



Office of Children and Family Services

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Local Commissioners Memorandum

Transmittal:	25-OCFS-LCM-09
To:	Municipal Youth Bureau Directors
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success
Date:	June 18, 2025
Subject:	Municipal Allocations for Youth Team Sports for Program Year October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026
Contact Person(s):	See section VI.
Attachments:	Appendix A: <i>Municipal Youth Team Sports Allocations, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026</i> <u>OCFS-5011, Universal Application for Youth Sports Funding</u>

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) is to advise municipal youth bureaus on the availability of Youth Team Sports (YTS) allocations for program year October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026.

II. Background

In state fiscal year 2025-26, the enacted budget included funding to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to support youth team sports programs for underserved youth under age 18. Each municipal youth bureau will receive a YTS allocation based on youth census data in each county.

III. Program Implications

YTS funding must be awarded to local community-based organizations and nonprofits. Youth bureaus may, in limited circumstances, be approved to directly operate or fund programming. Those circumstances are described in the Eligibility and Funding section below.

Each youth bureau must submit to OCFS one Resource Allocation Plan (RAP) for each program to be funded. Additional details on how to complete a RAP can be found in Quality Youth Development System (QYDS) under "BYD and System Documents."

YTS is grounded in the principles of positive youth development. It is intended to provide support to local team sports programs across New York State in communities where such programs may be scarce or under-resourced. YTS has a sole focus on team sports. For the purposes of YTS, a "team sport" is defined as an organized physical activity in which groups of two or more individuals compete with two

or more opposing individuals. Sporting activities where individuals engage in competition on behalf of an organized group are included in this definition, including, but not limited to, team tennis, team golf, or racing sports such as swimming or skiing.

YTS may be used to fund programming that provides opportunities for youth in under-resourced communities to learn and participate in team sports activities. This may include educational instruction necessary to prepare youth to participate in team sports.

To ensure that funding is going to the intended population, municipal youth bureaus must distribute funds based on local need,¹ considering factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- Historically under-resourced communities.
- Marginalized communities or groups with higher barriers to participation in sports (e.g., youth with disabilities; Indigenous peoples; girls; transgender/gender non-binary youth; and youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning).
- Federally and/or New York State-recognized tribes and tribal organizations.
- Communities with high rates of public housing and/or family homelessness.
- Opportunity Zones or neighborhoods/cities/areas deemed “low-income” via externally available tools like the New York State Council on Children and Families Kids’ Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse.
- Neighborhoods that experience higher rates of crime and violence and have lower-performing schools.

All funded programs must aim to foster the following:

- Physical health and well-being – Increasing physical activity and positive relationships to one’s body.
- Mental health and well-being – Improving outcomes related to youth’s mental health, and social and emotional skills development and connectedness.
- Employment – Increasing qualifications and skills, such as collective problem-solving, teamwork, and dispute resolution, which help prepare youth for suitable employment.
- Community cohesion – Breaking down barriers to reduce discrimination, crime, and violence in communities and help young leaders emerge.

Requirement to Advertise

To provide equitable access to government funding, OCFS has developed a universal application form that must be used as part of the procurement process by municipal youth bureaus (see appended form OCFS-5011, *Universal Application for Youth Sports Funding*). In addition, the opportunity to apply for funding at the local level must be widely advertised, and adequate time frames for inquiries and application must be provided. Municipal youth bureaus must provide information and technical assistance to interested organizations on how to apply for available funding.

In instances where counties have multiyear contracts in place as of the effective date of this LCM, those counties may request a waiver from the advertising requirement in program year 2025-2026. Waiver requests must be submitted in writing to YouthBureau@ocfs.ny.gov and include the following information:

¹ Data sources to consult in assessing local need include, but are not limited to, the New York State Council on Children and Families Kids’ Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse, <https://www.nyskwic.org/>; public data from the New York State Education Department, <https://data.nysed.gov/>; and youth arrest data from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, <https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/juvenilearrests/index.htm>.

- A letter on municipal letterhead addressed to OCFS requesting a waiver from the advertisement requirement for YTS in program year 2025-2026 due to pre-existing multiyear contracts.
- Documentation verifying the county has already executed contract(s) using 2025-2026 YTS funds.

Eligibility and Funding

Municipal youth bureaus will contract directly with local nonprofit or community-based organizations for up to \$50,000 per program. Contracted organizations should focus on developing community-based team sports programming for youth. Organizations that serve multiple areas through different programs may be funded above \$50,000. Funding may provide general operating support to give programs flexibility to efficiently allocate resources for quality programming.

