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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

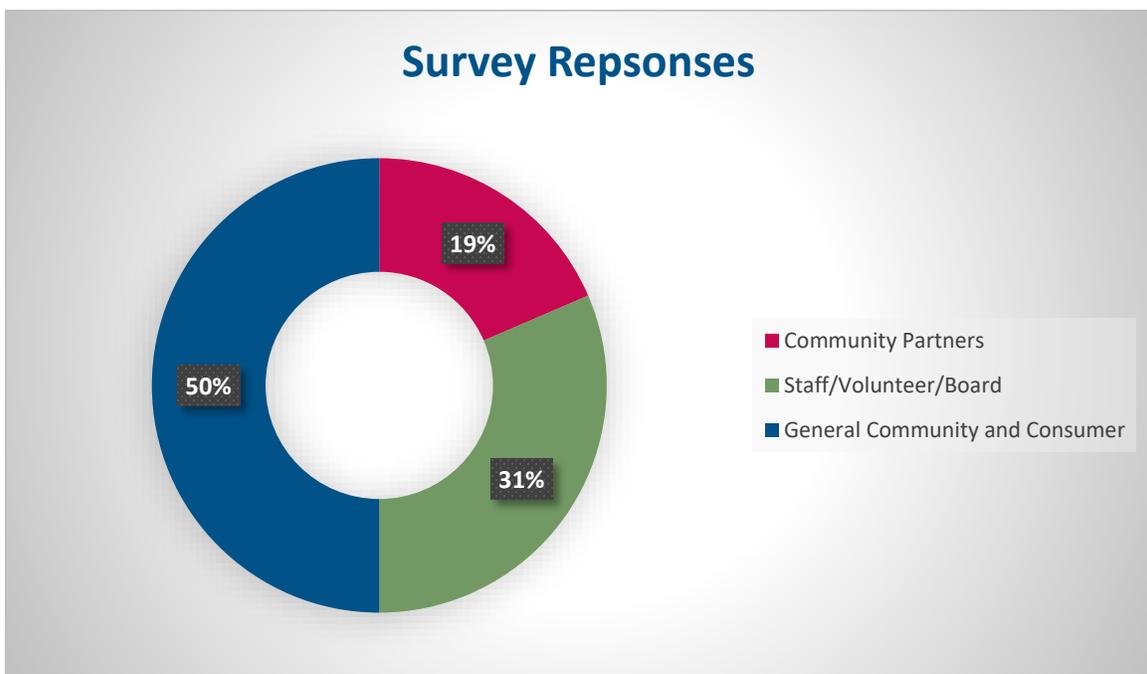
The Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties (JCEO) is dedicated to addressing the needs of low-income residents in Clinton and Franklin Counties by providing relevant and innovative programs and services based on the current and projected needs of individuals and families. This needs assessment was conducted to help inform JCEO’s current programming and future strategic planning.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties, Inc. (JCEO) conducted a Community Needs Assessment to assist in strategic planning and to understand the emerging and ongoing needs of the community they serve. Community Action Agencies are required through legislation to conduct a community needs assessment every three years. A guidance committee of staff led the assessment.

The Community Needs Assessment process utilized the following methodologies:

- Collected and analyzed relevant census and social indicator data
- Conducted six focus groups (held on June 11, 16, 17, 23, 28 and July 2 of 2021) with JCEO consumers, Head Start Policy Council and community partners and members. Feedback from these meetings is incorporated throughout the report.
- Conducted three surveys with JCEO consumers (170 total), JCEO staff, Board members, and volunteers (107 total), and community partners in both Clinton and Franklin Counties (63 total). Surveys were administered in an online version and paper form was offered. Feedback from these surveys is integrated into the report.



This assessment includes data for both Clinton County and Franklin County and both counties combined, referred to as the “report area”. Data for smaller municipalities in the county is included where available and applicable.

When referencing US Census Bureau data, American Community Survey Five Year 2015-2019 estimates were used in order to present the most accurate picture of community need. 5-year estimates are released annually and are recommended for analyzing small populations. The US Census Bureau has changed the way it collects Census data since the 2000 US Census. Instead of the decennial long-form, the Bureau now conducts annual data collection activities via the American Community Survey. The American Community Survey yearly estimates are based on roughly 2% of the population; the 3-year estimates are based on roughly 6% of the population, and the 5-year estimates are based on roughly 10% of the population.

As a result, demographers recommend the use of the 5-year ACS data and caution strongly against year-to-year comparisons. In this report, there are some cases where data was only available in the one year or three year estimates so that data was used and is noted as such. Additional national, state and local sources were utilized and are noted throughout the report.

KEY FINDINGS

The largest needs/concerns that were expressed during the process are as follows (alphabetical, not necessarily in ranked order):

- Child Care
- Employment
- Home and car repairs
- Mental Health Services
- Transportation

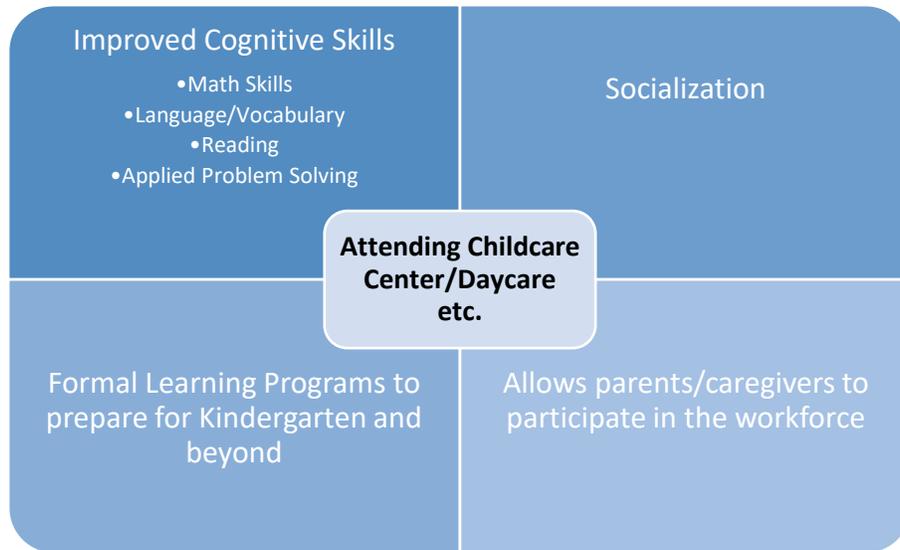
CHILDCARE DEMOGRAPHICS

There were significant concerns regarding access and affordability of **child care** in our region, especially in light of the pandemic which exacerbated this issue that families have been struggling with for years. Our region has struggled for many years with insufficient number of daycare providers. There is also a very limited number of available spots for children under 2 or those needing part time care making it difficult for parents or caregivers to return to work or maintain employment. 31.55% of households who completed the survey ranked child care as a top concern.

Affordable childcare was as an area of great need for low-income households in both focus groups and surveys. Sufficient affordable childcare options were thought to be lacking in both counties and parents noted that they often have to miss work or discontinue working all together due to lack of child care. The pandemic has pushed these issues even more into the forefront as many providers have closed as a result of the pandemic (i.e. increased requirements, concern about contracting the virus etc.)

It is widely known that quality childcare benefits the child, the family, the community, and ultimately, the country. Children in higher quality early learning programs have better cognitive outcomes: measurably better language/vocabulary, reading, math skills, and applied problem solving. They are more likely to attend college

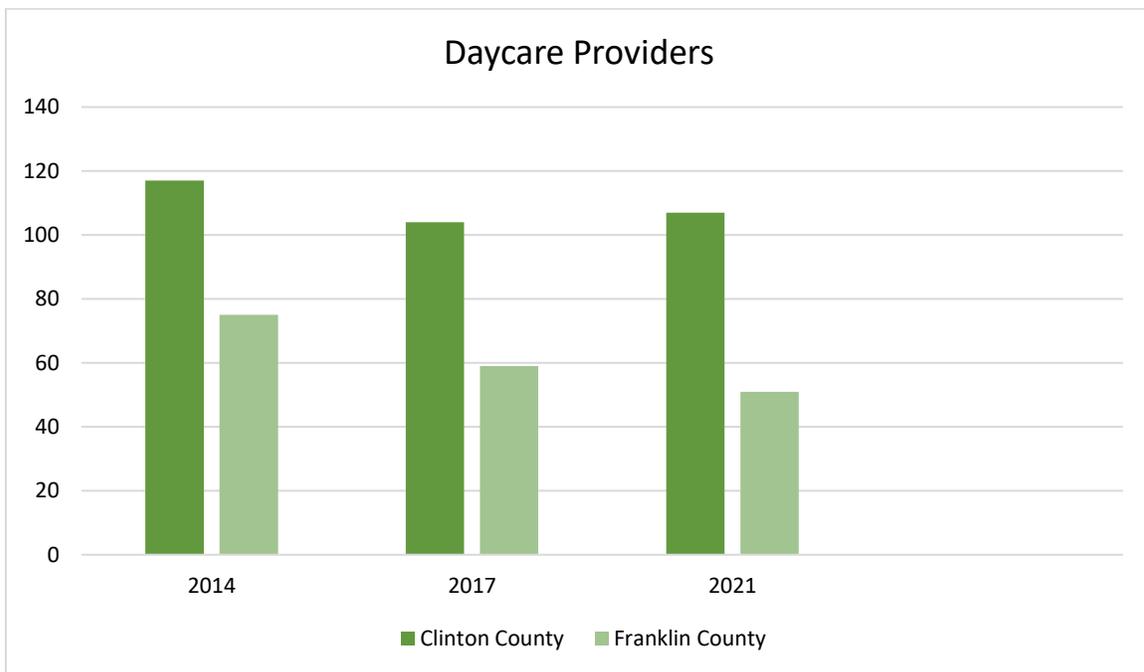
and earn higher wages, and less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system. While quality childcare has a positive benefit on all children, the impact is particularly strong for children in low-income families. Unfortunately, with the rising costs of child care and limited spaces available, low income families are more likely to stay home with their children rather than enrolling them in centers or having them attend home daycares which means less socialization, no formal early learning programs etc.



According to the 2020 ALICE Report:

“The child care industry will face new challenges, and so will parents. As the number of families with children continues to decrease (it fell 10% in New York from 2010 to 2018), it will be harder for child care centers to stay in business, making child care more difficult to find and more expensive, especially in less populated areas. In 2018, 64% of New York residents lived in a child care desert, defined as having no child care providers at all, or so few options that there are three times as many children for each available licensed child care slot. Since single-parent families are still more likely to be below the ALICE Threshold, they will also struggle to afford quality child care. According to the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, the high cost of child care in New York makes it unaffordable for many families, preventing parents from participating in the workforce, and depriving children of quality early-childhood learning and education. Compounding this issue is the fact that low-paid child care workers are ALICE as well (with a median hourly wage of \$12.87 in New York).”

In Clinton County, the number of providers has stayed fairly consistent; however, some school districts are more lacking than others based on feedback we receive from families. In Franklin County, the number of providers has been steadily declining over the last 7+ years. Daycare providers in this area state that with both starting and operating a daycare is it extremely difficult to follow all of the strict guidelines and regulations set forth by the state. The COVID-19 pandemic also pushed some providers to close as they realized they no longer wanted to operate a daycare, especially in light of the added risks and complications the pandemic created (i.e. exposure, quarantine, remote schooling etc.).



SOURCE: NYS OCFS, 2021

Cost of Childcare

According to The United Way ALICE Report, a household outside of NYC with one infant and one preschooler can expect to pay, on average, \$1,366 per month in New York State for child care.

According to the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, the cost for childcare in “Group 3” counties, including Clinton and Franklin County, is between **\$150** and **\$220** per week, per child. Care is more expensive for infants and toddlers and less so for three and four-year-old children and, as is the case nationwide, centers are usually more expensive than family childcare homes.

Childcare Assistance

Clinton County Department of Social Services provides subsidies to working parents through the Child Care Development Block Grant. Subsidies are based on the level of need and the family’s household income. Subsidies are not provided to parents enrolled in schools. Families who receive the childcare subsidy are required to pay a portion of their childcare costs, known as the family share of copayment.

