

## Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene

### 2025 Executive Brief

#### Key Accomplishments/Successes

- ✓ Provision of services in new Waverly Satellite Clinic for one full year
- ✓ Increase in number of clinical providers in Waverly Clinic due to increased need
- ✓ Expansion of licensed school based mental health services at Newark Valley Elementary
- ✓ Successful audit of OASAS program resulting in 3-year certification
- ✓ Received state aid to develop mobile crisis and received an interim designation to provide these services to adults
- ✓ Purchased two new vehicles for mental health mobile crisis and hired mobile crisis staff
- ✓ Received state aid for continuation of Medication Assisted Treatment in the Tioga County Jail
- ✓ Offering free Narcan Kits and Training to anyone who requests
- ✓ Opioid Settlement Funds awarded to 5 local agencies, A New Hope Center, CASA Trinity, Tioga Opportunities, HeaHea LLC, and Partnership to End Addiction
- ✓ Inter-departmental collaborations with Mental Hygiene
- ✓ We continue to be very proud of our two coalitions that provide a valuable service to Tioga County.
  - Tioga County Advocacy, Support and Prevention Coalition (Tioga ASAP) and
  - Tioga County Suicide Prevention Coalition

#### Challenges/Constraints

- ✓ Recruitment and retention of qualified staff, specifically experienced licensed providers
- ✓ Workforce shortage led to the need for a 30-day pause of Mental Hygiene Clinic services in October 2025
- ✓ Transportation barriers continue to be a challenge for non-Medicaid enrolled individuals
- ✓ Mandatory services such as court ordered CPL 730 evaluations can lead to criminal psychiatric admissions put a strain on the county budget. The average cost for Tioga County from 2019 through 2025 was nearly \$195,000.

#### Ongoing Priorities/Goals for 2026

- ✓ Launch of adult services under newly designated Mobile Crisis Program and apply for designation to serve children.
- ✓ Expand AOT infrastructure (Assisted Outpatient Treatment- Kendra's Law)
- ✓ Disaster Mental Health updates and training for staff
- ✓ Workforce recruitment and retention efforts

## Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene

### Annual Report 2025

Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene continues to offer a comprehensive continuum of care for citizens of Tioga County who have needs related to Mental Health, Substance Misuse, and/or Developmental Disabilities. Tioga County's Mental Hygiene Department operates two licensed clinics, Article 31 Outpatient Mental Health Clinic and Article 32 Outpatient Substance Use Clinic, that includes the Waverly satellite and School Based satellite locations in 5 districts. The department provided nearly 19,000 services to Tioga County residents in 2025 and began providing services in the new Waverly satellite location in early 2025 bringing much needed mental health and substance use services to the western end of Tioga County. The space is well utilized with department staff increasing to five providers to include a part-time psychiatrist. The department also partnered with Social Services to provide office space for the Child Advocacy Center in the Waverly location. We continue to see an increase in requests for services by consumers not previously known to the department, and continue to make telehealth available to residents, which increases access to care. The department provides quality, person-centered, and timely care thanks a to tireless, dedicated and resilient workforce, despite continued workforce shortages.

The Community Services Board continues to review and approve policies for the department as well as participate in planning. NYS requires the Director of Community Services to submit a plan each year (New York State Mental Hygiene Law § 41.16). The plan outlines goals and objectives for the county as a guide to and facilitation of local service planning. The plan is developed with stakeholders in the county, many of whom are on our three sub-committees.

The Director of Community Services is charged with oversight, planning and passing through funding to providers in Tioga County that are part of a continuum of care. Please see the list of providers below that the department provides state aid, apart from Developmental Disabilities which are provided directly from the state and updates from some of those agencies.

#### ➤ **Achieve**

#### ➤ **Aspire Hope NY**

##### 2025 Successes:

- Hiring and retention of Family Support staff, all FPA & FES positions currently filled
- Increased referrals and SPOA committee participation
- Increased community partnerships and AHNY program awareness
- Increased committee participation
- Monthly distribution of county newsletter tailored to community events and updates for families.
- Consistent support group childcare staff
- In May 2026, AHNY will host and sponsor a community wide all-day event to honor Mental Health Awareness. Activities, food, and entertainment will be provided to the public at no cost. Community providers will be invited to attend and table.