Municipal youth bureaus seeking to directly operate or fund a project must first demonstrate to OCFS that diligent outreach and recruitment activities were conducted to all known eligible entities and articulate the outcomes of such activities to OCFS. In addition, municipal youth bureaus must submit to OCFS an attestation stating they conducted outreach to all known nonprofit and community-based organizations in their municipality and that there were no entities eligible to administer the program. YTS funds can supplement existing municipal youth team sports programming; however, the funds cannot be used to supplant existing municipal funding for such programs.

Line-item budgets should focus on programming costs, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Coaches/instructors/direct service staff/mentors (including training/professional development necessary to support youth's ability to participate in team sports).
- Referee fees.
- Purchase of equipment or uniforms.
- Capital investment (e.g., swimming facilities, fields, fences, storage, lighting).
- Facility/field space cost.
- Purchase of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) by local nonprofit or community-based organizations to support the requirements of Chapter 681 of the Laws of 2023, as amended by Chapter 9 of the Laws of 2024.

Programs eligible for funding must meet the criteria below:

- Provide team sports activities for youth under age 18 in under-resourced communities.
- Operate in New York State.
- Demonstrate basic competency in the areas of governance, monitoring and evaluation, partnership, and financial stewardship.
- Have a child protection policy in place that includes adherence to local city, agency, school district, and state child protection guidelines.
- Have the ability to collect registration data, including participant demographic information, as required by OCFS in a manner that allows for accurate reporting of anonymized aggregate data.

Organizations, expenditures, and activities not eligible for funding are the following:

- For-profit organizations or businesses.
- Private foundations, as defined in section 509(a) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
- Organizations that discriminate based on age, ethnicity/race, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, physical or other disability, national origin, or any protected characteristic under local, state, and/or federal law.
- Research or project-planning activities.

- Elite or private sports camps, programs, or teams.
- Endowments, memorials, budget deficits, or fundraising activities.
- Religious organizations whose sports programs do not have a secular and community focus.
- Lobbying, political, or fraternal activities.
- Capital projects.

Touchstone Life Areas and Services, Opportunities and Supports (SOS) in QYDS

Municipal youth bureaus will be required to report demographics and outcomes through QYDS. The Life Area and SOS selections that will be required in QYDS for YTS are as follows:

- Life Area: 2PEH Physical and Emotional Health
- SOS: 0232 Year-Round/Seasonal Activities
- Performance measures:
 - How Much: 0232A.1 – Number of youth participating (unduplicated)
 - How Well: 0232B.4 – Percent of youth completing the program
 - Better Off: 0232C.2 – Number of youth who attain or improve on a skill and/or report an increase in knowledge/awareness

IV. Allocation Methodology

Allocations are based on a minimum allocation of \$10,000 with the balance proportionately split based on each municipality's population of youth under the age of 18.

In rare instances, a county may identify midyear that it has been allocated YTS funds that it cannot spend or claim. When this occurs, counties are encouraged to contact OCFS as soon as possible. Sharing this information with OCFS may allow those unused funds to be reallocated to another county with similar programming and demonstrated fiscal need. When counties demonstrate fiscal need by accurately completing the RAP, they may become eligible to receive additional funds should the funds become available. OCFS may reallocate any unclaimed allocation to municipalities with demonstrated need after the close of the claiming period.

V. Claiming

All claims must directly support the youth team sports program. A maximum of 15% of the municipality's total YTS allocation may be used to support administration/overhead costs for municipal youth bureaus. State share is available for 100% of eligible expenditures as included in the approved RAP. Additional details on how to complete a RAP and submit claims can be found in QYDS under "BYD and System Documents."

Claims for the program period October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, are due 3/31/2027.

Documentation that must be submitted by municipal youth bureaus to OCFS for a claim to be processed includes:

- County Implemented Programs
 - An original State Aid Voucher (AC-1171), with the program number assigned by QYDS, boxes 4 through 8 completed, and an original authorized signature.
 - Supporting backup documentation, which may include but is not limited to:
 - *Program Expenditure Report – Salaries* (OCFS-3126)
 - *Program Expenditure Report – Fringe Benefits* (OCFS-3127)
 - *Program Expenditure Report – Contracted Services & Stipends* (OCFS-3128)
 - *Program Expenditure Report – M&O and Facility Repairs* (OCFS-3129)