Franklin County DSS pays daycare costs for families with income up to 200% of the State Income Standard when child care services are needed for the child’s caretaker to participate in a program providing basic remedial education in reading, writing, mathematics, and oral communications for individuals functioning below the ninth month of the eighth grade level, in a program providing literacy training, or parent/caretakers who are satisfactorily participating in a four year college or university program leading to a bachelor’s degree and that is reasonably expected to lead to an improvement in the parent/caretaker’s earning capacity as long as the parent/caretaker is also working at least 17 ½ hours per week. The Parent/Caretaker must maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 and be enrolled with an approved college program.

Demonstrated Childcare Needs

31.55% of consumer respondents in our survey listed childcare as a top three need of their household within the last 12 months. With the COVID-19 pandemic, child care issues were more visible than ever. Many families

continued to struggle and more struggled than had in the past with finding suitable and affordable child care to accommodate for remote learning leaving many families needing to adjust employment situations and status to care for their children.

EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Employment issues that were raised were around a limited pool of certified and credentialed potential employees for the types of jobs that are most needed right now (i.e. counselors, teachers etc.). Some individuals provided feedback that they want to find a better job but aren't sure how or how to obtain the skills and education/training to reach those goals. Others noted that they have special training and education but they aren't quite sure how best to match that with what types of jobs are available in this area.

The current employment market is in flux. The pandemic caused a lot of people to temporarily be out of work and as now, some have yet to return for various reasons. The unemployment rates are headed towards being more in line with pre-pandemic numbers but you would be hard pressed to find a business or type of career field that is not short for help these days, many have been forced to close certain days of the week, shorten their hours or close the business entirely due to a lack in staffing.

There have been some recent strides in the workforce readiness realm, including the new Institute for Advanced Manufacturing at Clinton Community College, RAMP with Coryer Staffing, Ready2Create and Ready4Real with ERS which helps individuals gain relevant training and work experience.

The North County Regional Economic Development Committee's (NCREDC) Annual Report cites that "having affordable and available childcare not only improves long-term workforce recruitment and retention, it also helps with near-term employee work attendance."

A common theme in focus groups was the difficulty in recruiting professionals in fields that require specific credentialing such as education and mental health. The NCREDC reported in their 2021 Annual Report that healthcare is a huge demand field in our region especially in the fields of telemedicine, lab and surgical technicians, public health advocates, certified nursing assistants and medical office assistants. The other fields they specifically noted having shortfalls are lodging and hospitality. "Local workforce shortages, especially in healthcare and hospitality, compounded by the availability of childcare are making it very difficult for employers to maintain stable labor pools."

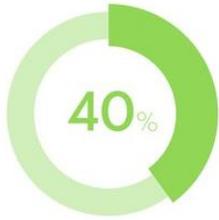
17.5% percent of JCEO consumer survey respondents indicated that they needed help finding a better job which is up from 10% of respondents in 2017. Over eight percent indicated they need help with job training or retraining services. Focus group participants noted that they have skills and education but aren't sure how to connect that to what jobs are available in the area so instead the work two jobs (not in the field they are trained and educated in) to help makes ends meet in the meantime.

The New York State ALICE report noted that the number of low-wage jobs increased by 33% from 2007 to 2018, and accounted for the largest number of jobs in New York in 2018.

Industries

According to Data USA in 2019, **the largest industry in both counties is "Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance"**. Clinton County's second and third largest industries are Retail Trade and Educational Services. Franklin County's second and third largest industries are Public Administration and Educational Services.

Employers



Of the top 20 employers in the region, four are prisons and four are schools.

Top Employers in Clinton and Franklin County

Clinton County	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UVM Health Network - CVPH 2. Clinton Correctional Facility 3. State University of NY-Plattsburgh 4. Clinton County Government 5. Wal-Mart and Sam's Club 6. Peru Central School District 7. Advocacy Resource Center 8. City of Plattsburgh 9. Beekmantown Central School District 10. Swarovski Lighting, LTD
Franklin County	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sunmount Development Center 2. North Star Industries 3. NYS Dept. of Correction - Bare Hill 4. NYS Dept. of Correction - Franklin 5. Akwesasne Mohawk Casino 6. Franklin County 7. NYS Dept. of Correction - Upstate 8. Alice Hyde Medical Center 9. St Regis Mohawk Tribe Council 10. Paul Smiths College

Source: www.northcountrychamber.com/Business-Development/Demographics

Both Clinton and Franklin County are part of the North Country Regional Economic Development Council along with Saint Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis, Essex and Hamilton Counties. The Council's mission is to empower

community, business and academic leaders to drive economic activity which is guided by long-term strategic plans.

The Council’s 2017 Progress Report has some notable accomplishments in increasing employment opportunities in the region:

- Clinton Community College launched the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing in July 2017
- Multiple STEM-focused youth career events were held throughout the region
- A third Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH), serving Franklin County, opened for the 2016-2017 school year
- The Workforce Development Boards coordinated a new apprenticeship class with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

The Plattsburgh Air Force base, which was closed in 1993, is now called the Plattsburgh Airbase Redevelopment Corporation. It has attracted many businesses in the fields of aerospace, rail transportation, market research, manufacturing, warehousing and health care. The former base is also home to Plattsburgh International Airport.

Clinton and Franklin Counties are both part of the North Country Workforce Investment Board (NCWIB) that also includes Essex and Hamilton Counties. The NCWIB provides employment-related services to local businesses and job seekers through a network of region-wide One Work Source Career Centers. Businesses utilize the NCWIB to find skilled employees and expertise in job training and supportive services and job seekers look for referral and placement in jobs, education, and training programs. The NCWIB received SOAR (Substance Abuse & Opioid Addiction Recovery Grant funding. This funding can be used for career services (i.e. resume and cover letter writing, interviewing skills, job coaching), supportive services (equipment, books, uniforms, child care, transportation, tools, exams, fees) and training services (occupation training, apprenticeships, college courses, internships, on the job training) for anyone directly or indirectly affected by substance abuse, alcoholism and/or the opioid crisis. This grant is intended to assist with dislocated workers (i.e. laid off), unemployed or underemployed individuals.

Unemployment

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the unemployment rate in Clinton and Franklin Counties as of August 2021 is 5.0%. At the start of the pandemic in 2020, those rates were over 16 and 17%. As of August 2021, New York’s unemployment rate is 7.1% and the US unemployment rate is 5.2%.

In our 2017 Needs Assessment, the unemployment rate in both counties had been steadily decreasing. In large part due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we are not following the same trend in 2021. The chart below shows the rate change over the past five years.

Five-Year Unemployment Rates

	July 2017	July 2018	July 2019	July 2020	July 2021
Clinton County, NY	5.2%	4.3%	4.4%	10.8%	5.2%
Franklin County, NY	5.4%	4.5%	4.6%	11.8%	5.3%
New York	4.8%	4.1%	4.0%	14.8%	7.4%
United States	4.3%	3.8%	3.6%	10.2%	5.4%

Data Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

HOME AND CAR REPAIRS

Home and car repairs were repeatedly mentioned as an area of concern because individuals cannot afford these necessities in many cases and have to prioritize other needs such as food over repairs. Nearly 19% of respondents were unable to afford car repairs in the last year. When someone doesn't have a car that has a ripple effect on other aspects of their life such as employment, accessing resources, children going to school etc.

MENTAL HEALTH DEMOGRAPHICS

In both counties, **mental health services** were near the top of the list with 27.38% of respondents ranking this as a top household need in the past 12 months. A large focus was around children's services and wait lists which were direct results of the pandemic (both the impact on individuals that resulted in greater need for services as well as limited services and providers because of the pandemic).

The following is a list of the larger mental health service providers in Clinton and Franklin County.

In Clinton County, the **Clinton County Department of Mental Health** provides both mental health and addiction treatment outpatient clinics. **Behavioral Health Services North (BHSN)** operates in both Clinton and Franklin Counties and provides the following services for adults: Treatment and Care Management, Rehabilitation, and Residential Intervention Services. BHSN also provides the following services for children: Adventure-Based Counseling, Child/Family Clinic, Therapeutic Foster Care services, and various services for children with serious emotional disturbance or special needs. **The National Mental Health Alliance – Champlain Valley (NAMI)** provides free education, advocacy, and support services to all those affected (individuals and families) by brain disorders – including serious mental illnesses and/or emotional/behavioral disorders – in Clinton, Franklin, and Essex Counties.

In Franklin County, **Citizen Advocates** provides widespread behavioral health outpatient services for mental health and substance use problems, individualized case management, health home care coordination and other behavioral health services. The organization also provides extensive services for children. In 2017, Citizen Advocates opened a Crisis & Recovery Center in Malone. The facility is a voluntary setting where people with a mental-health, substance-use or co-occurring crisis can receive prompt, recovery-focused services instead of going to the emergency room.

The North Country Behavioral Healthcare Network includes organizations in both Clinton and Franklin County. The network aims to link member organizations to share resources and collaborate.

Focus groups noted the increased utilization and success of peer counselors, however, there are not enough of them in the area for the level of need or they aren't always available when and where it could benefit someone and that individual ends up in full blown crisis before services can be made available.

The pandemic has exacerbated mental health issues for many and created them for those who hadn't experienced them in the past. Focus groups reported that for school aged children then drastic shift to limited socialization and remote school had severe negative impacts on their mental health that will impact them for many years to come. Focus groups also noted that for teens, especially, reintegrating post-Covid has been difficult and there aren't a lot of options for healthy socialization especially when you factor in limited transportation when parents need to work and can't bring their children to and from clubs, meetings etc. It was

also noted that having counselors at school is a wonderful resource but many children don't necessarily need that, they just need someone they can "vent" to such as a peer/ mentor but in an appropriate setting or perhaps with some guidelines and training to ensure they know what types of red flags or potential safety concerns to watch for.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

According to the NYS Opioid Annual Report for 2020: "Among NYS residents, the number of overdose deaths involving any opioid increased each year between 2010 and 2017, with an overall increase of 200 percent from 1,074 in 2010 to 3,224 in 2017. In 2018, overdose deaths involving any opioid decreased from 2017 (3,224) by seven percent to 2,991 deaths. Despite the recent decline, the 2018 age-adjusted rate of 15.1 deaths involving any opioid per 100,000 population in NYS is still nearly triple that of 5.4 in 2010. The number of overdose deaths involving commonly prescribed opioids increased by 42 percent from 737 deaths in 2010 to 1,044 in 2017, followed by a four percent decrease in 2018 to 998 deaths."

In Clinton County in 2019, there were two opioid overdose deaths which increased to 10 deaths in 2020. In 2019, there were 14 outpatient emergency room visits compared to 9 in 2020. Opioid overdoses resulting in hospitalization, but not death, remained steady at 7. The rate of Naloxone administration by EMS, law enforcement and registered programs is steadily increasing- 32 times in 2019, 104 in 2020 and for the first quarter of 2021 there were 28 administrations. Admissions into OASAS-certified substance-use disorder treatment programs for any opioid increased from 577 in 2018 to 642 in 2019.

In Franklin County in 2019 and 2020 there were three opioid deaths. In 2019, there were 6 outpatient ER visits and that increased to 15 in 2020. Opioid overdoses resulting in hospitalization, but not death, went from 0 in 2019 to 6 in 2020. The rate of Naloxone administration by EMS, law enforcement and registered programs stayed fairly consistent- 16 times in 2019, 25 in 2020 and for the first quarter of 2021 there were 15 administrations. Admissions into OASAS (Office of Addiction Services and Supports)-certified substance-use disorder treatment programs for any opioid decreased from 322 in 2018 to 267 in 2019.

According to The United Health Foundation's 2020 Annual Report, 14.8% of women in New York State and 21.9% percent of males in New York State reported excessive drinking. By age, the largest percent reported was 18-44 and it continue to go down from there. New York State ranks 22nd nationwide for excessive drinking. The University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute's Health Rankings Report found that 22% reported excessive drinking in Clinton and Franklin Counties in the 2021 report (2018 data).