- **Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga**
- **Franziska Racker Centers**
- **Glove House** “The Waverly Preventive Program is a longstanding collaboration bringing together Tioga County DSS, Glove House, and the Waverly school system to improve outcomes among students who are struggling in school for a variety of needs ranging from behavioral, attendance based, academic needs, and more. Goal attainment for the year:
  - 85% of clients served will not be suspended from school or have a major incident reported while enrolled in preventative services. Result: 90% of clients served were not suspended from school after involvement in the program.
  - 95% of clients served will not be involved with CPS for Educational Neglect while enrolled in preventive services. Result: 95% of clients were not involved. One youth was referred, as they addressed medical and mental health needs.
  - Clients enrolled in preventive services will show a reduction in the number of absences throughout their enrollment in the program. Result: 100%, attendance rates improved for all successfully discharged youths, while also showing improvement for all active cases at this time.
- **A New Hope Center** “A New Hope Center’s vision: a world where all people are safe, valued, respected, and free. Provides services to any person subjected to abuse or crime. The agency served 186 individuals struggling with mental health and/or suspected substance use. This is consistent with last year.”
- **Rehabilitation Support Services**
- **Tioga County Veterans**
- **Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES** The TST BOCES Youth Development Program is a school-based program prevention program that focuses on mitigating risk factors and strengthening internal and external protective factors for youth by promoting social-emotional and mental wellness. Our prevention services are primarily provided to youth in grades K-6 in the Candor School District. Our secondary focus is on supporting junior/senior high school students, school personnel, caregivers/persons in parental relations, and community members in increasing their awareness and building the skills needed to help create environments and experience that empower students to make healthy decisions.
  - 36 students in grades 3-6 participated in weekly Banana Splits groups to talk about their experiences/feelings and discover solutions on how to manage them. They engage in discussion-based games which help them develop empathy and additional social skills. (3<sup>rd</sup> grade groups started in October 2025)
  - 58 students in grade 5 participated in a Cyber Safety & Digital Citizenship lesson (February 2025)
  - Teen Intervene- A brief intervention based on motivational interviewing for students currently using substances. This was the first year we provided Teen Intervene at Candor Jr/Sr High School. 5 students participated in Teen Intervene during this calendar year. 29 sessions were held.
- **Trinity, CASA**

➤ **Tioga County Alcohol and Drug Services & Tioga County Mental Health Clinic**

Mental Health and Substance Use services in the new Waverly Satellite Clinic were very successful in 2025. Demand has increased and there are now 4 full-time providers and 1 part-time psychiatrist offering services in Waverly.

Mental Hygiene partners with area school districts provide licensed mental health services at school. Currently we have satellite clinics in Owego & Apalachin Elementary Schools, Waverly Elementary School, Newark Valley Schools, Tioga Central Schools, and Spencer VanEtten Schools.

At the end of 2025, Mental Hygiene received an interim designation from OMH for Mobile Crisis to serve adults in Tioga County. Throughout 2025 there were challenges in finding and hiring experienced staff for this program. With the state aid we were able to purchase mobile crisis vehicles and technology equipment for the program. Services in 2026 will begin with the adult population with a goal of obtaining a designation to serve children. We are eager and excited that this much needed service will be available in the community in early 2026.

Mental Hygiene continues to receive state aid for the continuation of MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) in the Tioga County Jail. This program has been successful in providing much needed treatment medications to incarcerated individuals.

Mental Hygiene continues to offer Narcan kits and free training to anyone who requests this need. Mental Hygiene is a certified provider under the NYS Opioid Overdose Program that supplies free Naloxone, rescue breathing face shields, and drug testing strips as an effort to reduce overdose in the community.

Wapping up 2025, Opioid Settlement Funding RFPs were awarded to five agencies within the county including A New Hope Center, HeaHea, CASA Trinity, Tioga Opportunities and Partnership to end Addiction. We look forward to working with these agencies in 2026.

Staffing trends remained a challenge throughout 2025, with staffing shortages and turnover. Retirements, and new opportunities for experienced social workers including private practice and opportunities for fully remote positions directly impact clinic staffing. Mental Hygiene was forced to pause services in October 2025 due to clinical staffing shortages and needing to reset to meet the current need. We re-opened services in November and have since hired several new social workers. Mental Hygiene ended the year with a total of 5 vacancies -all of which are clinical staff positions.

Mental Hygiene partnered with Social Services with a goal of providing mental health services through the Child Advocacy Center in 2026. This will be a wonderful opportunity for children and families involved with the CAC. Mental Hygiene continues to search for qualified and experienced social workers who can work independently to meet more complex needs of children and families.

Mental Hygiene continues to partner with Probation to provide mental health screening to youth involved with probation through the E-connect program. The probation department facilitates a confidential initial electronic screening with youth which is scored. Outcomes result in expedited referrals to Mental Hygiene for services.

Mental Hygiene partners with Public Health to ensure the success of the Advocacy Support and Prevention Coalition (ASAP) and Suicide Prevention Coalition. After some transitions, both coalitions appear to be strong and are moving forward in positive direction. Both coalitions bring new interest, awareness, training, ideas and support to the community through hosted and planned community events as well as media campaigns. The Tioga ASAP completed the CLYDE Surveys at 6 school districts in 2025 and will soon be sharing the results in the Spring of 2026. The CLYDE Survey is an anonymous youth survey that collects feedback from school-age youth. The survey asks students about themselves, their family, their school, and their community. The survey also collects self-reported data on youth substance use and risky behaviors (e.g., drinking and driving). The Suicide Prevention Coalition has been revitalized and has begun strategic planning for the next two years. Any community member who is interested in either of these initiatives is strongly encouraged to attend!

Mental Hygiene is also actively engaged with Tioga County's TAM (Threat Assessment Management) Team, COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster), LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee), Suicide Prevention Coalition, ASAP (Advocacy, Support and Prevention) Coalition, and CAC (Child Advocacy Center) and more.

Finally, we want to thank Lori Morgan for her 23 years of dedicated service to the Tioga County. As the Director of Community Services Lori was responsible for many of the key accomplishments and successes for the Mental Hygiene Department over the past decade. We wish her the very best.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Begeal, LCSW-R  
Interim Director of Community Services  
Tioga County Department of Mental Hygiene