services (\$9.1 M)

- 24/7 county-wide fire & EMS coordination
- Special Operations
- Fire Training Facility
- HAZMAT Team
- Bomb Squad
- Arson Unit
- WMD Response
- Emergency Evacuation