Addiction Services

There are several services in both counties to treat addictions as well as St. Lawrence Addiction Treatment Center located in Ogdensburg. In Clinton County, Champlain Valley Family Center (CVFC) provides substance abuse treatment (Outpatient Clinic and a Residential Stabilization and Rehabilitation facility), prevention (including student assistance counseling and community education) and related non-traditional programs: supportive housing, Peer Engagement, a recovery community center, Adult Care Management, Tobacco Free Clinton, Franklin and Essex (ATFC), and adolescent case management. Clinton County Mental Health and Addiction Services has outpatient psychotherapy (individual, group, and family) for Clinton County residents. St. Joseph's Rehabilitation Center, Inc. in Saranac Lake provides Inpatient and Outpatient Programs, Citizen Advocates, Inc. - North Star Community Support Services in Malone and Saranac Lake provides chemical dependency services in clinics and schools. A coalition called SPARCC (Substance Abuse Prevention and Recovery of Clinton County) is a group comprised of community organization, elected officials, concerned citizens, and treatment providers are raising awareness and addressing issues associated with substance abuse.

TRANSPORTATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Both Clinton and Franklin Counties are extremely rural and transportation was noted as a top need in both counties as evidenced by focus groups with community partners and JCEO consumers, as well as surveys. In JCEO's Consumer Survey, those who cited transportation as a challenge indicated they could not afford gas (11.24%) or could not afford car repairs (18.93%).

While both counties have a public transportation system, it was noted that the routes are limited, with transportation to the rural communities once a day, making a one hour doctor's appointment in Plattsburgh or Malone difficult and requiring a full day's worth of time. The limited routes and times can also be challenging for those with transportation needs out of traditional hours. Focus group participants noted that there is a stigma attached to public transportation, and people do not know how to use it. Personal vehicles also present a challenge with cost of insurance, gas, and even costs associated with getting a driver's license. In addition, the weather can take its toll on vehicles.

JCEO's **Medical Transportation** service, in which volunteer drivers bring Medicaid eligible individuals to medical appointments, is extensively utilized in both Clinton and Franklin County. Clinton County coordinates approximately 800 rides per month and Franklin County coordinates approximately 400 rides per month (based on 2020 numbers, which were down approximately 47% due to the Covid-19 Pandemic).

It is also important to note that in June 2017, **Lyft** and **Uber**, both ride-hailing apps in which customers request a ride via their smartphone, became available in upstate New York.

Clinton and Franklin County both participate in the **Adirondack Regional Ride Share Program**, in which travelers can request rides from other travelers on the program's website.

Clinton County Public Transportation

Clinton County Public Transit (CCPT) serves Clinton County and the City of Plattsburgh. It provides fixed route public transportation and has 12 buses with wheelchair lifts (capacity of 800-1000 pounds, depending on bus). CCPT also offers "Rural Zone Dial-A-Ride" Service Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with 7 different stop locations throughout the day (Renal Center, Champlain Centre Mall, Consumer Square, Price Chopper, UVM-CVPH, Beekman Towers and Government Center). To utilize this service, you must contact them at least one business day before your trip. The daily fare for this service is \$10 and seniors (age 60+) may be able to have their fare covered by the Office of the Aging.

CCPT undertook a Transportation Needs Assessment in 2011. From the surveys and meetings conducted during the assessment, the following were gaps in service:

- Lack of information and education about transit in the county, including teaching people how to get from one point to another
- Lack of regional connectivity between Clinton County and Franklin County, New York and Chittenden County, Vermont
- Lack of a south city hub for CCPT
- Lack of service available for persons who work evenings or late night shifts
- Infrequency of fixed route service, specifically in the outlying areas of the county
- Lack of affordable or available options for those that need to travel outside of CCPT operating hours and do not qualify for the various human service transportation programs
- Lack of formal park-and-ride areas with corresponding transit services

In addition to CCPT, there are approximately five taxicab companies providing services in Clinton County and various other agencies, including JCEO, that provide transportation for their clients. Although, these services are typically offered to certain segments of the population, such as seniors or those with a disability.

Franklin County Public Transportation

Franklin County is providing public transportation service within northern and southern Franklin County. This transportation service is available for shopping, employment, medical, educational and miscellaneous needs.

In the northern part of the county bus service is provided within Chateaugay, Burke, Fort Covington, St. Regis Falls, Malone and surrounding communities. Service operates from 6:15 am until 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Saturday service provides transportation from 8:30 am until 5:00 pm. No service on Sunday.

In the southern part of the county bus service is provided within Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake, and Lake Placid with three round trips a day, seven days a week. Shuttle service within the Tupper Lake community is available only Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4pm.

The new Adirondack Route is providing service from Malone to Lake Placid, three times a day, seven days a week.

Taxi service and ride share options in Franklin County remains limited.

Community Partner Focus Groups regularly mentioned the difficulties with transportation for those in Franklin County, especially. Most of their county is incredibly rural and spread out- there are times that families need to travel from Tupper Lake to Malone to access services, nearly 60 miles one way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Gleaned from survey and focus group feedback:

- Explore new ways of recruiting child care providers and collaborations with other local organizations/agencies to find new solutions.
 - Is there a way for local employers to offer onsite care?
 - Is there a different way to help train individuals interested in operating a day care center?
 - Are there better ways to navigate the registration and licensing process to help with some of the delays and roadblocks?
- Continue to build relationships with local high schools, colleges, technical programs, trade schools and staffing agencies to attract potential employees for in demand positions within our agency.
 - Explore the possibility of partnerships to support training of those wishing to enter our employment field.
- Explore ways to support individuals needing mental health services through resource and referrals.
 - Establish stronger relationships with providers in the area to better understand what is available and where to direct people to.
- Continue to provide staff training and resources to help them better support our consumers when it comes to things such as ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and Trauma Informed Care which have direct ties to mental health needs.

- Work with CCPT (Clinton County Public Transit) to facilitate trainings on how to use the bus system, especially in the rural areas.
- Continue to recruit medical transportation drivers across our two county region.

HISTORY

JCEO was created in 1966 as the official anti-poverty agency of Clinton County. The original mandate, which holds true today, was to provide resources and services to promote people’s dignity and self-reliance. JCEO has implemented this philosophy of self-help through practical, timely, and innovative programs and services that emphasize and develop problem-solving skills for over 55 years.

JCEO serves the residents of Clinton and Franklin Counties through its main administrative office located in Plattsburgh as well as 11 Community Outreach Centers in Clinton County and 2 Community Outreach Centers in Franklin County. The Food Services program operates out of a building in Malone (Franklin County). Additionally, we have 11 Head Start classrooms (7 in Clinton County and 4 in Franklin County). We have 2 Early Head Start Classrooms (1 in Clinton County, 1 in Franklin County).

A 24-member Board of Directors governs the agency, consisting of members from the private, public, and consumer sectors. Members of the Board are from both Clinton and Franklin Counties.

In 1998, JCEO began to provide Head Start services to children and families in Franklin County. In 2013, following the closure of the Community Action Agency in Franklin County, JCEO was awarded CSBG funding from the New York State Department of State to serve residents of that county. JCEO now provides Weatherization, Empower NY, Food Services, and Community Outreach programs to Franklin County residents.

JCEO currently administers the following programs:

Head Start and Early Head Start

Head Start/Early Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood education program, providing services to nearly 300 income eligible children and their families. The program combines parent involvement, education, health services, social services, and services to children with disabilities for a uniquely successful program.

Community Outreach

Community Outreach centers are entry points for confidential information, referrals, and services. Services provided include: Food pantries, Medicaid Transportation & Rural Transportation, eviction & utility shut off prevention, HEAP—Home Energy Assistance Program, Christmas Bureau application assistance, summer camp scholarships, and back-to-school supplies.

Senior Outreach Program

The Senior Outreach program meets the diverse needs of Clinton County’s senior population. Services provided include outreach, information, referrals, Telephone Reassurance/Friendly Visitor, Rural Transportation Program, repair services, and HIICAP Insurance Counseling. This program is funded through the Clinton County Office for the Aging and the NYS Office for the Aging.

Day Care Resource and Referral

The Day Care program assists individuals in becoming a New York State Registered Day Care Provider. All providers complete 15 hours of Health and Safety Training. The program also refers families to day care.

Energy Services

The Energy Services team helps families and individuals live in an energy efficient home. Energy Services administers two programs: Weatherization and Empower NY. Eligibility is based on income and services are provided to both homeowners and renters.

Food Services Program in Franklin County

This program obtains nutritious food via donations and agriculture. Food is distributed to approximately 25 food pantries in a 3-county area. The program operates two greenhouses, four gardens, and two Mobile Farmers Markets in the summer months. Citizen Advocates operates two food programs out of this building as well: a summer food program and The Backpack Program, which both provide food to low-income children.

From the period of January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 JCEO served 11,762 unduplicated persons – 3,470 children ages 0-17, 5,784 adults ages 18-64, 1,386 seniors and 1,122 unknown or unreported ages. The demographics of JCEO's consumers are integrated into the different sections of this report.

OVERVIEW OF CLINTON AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES

Clinton County is the most northeastern county in New York State. It is located just west of Vermont and south of the Canadian province of Quebec. The eastern boundary of Clinton County is Lake Champlain, which serves as the New York-Vermont border. It borders Franklin County to the west and the Ausable River forms a large part of the southern county line. The southwest part of the county is in the Adirondack Park.

Clinton County has a total area of 1,118 square miles of which 1,038 square miles is land and 80 square miles is water. The population density per square mile is 79.1. The county is comprised of 1 city, Plattsburgh, as well as 14 towns and 3 villages. The city of Plattsburgh is the county seat.

Franklin County is located in the northeastern part of New York State. The northern edge is the border with the Canadian provinces of Quebec and Ontario; its eastern boundary is Clinton County. Franklin County was created in 1808 when it split from Clinton County. The county seat was set in the village of Malone where it remains today. The largest period of growth in the county was between 1820 and 1830, when the population nearly tripled.

Franklin County has a total area of 1,697 square miles of which 1,629 square miles is land and 68 square miles is water. The population density is 31.7 people per square miles. Franklin County is made up of 19 towns and 6 villages; the Village of Malone is the county seat. Franklin County is also home to the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation, a Mohawk Indian reservation. It is also known by its Mohawk name, Akwesasne. The reservation is adjacent to the Akwesasne reserve in Ontario and Quebec, straddling 12 miles of the US-Canadian Border. The population is 3,247 according to 2015 ACS 5 year estimates. The reservation is home to the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino and the Mohawk Bingo Palace.

Much of Franklin County is within the Adirondack Park; 34% of the county is state land. Land use permits, for sections within the Adirondack Park, are heavily regulated.

Both counties are part of the “North Country”, an area notable for its long, cold winters. Both counties are predominantly rural with miles between the more populated communities. Franklin County is more isolated, and without a large population center, its residents are spread throughout the county. Clinton County is less rural, especially with the City of Plattsburgh.

POPULATION

According to ACS 5-Year Estimates, (2015-2019) Clinton County has a population of 80,583 and Franklin County has a population of 50,477. Though Franklin County is the larger of the two counties geographically, it has a smaller population. Both Clinton and Franklin Counties are made up of several towns and villages - the only city within the two counties is Plattsburgh, located in Clinton County, with a population of 19,465. In Franklin County, the town of Malone is the most populated municipality with a population of 14,276.

Clinton and Franklin County's population, collectively, has decreased over 5% from 2010-2019 according to U.S. Census data.

Population in Poverty

The chart below illustrates poverty in our community. Federal Poverty Levels measure poverty in the US. In 2017, a single person lives in poverty if their income is \$12,060 or less annually. A family of four lives in poverty if their income is \$24,600 annually. According to the US Census Bureau, **16.48%** of the population in Clinton County live in poverty, while **20.26%** of the population in Franklin County live in poverty. The poverty rate is higher in both Clinton County and Franklin County than New York State (15.69%) and the United States (15.47%).

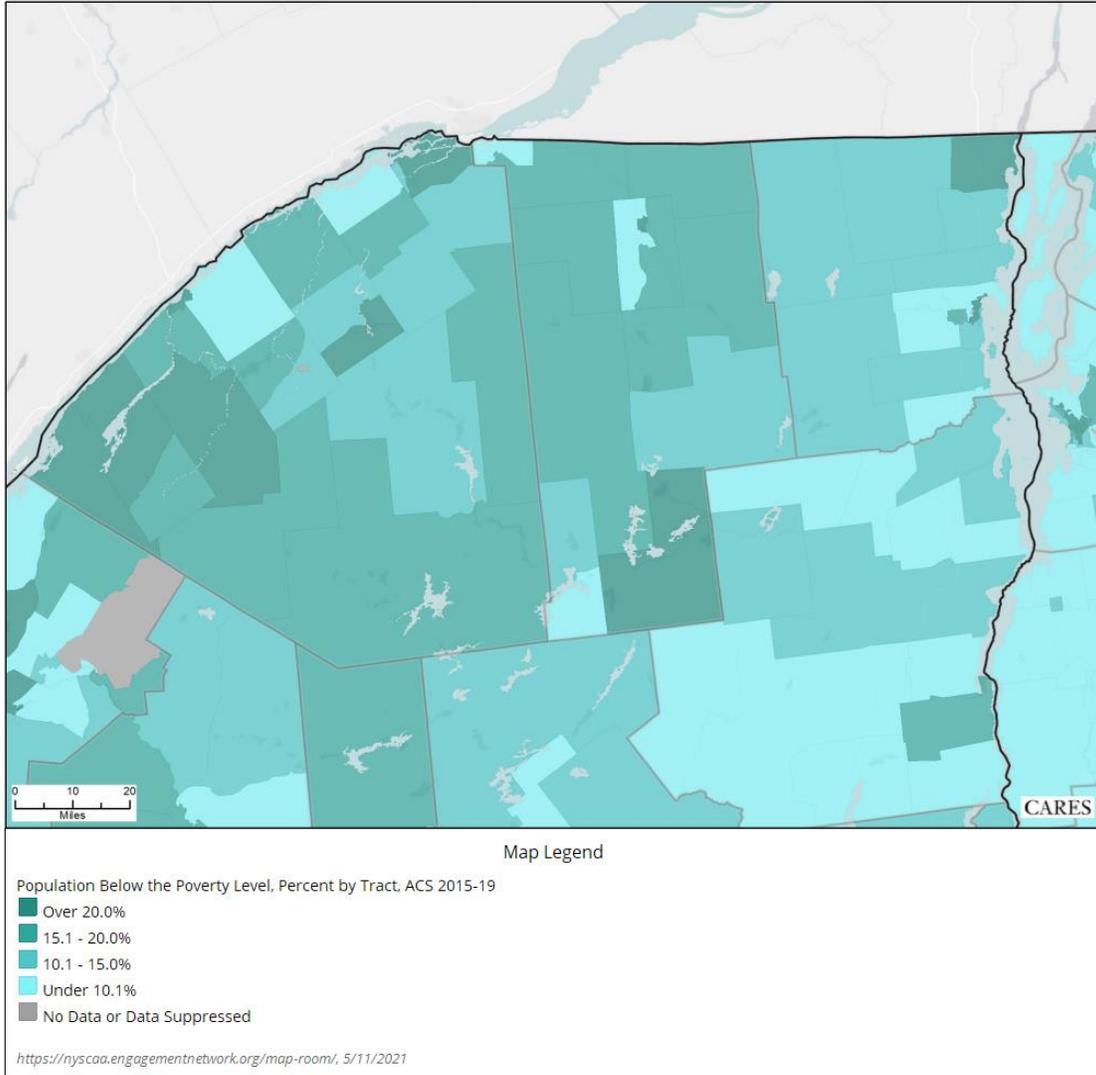
According to the 2020 ALICE Report, the number of ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained and Employed) households rose 39% from 2007-2018 and over the same time period, the number of households living in poverty rose 8%.

Population in Poverty

	Population for whom poverty status has been determined	Population in Poverty	Percent Population in Poverty (2015-2019)
Clinton County, NY	73,807	10,902	15%
Franklin County, NY	44,890	7,981	17.8%
New York	19,063,180	2,681,277	14.1%
United States	316,715,051	42,510,843	13.4%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2015-2019

Population Below the Poverty Level, Percent By Tract



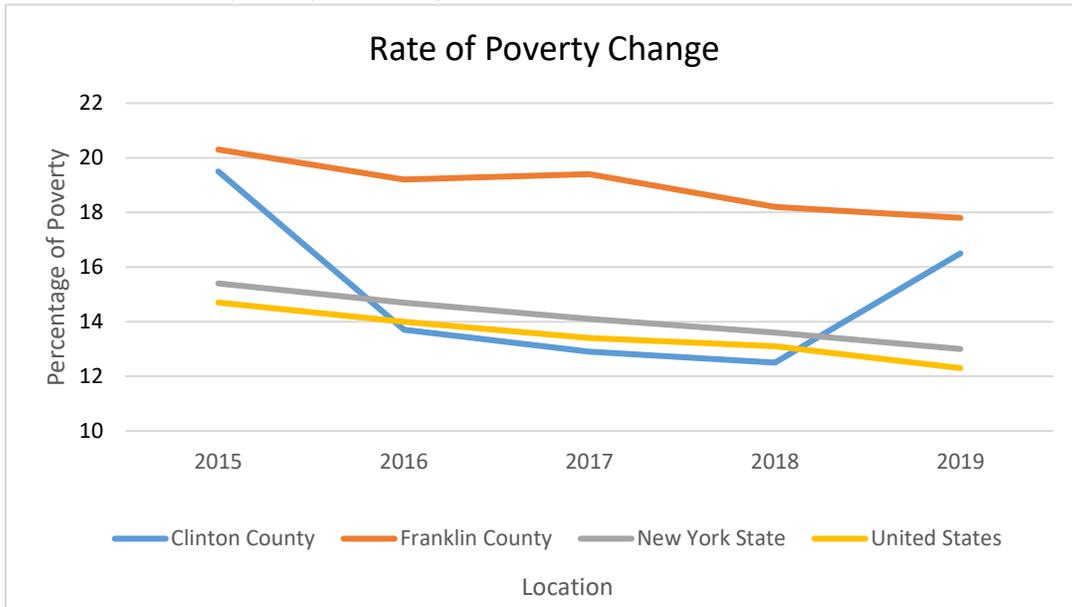
Source: American Community Survey 2015-2019

		Population for whom poverty status is determined	Percent below poverty level	Population in poverty
	County Subdivisions (Town except where noted)	Total Population	Estimated Population In Poverty	Estimated Percentage of Poverty
Clinton County	Altona	2,407	330	13.7
	Au Sable	3,028	282	9.3
	Beekmantown	5,475	694	12.7
	Black Brook	1,404	170	12.1
	Champlain	5,612	1,166	20.8
	Chazy	4,133	557	13.5
	Clinton	626	52	8.3
	Dannemora	1,323	198	15.0
	Ellenburg	1,816	305	16.8
	Mooers	3,563	550	15.4
	Peru	6,830	986	14.4
	Plattsburgh (city)	16,273	3,430	21.1
	Plattsburgh	11,297	1,213	10.7
	Saranac	3,789	601	15.9
Schuyler Falls	5,101	368	7.2	
Franklin County	Bangor	2,167	488	22.5
	Belmont	1,332	218	16.4
	Bombay	1,086	290	26.7
	Brandon	510	73	14.3
	Brighton	719	84	11.7
	Burke	1,381	209	15.1
	Chateaugay	1,580	302	19.1

Constable	1,635	262	16
Dickinson	999	197	19.7
Duane	158	18	11.4
Fort Covington	2,138	361	16.9
Franklin	1,126	107	9.5
Harrietstown	5,468	1,181	21.6
Malone	9,987	2,314	23.2
Moira	2,804	440	15.7
St. Regis Mohawk Reservation	3,310	328	9.9
Santa Clara	381	28	7.3
Tupper Lake	5,422	547	10.1
Waverly	911	225	24.7
Westville	1,776	309	17.4

Poverty Rate Change, 2015-2019

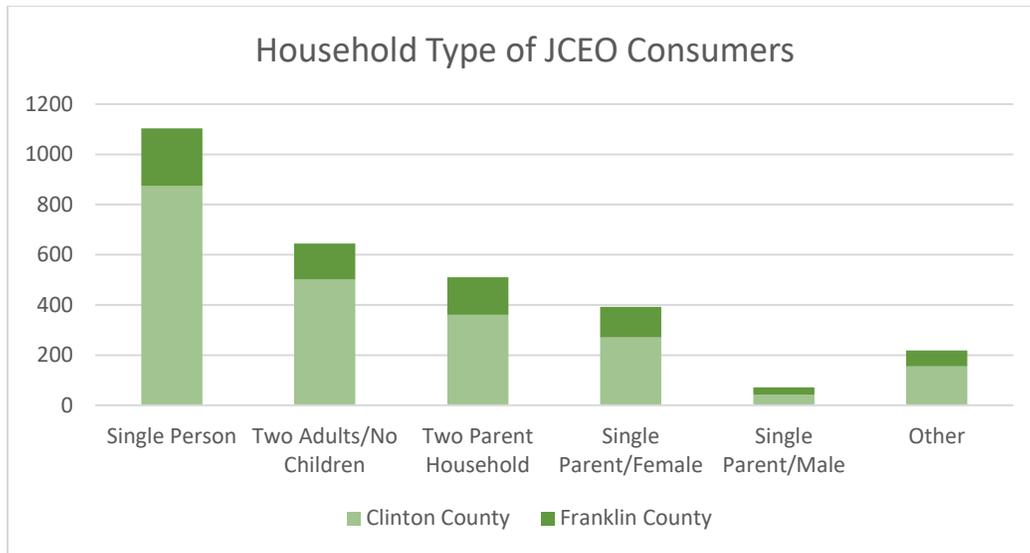
Franklin County is seeing a gradual decline in poverty rate, whereas Clinton County took a large jump from 2018 to 2019, 12.5% to 16.5% respectively. Even with a gradual decline, Franklin County is still seeing higher rates of poverty on average than New York State and the U.S.



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Households in Poverty By Family Type

	Total Families	Total Families in Poverty	Married Couples	Male Householder	Female Householder
Clinton County, NY	19,205	1,995	665	329	1,001
Franklin County, NY	11,975	1,426	450	277	699
New York	4,632,289	479,951	177,574	48,113	254,264
United States	79,114,031	7,541,196	2,764,595	803,863	3,972,738



Source: JCEO Consumer Data Collected January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020

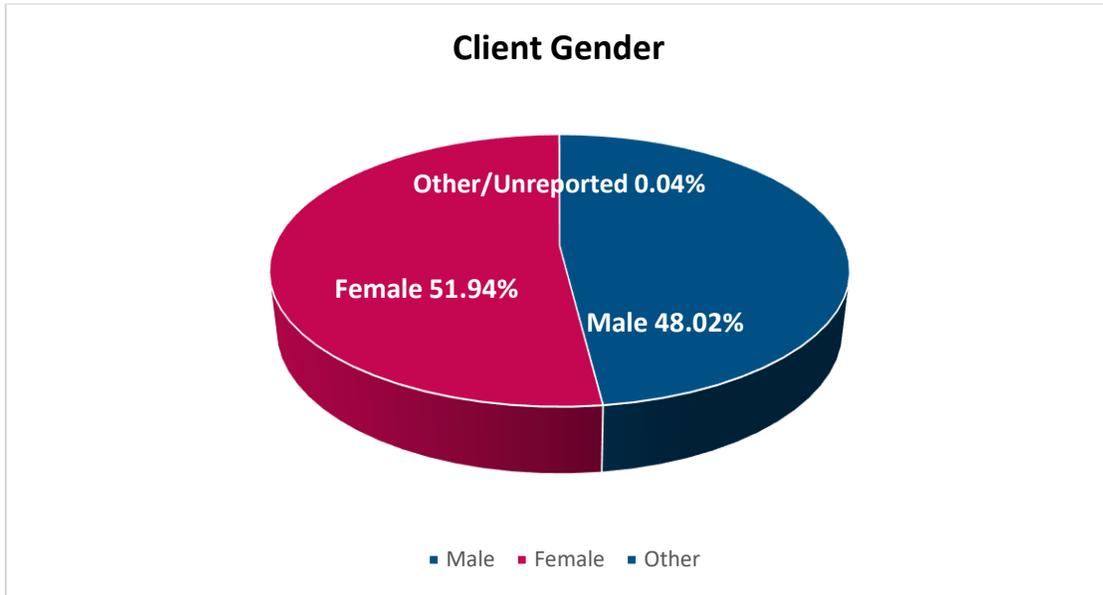
Age and Gender

Population by gender within the report area is shown below. According to ACS 2015-2019 5 year population estimates for the report area, the female population comprised 47.87% of the report area, while the male population represented 52.13%.

Report Area	0-4 Male	0-4 Female	5-17 Male	5-17 Female	18-64 Male	18-64 Female	Over 64 Male	Over 64 Female
Report Location	3,277	3,126	9,240	8,945	46,214	38,675	9,144	11,574
Clinton County, NY	2,002	1,916	5,370	5,240	27,820	25,017	5,453	7,153
Franklin County, NY	1,275	1,210	3,870	3,705	18,394	13,658	3,691	4,421

New York State	590,459	563,742	1,510,451	1,443,847	6,051,827	6,265,687	1,199,629	1,798,042
United States	10,112,614	9,655,056	27,413,920	26,247,802	99,841,782	100,642,825	20,320,351	28,265,193

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019



Source: JCEO Consumer Data Collected 01/01/2020-12/31/2020



Source: JCEO Consumer Data Collected January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020

Race

Report Area	Total Population	White Total	Black Total	American Indian Total	Asian Total	Native Hawaiian Total	Some Other Total	Mixed Race Total
Report Location	131,060	114,963	6,310	3,380	1,413	126	2,464	1,954
Clinton County, NY	80,583	73,237	3,447	221	1,133	15	1,407	1,123
Franklin County, NY	50,477	41,726	2,863	3,609	280	111	1,057	831
New York State	19,572,319	12,459,687	3,065,471	79,512	1,647,606	8,821	1,694,965	616,257
United States	324,697,795	235,377,662	41,234,642	2,750,143	17,924,209	599,868	16,047,369	10,763,902

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019

JCEO Client Race Data

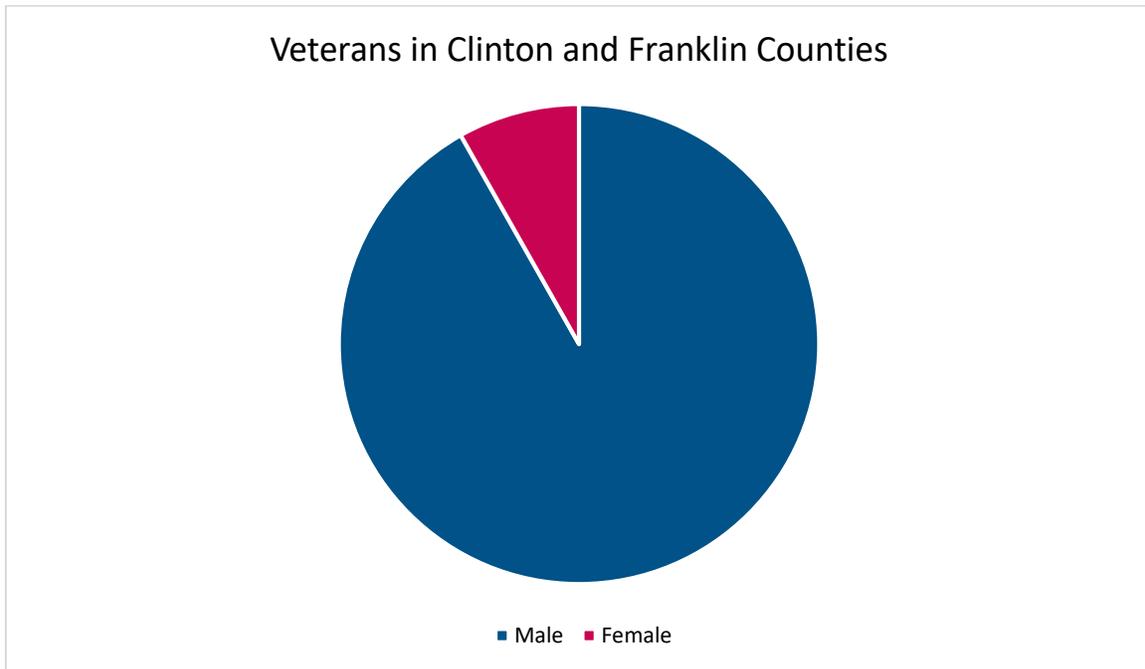
	Clinton County	Franklin County
American Indian or Alaskan Native	35	44
Asian	17	1
Black or African American	233	30
White	4,993	1,901
Other-Single Race	68	90
Multi-Race (2 or more)	15	3
Unknown/Unreported	15	19

Source: JCEO Client Data, collected 1/1/2020/12/31/2020

Veterans

Clinton County has 5,821 Veterans (census.gov, 2015-2019), making up approximately 8.9% of the total population. In Franklin County, there are 3,189 Veterans (census.gov, 2015-2019), making up approximately 8.3% of the total population. The majority of Veterans in both counties are over age 65.

Veterans in Clinton and Franklin Counties



A new VA clinic opened in Plattsburgh, NY (Clinton County) in August of 2020 that is nearly double the size of the previous one and offers a variety of services including primary care, blood work, pre-op visits, mental health, women’s health etc.

There has been an increased awareness around the need for Veteran support with food and basic household necessities resulting in a new program that launched in Clinton County in 2020 and will launch late 2021 in Franklin County- “Veterans Feeding Veterans”. This program is a partnership between JCEO and the local Veteran Affairs offices with support from NYS Health Foundation and private donors.

Citizenship Status

Clinton and Franklin Counties have a total of 2,384 non-Citizens, or 1.82% of the total population of 130,961 persons. Naturalized citizens make up 1.74% of the total population in Clinton and Franklin Counties.

Crime

According to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services reporting system, a total of 1 murder, 81 assaults, 8 robberies and 106 rapes took place within the Clinton and Franklin Counties in 2019. The incidence of crime has remained fairly consistent (with slight increases) in Clinton County and has declined slightly in Franklin County from 2015-2019.

209 burglaries, 1,228 incidents of larceny, and 39 automotive thefts were recorded in 2019 within Clinton and Franklin Counties. Compared to 2015, there has been a decrease in burglaries (111 fewer) and larcenies (303 fewer) auto thefts rose by 1 from 2015-2019.

EDUCATION

Quality education from pre-kindergarten through adulthood is one of the best tools for moving individuals out of poverty and toward self-sufficiency. Research has shown that a quality education has benefits for both the individual and community.

In recent years, there has been a movement around alternative post-secondary paths, rather than just encouraging students to attend college which is not a fit for everyone. Locally, Coryer Staffing offers a program called RAMP to help high school juniors and seniors explore options before graduation. Students “take a RAMP year” which allows them to work in different industries around the area to see what might interest them. While doing so, they get paid, gain experience and earn a micro-credential career development badge from Clinton Community College.

ETS offers an eight-week program to help individuals prepare for a manufacturing career called Ready2Create. There are ten different sessions that address a variety of topics including talent, emotions, energy, time, money, goals, your brand, relationships and more. ETS also offers a professional and skill-based training program for youth and adults.

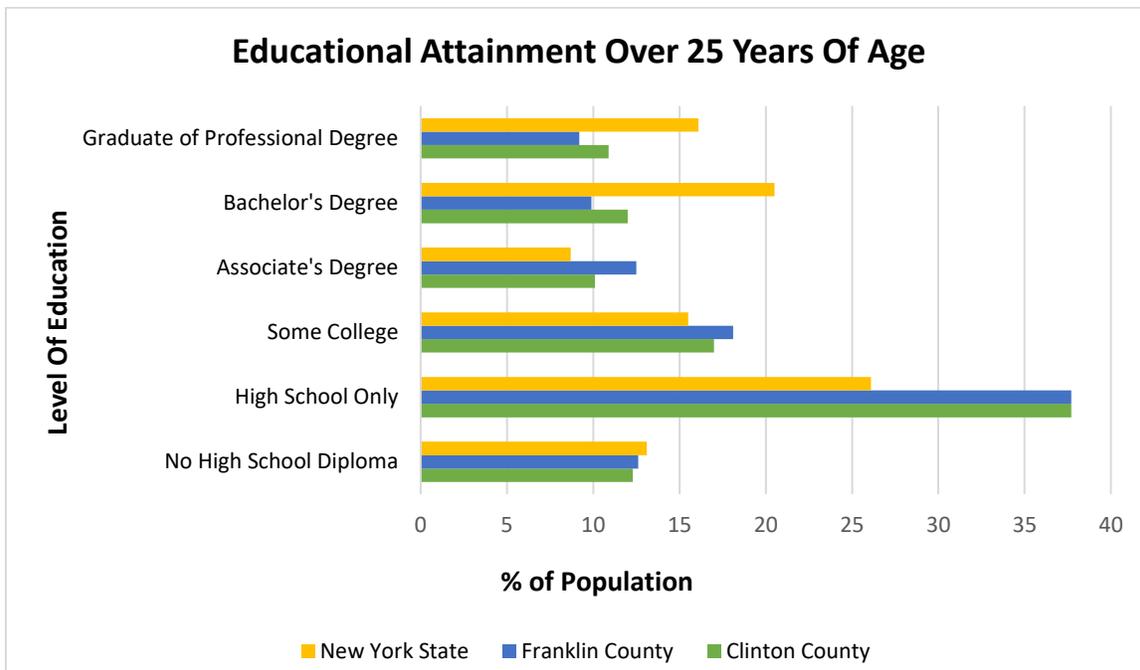
School Enrollment

There is limited private school enrollment in both counties. As of June 2019, Clinton County had a public school enrollment of 10,519 and Franklin County had a public school enrollment of 6,911 (NYS Education Department).

High School Graduates and Dropouts

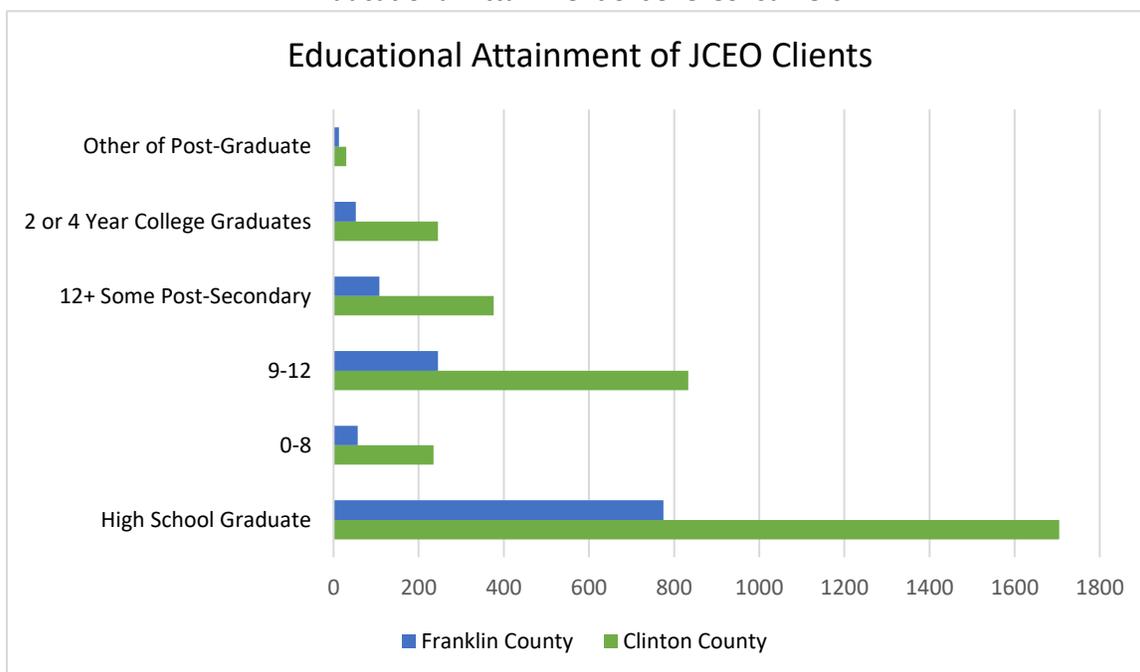
The graduation rate is defined as the number of students in a cohort who earned a Regents or local diploma divided by the total number of students in a cohort. A cohort is the group of students who entered 9th grade together; for a 2020 graduation, they are the 2016 cohort. Statewide, the average graduation rate for the 2016 cohort increased to 84.8%, up 1.4 percentage points from the year before.

Clinton and Franklin County both averaged 88% graduation rates vs. New York State’s average of 85% in 2020. Educational attainment for individuals over 25 years old is shown in the chart below. Both Clinton and Franklin Counties have lower rates of advanced education compared to the state averages.



Source: American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Educational Attainment of JCEO Consumers



Source: JCEO Client Data collected from January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020

Literacy Rates

The most recent data on adult literacy rates from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) estimates that **13%** of the population 16 and older in Clinton County and **15%** in Franklin County lacked basic prose literacy skills. These adults “were unable to read and understand any written information in English to being able to locate easily identifiable information in short, commonplace prose text, but nothing more advanced”. The previous study, in 1992, indicated low literacy rates of 12% in Clinton County and 14% in Franklin County.

Clinton County provides adult literacy services largely through the Champlain Valley Educational Services Career and Technical Education. High School Equivalency and Adult Basic Education literacy services are offered at the OneWorkSource Centers in Plattsburgh. Tutoring and classes are also offered at other community sites; JCEO Head Start sites in Keeseville and on the Military Turnpike are used as community sites. Home study is also available to students who cannot attend classes, with assignments delivered to local libraries. The only other providers in Clinton County are the state correctional facilities and the Clinton County jail.

In Franklin County, the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES provides Adult GED and Adult Basic Education classes. A variety of classes is offered throughout the area including Malone, Saranac Lake, Tupper Lake and the Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve. Program options consist of morning, afternoon or evening sessions. In addition, opportunities to participate in distance learning (home study) are available for those students who are unable to attend traditional programming. Literacy Volunteers of Essex/Franklin Counties provides Basic Literacy and High School Equivalency/GED preparation. Literacy Volunteers also provides services in Bare Hill Correctional Facility and Franklin County Jail, working with inmates who do not qualify for the GED program because their testing results are too rudimentary. In Bare Hill, educated offenders are trained to tutor other inmates who are not educationally ready for the GED program.

Poverty by School District

From 2015 to 2019, 5 of the 15 school districts in Clinton and Franklin County had an increase in poverty of the population ages 5-17. Of the 5 school districts with increases, 3 of them are in Franklin County.

County	School District	2019				2015
		Total Population	Population Ages 5 to 17	Population Ages 5 to 17 in Families in Poverty	Percent of Population Ages 5 to 17 in Poverty	Percent of Population Ages 5 to 17 in Poverty
Clinton	AuSable Valley	8,564	1,342	165	12.3	16.2
Clinton	Beekmantown	12,598	1,560	318	18.4	18.6
Clinton	Chazy Union	3,353	479	35	7.3	12.8
Clinton	Northeastern Clinton	9,021	1,525	450	29.5	19.3
Clinton	Northern Adirondack	5,431	949	148	15.6	24.6
Clinton	Peru	12,877	1,744	179	10.3	15.5
Clinton	Plattsburgh City	16,273	1,960	500	25.5	25.3
Clinton	Saranac	9,552	1,297	214	16.5	18.6
Franklin	Brushton-Moira	4,722	782	268	34.3	28
Franklin	Chateaugay	2,741	404	96	23.8	25.5
Franklin	Malone	15,328	2,585	679	26.3	21.6
Franklin	Salmon River	8,042	1,412	271	19.2	30.1
Franklin	Saranac Lake	10,766	1,641	516	31.4	21
Franklin	St. Regis Falls	2,113	380	70	18.4	29.9
Franklin	Tupper Lake	5,609	769	53	6.9	13.5

Colleges, Universities, and Trade Schools

Both counties are home to two and four year schools. Paul Smith’s College, a four-year private college is located in Franklin County. North Country Community College, sponsored by both Franklin and Essex Counties, has two campuses in Franklin County: its main campus is located in Saranac Lake and one of its satellite campuses is located in the Village of Malone.

Clinton County is home to the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, a four-year school, and Clinton Community College. Clinton Community College’s Institute for Advanced Manufacturing opened in 2017 and serves as a regional hub for manufacturing education. Two trade schools are also located in Clinton County:

Clinton Essex Warren Washington BOCES Practical Nursing Program, and CVPH Medical Center of Radiologic Technology, both located in Plattsburgh (National Center for Education Statistics).

HOUSING

High housing costs leave families vulnerable to eviction if there is a crisis such as loss of employment, increased medical costs, or temporary disability of a family member. For some families, any increase in expenses, such as those in heating and other utility costs, could place them in crisis. There are limited units available and often the housing that is available is often not in good condition.

Low-income housing assistance such as rent vouchers and public housing apartments are intended to provide struggling households with temporary support while families and individuals gain an economic foothold as a safeguard against homelessness. Although, demand for housing assistance far outweighs the supply and many housing applicants must get on a waiting list to receive assistance.

JCEO's Consumer Survey reflected the housing issues low-income families and individuals face. In the past 12 months, 17.61% of respondents reported their homes need major repairs and 19.11% could not afford those repairs. 11.46% reported being unable to afford their heating bill and 10.83% could not afford their electric bill.

Focus groups noted a lack of affordable family housing, especially to purchase. Many families are just making ends meet each month; therefore, they do not have extra income to save towards a down payment. In the past, 20% was needed for a down payment however, there are a variety of funding options with lower requirements or no down payment required. The tricky part is closing costs which are still hard for low income families to save towards. Even if they could save the funds, there aren't many quality houses in their price range, if any.

Housing Facts

Franklin County has fewer housing units than Clinton County; however, Franklin County has more vacant units on average. Both Clinton and Franklin County have a lower rental vacancy rate than New York State. Franklin County also has a large percentage of "other" vacant units which may be attributed to the many summer camps and hunting camps throughout the county. Vacancy rates are shown in table below.

According to the U.S. Census, there was an increase of 1,771 housing units (or 2.98%) from 2005 to 2015 in Clinton and Franklin Counties, collectively, compared to a 3.66 % increase statewide.

U.S. Census data shows 194 housing units in the report area were without plumbing in the ACS five year estimate (92 in Clinton and 102 in Franklin) were without plumbing averaged over the 2015-2019 timeframe.

Report Area	Total Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate
Clinton County, NY	36,576	5,275	1.9	3.2
Franklin County, NY	19,148	6,739	1.4	3.6
New York State	8,322,722	979,488	1.7	4.2

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2015-2019)

Fair Market Rent

Fair market monthly rent is HUD’s best estimate of what a household seeking a modest rental can expect to pay for rent and utilities in the current market. Fair Market Rent for 2021 (0-4 bedrooms) is shown below.

Renters make up approximately 34% of Clinton County Residents, 29% of Franklin County Residents and 46% of total New Yorker Residents.

	Fair Market Monthly Rent (0 Bedrooms)	Fair Market Monthly Rent (1 Bedrooms)	Fair Market Monthly Rent (2 Bedrooms)	Fair Market Monthly Rent (3 Bedrooms)	Fair Market Monthly Rent (4 Bedrooms)
Clinton County, NY	\$692	\$697	\$884	\$1,150	\$1,266
Franklin County, NY	\$532	\$680	\$775	\$1,041	\$1,051
New York State	\$1,453	\$1,524	\$1,770	\$2,242	\$2,429

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition Out of Reach 2021 Report

Housing Affordability

The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports each year on the hourly wage a renter must earn in order to afford a rental unit based on Fair Market Rents. According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the generally accepted definition of affordability is for a household to pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are “cost burdened” and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

According to the US Census Bureau’s 2019 American Community Survey, 43.2% of renters in Clinton County and 47.3% of renters in Franklin County pay more than 30% of their income on rent.

In New York State, an individual making minimum wage (\$12.50/hour in 2021) would need to work 94 hours per week to afford a modest 1 bedroom rental. In no state can a person working full-time at the federal minimum wage afford a two-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent. In only 218 counties out of more than 3,000

nationwide can a full-time worker earning the minimum wage afford a one-bedroom rental home at the Fair Market Rent.

In both Clinton and Franklin Counties, an individual would need to make \$29.31/hour to afford a one bedroom rental while the average hourly wage is only \$24.45.

Homelessness

Each year in January, the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development conducts a physical assessment designed to measure the scope of homelessness across the country, called a Point-in-Time Count. From 2018 to 2019, Franklin County reports a 43% decrease in homelessness while Clinton County reported a 167% increase over 2018.

	Overall Homeless	Sheltered Homeless	Unsheltered Homeless
Clinton County	164	163	1
Franklin County	24	21	22

Source: Homeless Shelters Directory and HUD, 2021

Clinton and Franklin County both lack adequate homeless shelters. Clinton County has no homeless shelter. In Franklin County, Malone has a small men’s shelter called Barnabas House and Saranac Lake has a women’s shelter called the Good Samaritan Homeless Shelter. The Department of Social Services in both counties house homeless individuals and families in hotels and motels. As a result, homeless families are frequently shuffled around.

Emergency housing assistance for those at risk of becoming homeless is available from JCEO, The Department of Social Services, and The Evergreen Townhouse Community. Assistance may be in the form of short-term lodging, emergency rent payments to prevent eviction, and help finding permanent housing.

The Oasis Project, provides educational and social support for homeless children in Clinton County. The project has two sites, one in Plattsburgh and the other in Keeseville. Their vision is to impact generational poverty by providing tutoring, access to learning resources, and promote self-sufficiency for homeless children and their families.

STOP Domestic Violence, a program of Behavioral Health Services North, operating in Clinton, Franklin, and Essex Counties has safe apartments for victims of domestic violence. Evergreen Townhouse Community, located in Plattsburgh, NY, provides temporary housing units for Social Services and permanent housing for homeless individuals and families.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance for low-income families and individuals is available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Housing assistance programs are intended to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Housing assistance is typically **project-based** or **tenant-based**. Project-based assistance requires you to live in a housing unit at the property that is subsidized (referred to as “public housing”). Tenant-based assistance provides a voucher to you to choose where you want to live in the community and lease from a private landlord that will accept the voucher. For both types of assistance, the tenant is usually required to pay at least 30% of their income toward their rent/utilities. This amount can adjust through deductions including childcare expenses and medical expenses, among others.

The demand for housing assistance often exceeds the resources available. **Right now, there is approximately an 18-month wait for services in Clinton County and a 12-month wait for services in Franklin County.**

Approximately 3,300 Public Housing Agencies manage housing assistance programs across the country.

Clinton County

The Plattsburgh Housing Authority operates several low-income properties in the city. There are three buildings specifically for seniors: Lake View Towers, Robert S. Long Apartments and Russell H. Barnard Apartments. Family housing is available at Hortense Sterns Apartments, John Collins Park, John Collins Extension, Leander A. Bouyea Court, and Thomas Conway Apartments. Plattsburgh Housing Authority opened 26 new affordable apartments (Atlas Heights) that are filled by lottery, in July 2021. The agency also provides housing vouchers.

The Clinton County HUD provides housing vouchers.

Franklin County

The Franklin County Housing Authority provides subsidized apartments and housing vouchers. The Franklin County HUD provides housing vouchers. The Malone Housing Authority operates offers three apartment communities that are dedicated to senior/disabled individuals and one apartment community for families.

The following properties in Malone provide subsidized housing: Webster St. Manor, Trails at Malone, and Elm St. Manner. Harrietstown Housing in Saranac Lake also offers subsidized housing.

INCOME

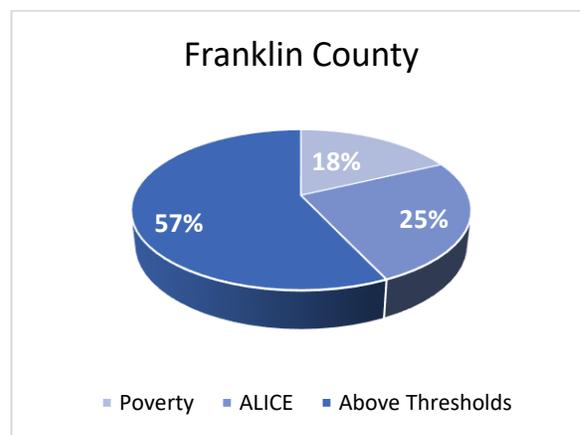
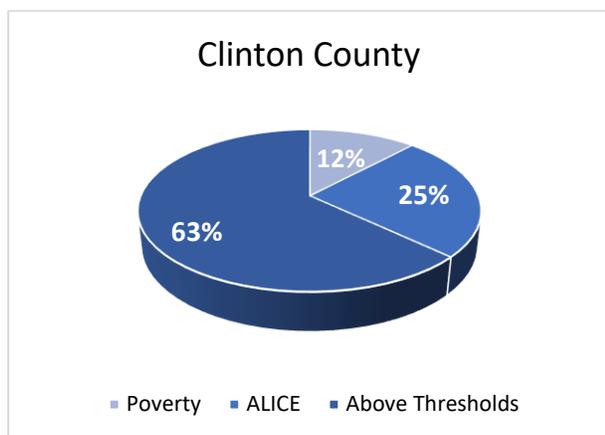
According to the US Census Bureau, median household income in the US was \$68,703 in 2019, an **increase of 6.8 percent** from the 2018 median of \$64,324. This is the third consecutive annual increase in median household income.

Household Income

Median annual household incomes for 2015 are shown in the table below. **According to the U.S. Census, median annual household income increased from 2015 to 2019 increased in both counties and statewide.**

	2019	2015	Percent Change
Clinton County	\$56,365	\$46,747	17.06
Franklin County	\$50,407	\$45,682	10.34
New York State	\$68,486	\$60,805	12.63

According to the ALICE Report, 12% of the population in Clinton County live in poverty, but another **25%** are ALICE level households. In Franklin County, 18% of the population live in poverty, but another **25%** are ALICE level households.



Public Benefits

Public benefits are provided to low income individuals in an effort to assist them in meeting their basic needs. Listed below are some of the more common benefits utilized by low-income families and individuals to help make ends meet.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

TANF assists families with children who cannot provide for their family’s basic needs. Assistance is in the form of cash assistance.

1,533 persons were receiving TANF in January 2021 in Clinton and Franklin Counties, collectively, at a cost of \$543,834, or \$354.75 per recipient (New York Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance).

In Clinton and Franklin Counties, the number of recipients **decreased** by 30.4% since 2017 (2,202 participants down to 1,533).

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

SSI pays benefits to disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits are also payable to people 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial limits.

There were 2,903 recipients in Clinton County and 1,805 recipients in Franklin County in January of 2021. The report area averages a payment of **\$608.42** to each recipient, less than the state average of \$614.67 per recipient. The amount for our report area has increased 15% from \$528.41 over the last 11 years.

FOOD SECURITY

Food assistance was identified as #9 for top needs in JCEO’s consumer survey – 14% of respondents said they needed food assistance in the past 12 months. This was a significant drop from our 2017 Needs Assessment when it was the #1 need and 45% reported needing assistance in the past 12 months. 49% of respondents utilized food assistance programs in the last year (i.e. Backpack Program, free community meals, food pantries, meals on wheels, school meal programs, SNAP, WIC etc.).

JCEO’s partner survey indicated that food assistance is the most successful service provided to low income households (65.5% of respondents). Although food is a huge need, food pantries and food programs in both counties do a remarkable job feeding their communities.

In the rural communities, with limited transportation, many families are restricted to shopping at convenience stores where the food is more expensive and the selection more limited, especially fresh fruits and vegetables. There are several food pantries in both counties and they are heavily used. Pantries are one way families can save on food costs so they can make ends meet. There have been additional pantries opened in the last couple years and even some with extended evening hours which has been greatly needed for those who work a traditional daytime schedule and can't access the pantries during those times.

Adults in food insecure households are more likely to have poor or fair health, reduced nutrient intake, be overweight, and have a lower quality of life. Children in food insecure households are more likely to have poor health, behavior problems, frequent stomachaches and headaches, and worse developmental outcomes.

Food Access

According to *Feeding America*, 13.7% of the population in Franklin County are food insecure, and 13% of the population in Clinton County are food insecure. However, food insecurity rates for children are much higher. 19.2% of children in Clinton County and 21.3% of children in Franklin County experienced food insecurity at some point during the report year. **21% of food insecure children in Clinton County and 20% of food insecure children in Franklin County were not eligible for assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC, and school meals.**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net, making it easier for many working households to apply and gain access to critical nutritious food. Monthly benefits are used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. In New York State, benefits are provided through an electronic benefit card. Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income, expenses and other factors.

According to the New York State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance, 10,756 individuals in Clinton County and 6,257 individuals in Franklin County were receiving SNAP benefits as of January 2021. The average benefit per household was \$351.15/month in Clinton County and \$365.85/month in Franklin County. The average monthly payment in Clinton and Franklin Counties has increased a staggering 69% since 2017.

Food Assistance

JCEO has 12 food pantries in Clinton County and 2 in Franklin County. A mobile outreach vehicle containing a food pantry was discontinued in 2017 because of low utilization. The number of consumers using the food pantries is shown below. The numbers are unduplicated and it is important to note that consumers may use the food pantry up to eight times per year. These numbers also do not account for the consumers that come into the pantry for bread or fruits and vegetables, which anyone can take.

Unduplicated Persons Using the Food Pantry

	2017	2020
Clinton County	3,704	3,881
Franklin County	2,440	2,089

Source: JCEO Consumer Data Collected 8/1/2016-7/31/2017 and 1/1/2020-12/31/2020

The Franklin County food pantry at Valco Drive in Malone has seen an increase in the number of veterans served since the program started allowing veterans to come at a specified time, before the public.

JCEO partners with several local grocery stores and retailers and receives the food that stores would otherwise dispose of. In 2020, food recovered was in excess of 818,091 pounds.

There are a number of food pantries and soup kitchens in both counties. The following is a partial list of such programs, provided by the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York. The Franklin County list is much more extensive, perhaps due to the size of the county and the more limited transportation system.

Clinton County

Behavioral Health Services North
Champlain Home for Children
JCEO - 12 sites
Moers Wesleyan Food Pantry
Plattsburgh Interfaith Food Pantry

Salvation Army – Plattsburgh Food Pantry
Salvation Army – Plattsburgh Soup Kitchen
St. Alexander's/St. Joseph's Soup Kitchen

Franklin County

Bangor Community Food Pantry
Barnabus House-Community Connections, Inc.
Behavioral Health Services
Bombay Food Pantry
Brandon Wesleyan Food Pantry
Brushton Food Pantry
Catholic Community Constable
Chateaugay Food Pantry
Citizen Advocates
Community Lunch Box – Saranac
Community Supper – Soup Kitchen
Dickinson Food Pantry
First Baptist Church Malone Food Pantry
Fort Covington Helping Hands Food Pantry
Good Samaritan Food Pantry
Grace Pantry
JCEO Pantries (3)
JCEO – Duane Food Pantry (volunteer run)
Lifeway Neighborhood Food Pantry
Moir New Hope Food Pantry
Saranac Lake Interfaith Food Pantry
St. Joseph's Addiction Treatment & Recovery Center
St. Paul's Assumption Vermontville
Town of Bellmont Food Pantry
Tupper Lake Community Pantry
Waverly Food Pantry

Another form of food assistance is the **Free and Reduced Lunch Program**. This program is federally assisted and operates in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The following is a list of schools and the number of students eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Beekmantown CSD, Northern Adirondack CSD, and Plattsburgh City CSD in Clinton County have over 60% of children eligible for free and reduced lunch. Brushton-Moira CSD and Salmon River CSD in Franklin County have over 60% of children eligible.

	Total Student Enrollment (January 2019)	Students Eligible	Percent of Student Eligible
Report Location	18,715	10,189	54.44%
Clinton County	11,316	6,144	54.29%
Franklin County	7,399	4,045	54.67%
New York State	3,058,426	2,286,046	74.75%

Free and Reduced Lunch Program by School

County Name	School Food Authority	Enrollment	Free Eligible	Reduced Eligible	Free and Reduced
Clinton County	Ausable Valley CSD	1,175	43%	8.4%	51.4%
Clinton County	Beekmantown CSD	2,061	70.7%	0%	70.7%
Clinton County	Chazy UFSD	464	24.6%	2.8%	27.4%
Clinton County	Northeastern Clinton CSD	1,313	39.1%	6.1%	45.2%
Clinton County	Northern Adirondack CSD	835	78.4%	0%	78.4%
Clinton County	Peru CSD	1,884	39.6%	4.4%	44%
Clinton County	Plattsburgh City SD	1,862	71.2%	0%	71.2%
Clinton County	Saranac CSD	1,467	32.1%	3.5%	35.6%
Clinton County	Seton Catholic	255	9.8%	2.4%	12.2%
Clinton County	Clinton County Total	11,316	51.4%	2.9%	54.3%
Franklin County	Brushton-Moira CSD	793	54%	7.6%	61.5%
Franklin County	Chateaugay CSD	519	46.1%	5.4%	51.4%
Franklin County	Malone CSD	2,341	48.2%	5.4%	53.6%
Franklin County	Salmon River CSD	1,496	63.2%	5.8%	69.1%
Franklin County	Saranac Lake CSD	1,212	36.4%	3.8%	40.2%
Franklin County	St Regis Falls CSD	266	49.6%	4.9%	54.5%
Franklin County	Tupper Lake CSD	772	39.5%	8.5%	48.1%
Franklin County	Franklin County Total	7,399	48.9%	5.8%	54.7%
New York State	New York State Total	3,058,426	73.2%	1.5%	74.7%

Source: New York State Education Department, January 2020

HEALTH

A 2015 report by the Urban Institute, *How Are Income and Wealth Linked to Health and Longevity?*, explains the link between income and health. Low-income American adults have higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and other chronic disorders than wealthier Americans do. Infant mortality and children's health are strongly linked to family income and maternal education. Rates of low birth weight are highest among infants born to low-income mothers. Lower-income children experience higher rates of asthma, heart conditions, hearing problems, digestive disorders, and elevated blood lead levels.

On JCEO's consumer survey, 14% of respondents indicated that they were nervous or afraid to get medical help in the past year which was up from 10% in 2017. Over 25% reported that it costs too much to receive medical care and 23% reported it takes too long to get an appointment. Surprisingly, only 4% reported difficulty getting to appointments which was a significant decrease from 2017.

According to The 2021 County Health Rankings by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, Clinton County has a Health Outcome Rank of **33** out of the 62 counties in New York State (1 being the best and 62 being the worse) while Franklin County has a rank of **32**. Clinton County dropped in rankings from 29 in 2017 to 33 in 2021. Franklin County jumped up the list, from 46 in 2017 to 32 in 2021. The ranks are based on two types of measures: how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive.

Health in Clinton County

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there were 13 active Medicare and Medicaid institutional service providers in the third quarter of 2020 for Clinton County.

Clinton County is home to one hospital, Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH). In 2014, the hospital partnered with the University of Vermont Health Network to become The UVM Health Network – Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital. The hospital is part of UVM's six-hospital network serving northern New York and Vermont. According to CVPH and the Clinton County Health Departments (CCHD) Community Health Assessment, the new partnership provides additional medical specialists, establishes a medical residency program in the community and supports further development of the local system that links residents to services and care. The ultimate goal is to build strong prevention based care and reduce access-to-care issues.

The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) and CVPH undertook a Community Health Assessment in 2019 to identify and prioritize the healthcare challenges faced by Clinton County residents. According to the report, the selected priority areas are **Prevent Chronic Diseases** and **Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental Substance Use Disorders**. The goal is to promote healthy eating and food security, tobacco prevention and chronic disease preventive care and management. They also cited the need to address the over-arching issue of income disparity in relation to the priority areas.

Health in Franklin County

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there were 19 active Medicare and Medicaid institutional service providers in the third quarter of 2020. Franklin County has two hospitals, The UVM Health Network - Alice Hyde Medical Center in Malone and Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake.

Franklin County Department of Health, Alice Hyde Medical Center and the Adirondack Rural Network also undertook a Community Health Needs Assessment to “identify and prioritize the health care challenges currently faced by the residents of Franklin County.” For 2019-2021, the identified prioritized health needs in Franklin County are similar to Clinton County - **Prevent Chronic Disease and Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders**. The report notes that both priorities reflect disparities of poverty and access to care.

Within the goal of preventing chronic disease there are four additional focus areas- healthy eating and food security, physical activity, tobacco prevention and chronic disease preventive care and management.

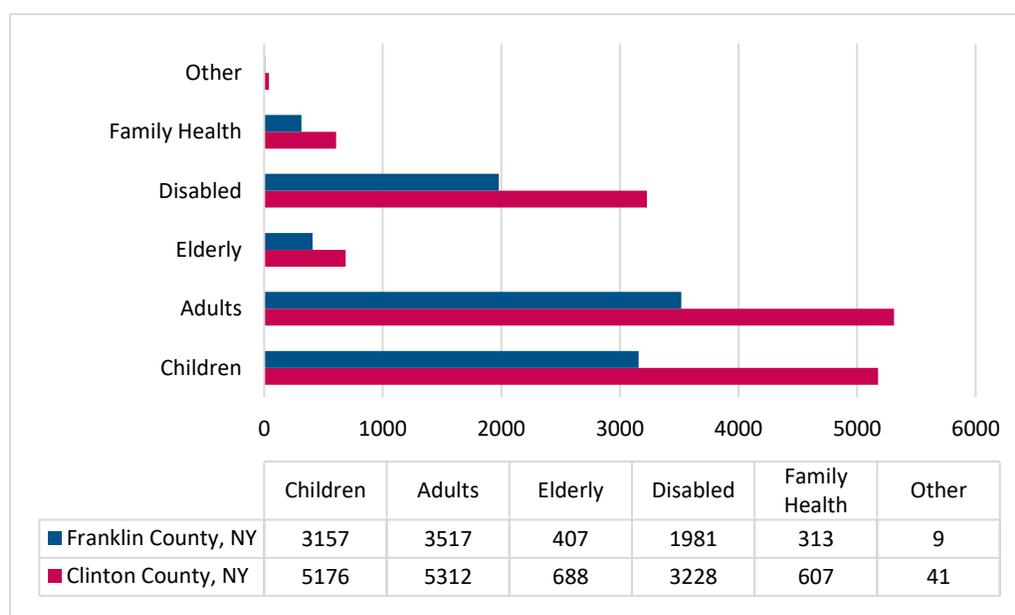
Uninsured Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s *Small Area Health Insurance Estimates* for 2019, 3.75% of the population age 18-64 are without health insurance in Clinton County which is down from 8.1% in 2017. 4.94% of the population age 18-64 are without health insurance in Franklin County which is down from 9.26% in 2017. These rates are both below New York States rate of 4.97% uninsured persons (Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, 2019) and the United States rate of 8.93%. The uninsured population in Clinton and Franklin County has steadily decreased since 2010.

96% of JCEO’s consumers had health insurance in a 12-month period between 2020 and 2021.

Persons Receiving Medicaid

The average number of persons receiving Medicaid during 2014 is shown below, broken down by recipient type. The NYS Department of Health reported that 24,436 persons were receiving Medicaid benefits in the report area in 2014. (This remains the most recent report as of the 2021 Needs Assessment).



Source: New York State Department of Health

Persons Receiving Medicare

The total number of persons receiving Medicare is shown, broken down by number over 65 and number of disabled persons receiving Medicare for the report area. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported that 23,082 persons were receiving Medicare benefits in the report area in 2019. A large number of individuals in our society are aware that persons over 65 years of age receive Medicare; however, many of them are unaware that disabled persons also receive Medicare benefits. 6,256 disabled persons in the report area received Medicare benefits in 2019.

	Persons Over 65 Receiving Medicare	Disabled Persons Receiving Medicare	Total Persons Receiving Medicare
Clinton County, NY	14,250	3,944	18,194
Franklin County, NY	8,832	2,312	11,144
New York	6,270,186	988,028	7,258,219
United States	52,987,966	8,519,960	61,507,926

Source: *Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services*

Prenatal Care

Proper and timely prenatal care is important for healthy births. Pregnancy risk factors include age, chronic diseases, genetic disorders, heredity, and sexually transmitted diseases. Increased risk levels are seen in the very young or older females, and those involved in substance abuse including over the counter drugs and prescription medications, and domestic violence.

According to the New York State Department of Health, the report area had 1,186 births in 2018. According to The March of Dimes, 11.7% of live births in Clinton County and 13.9% of live births in Franklin County received inadequate prenatal care. Adequacy of prenatal care is measured by timing of prenatal care, number of visits and the infants' gestational age.

Teen Births

According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, teen mothers are less likely to complete high school and more likely to end up on welfare compared to women who delay childbearing. The children of teen mothers are at significantly increased risk of low birth weight and prematurity, poverty, poor school performance, insufficient health care, and abuse and neglect.

Teen pregnancy and teen birth rates are at historic lows. **The teen birth rate in New York declined 68% between 1991 and 2015.** Even so, in 2018 there were 6,889 births to teens. Most teen births in New York (75%) are to older teens (age 18-19). It is estimated that the public cost of teen childbearing in the United States is approximately \$9.4 billion per year. Teen birth rates have fallen for all racial and ethnic groups, and in some cases, the gap in teen birth rates by race/ethnicity has narrowed, but disparities remain.

Births to teens in Clinton and Franklin County totaled 52 in 2018, less than 1% of the total teen births in New York State.

Teen Births, 2018

Report Area	Age Under 15	Age 15 to 17	Age 18 to 19	Total Live Births	Births to Teens	Births to Teens
Clinton County, NY	0	6	20	719	26	3.62%
Franklin County, NY	0	6	20	467	26	5.57%
New York	57	1,641	5,191	225,162	6,889	3.06%

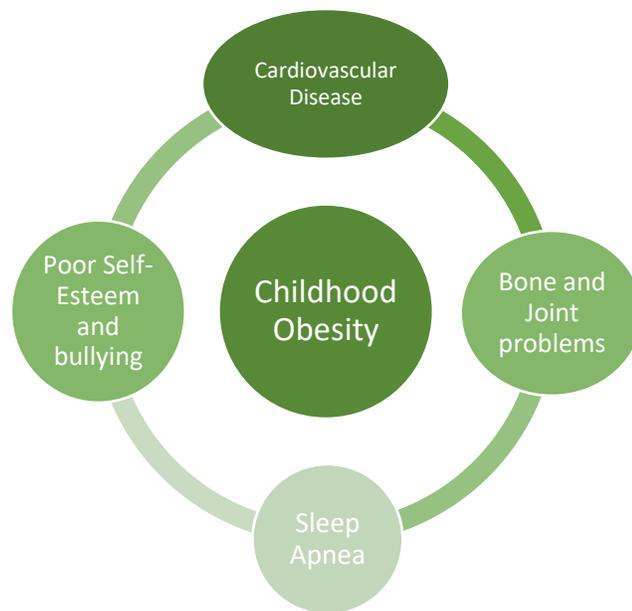
Source: New York State Department of Health

Obesity

Both county health assessments identify obesity as a top issue and are actively working to reduce obesity in the community, as noted earlier in this report.

According to *The State of Obesity* project, obesity rates are generally inversely correlated with income, with low-income individuals far more likely to be obese than higher-income individuals. Children from low-income families and individuals with lower education levels are more likely to be obese. Individuals in rural communities face their own set of challenges – healthy grocery stores may be far away, children cannot walk to school, sidewalks are not available, and recreational centers are not easily accessible.

Childhood obesity in particular has long-term health impacts: obese youth are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease, bone and joint problems, and sleep apnea. Obese youth may also suffer from poor self-esteem and bullying.



Over the last several years, there has been an increase in the number of non-traditional food outlets (i.e. convenience stores, dollar stores etc.) which provide less healthy food options and are often in areas where low income individuals live, many without transportation so their options are more limited.

In Franklin County the rate of children who are obese is 21.2% and adults is 32.7%. Clinton County reports 36.7% of adults and 20.9 of children are obese.

Lead Poisoning

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), at least 4 million households have children living in them that are exposed to high levels of lead. There are approximately half a million U.S. children ages 1-5 with blood lead levels above 5 micrograms per deciliter, the reference level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated. No amount of lead is safe for a child. Unfortunately, lead exposure often occurs with no obvious symptoms and frequently goes unrecognized. Even at very low levels of exposure in children, lead causes reduced IQ and attention span, hyperactivity, impaired growth, reading and learning disabilities, and a range of other health, intellectual, and behavioral problems.

According to the NYS Child Health Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, in 2017 there were a total of 6 cases of confirmed high blood lead level on 1,252 tested children aged under 72 months in Clinton County. In Franklin County, there were 17 cases during the same period; 787 children were tested. **Both counties report about 26.2% of children under 72 months were tested in 2017 which is just above the New York State average of 25.86%.**

Mental Health

Many survey respondents noted a lack of mental health services in the area, especially for children, and 27% of respondents ranked mental health services as their #2 top household in the last 12 months. Focus groups noted that mental health services and concerns had increased in the last 12 months in large part due to the pandemic. Participants and respondents noted that their children needed services for the first time as a result of the stress and isolation and many were on waiting lists for 90+ days.

Partner organization focus groups commented that the demand for mental health services is currently far-outweighing the number of trained and credentialed staff they have and finding additional providers has been near impossible over the last 18 months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2016, the NYS Office of Mental Health conducted a Needs Assessment to determine the scope and plan of action regarding mental health and substance abuse. The assessment is broken into DSRIP regions. The Adirondack DSRIP Region's assessment includes information on Clinton and Franklin County, as well as Essex, Hamilton, Warren, and Washington counties.

According to the assessment, the Adirondacks region has 20 licensed mental health professionals per 10,000 population, which is the third lowest rate in any DSRIP region. The region's total psychiatric bed capacity of 27 beds per 100,000 adults and 17 beds per 100,000 children are the second lowest rates in any DSRIP region.

Compared to all DSRIP regions, the region has the highest average rate of self-inflicted injury as well as the highest rate of alcohol related motor vehicle injuries and deaths. On the other hand, the community has a high rate of community service programs, including vocational, self-help and care coordination.

As part of the assessment, consumers and providers were surveyed for input on the community's needs. The needs most frequently reported by both consumers and providers include: **transportation to health care services; reduced wait times for an appointment; assistance with paying for services; convenient provider hours (evenings and weekends); ambulatory substance use disorder detoxification; and inpatient mental health.**

CONCLUSION

Survey and focus group results and feedback were used to inform the agency's strategic planning sessions which occurred in September and October of 2021.

APPENDIX

Partners involved in surveys and focus groups were as follows:

- Behavioral Health Services North-Community Based
- Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Ogdensburg-Faith/Community Based
- Champlain Valley Educational Services-Public Education
- Champlain Valley Family Center-Community Based
- Chazy Central Rural School-Public Education
- Clinton County Child Protective Services-Community Based
- Clinton County Department of Social Services-Community Based
- Clinton County Veterans Services Agency-Community Based
- Community Connections of Franklin County- Community Based
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Franklin County-Community Based
- Employee Assistance Services-Community Based
- Glasgow Elementary School-Public Education
- Hospice of the North Country- Community Based
- Hudson Headwaters- Community Based
- Oak Street Elementary School-Public Education
- Saranac Lake Central School- Public Education
- St. Joseph's Outreach Center-Community/Faith Based