



# Office of Children and Family Services

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## Local Commissioners Memorandum

<b>Transmittal:</b>	23-OCFS-LCM-21
<b>To:</b>	Municipal Youth Bureau Directors
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success
<b>Date:</b>	September 22, 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Youth Team Sports Allocation</b>
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	See section V.
<b>Attachments:</b>	Funding Allocations for Program Year October 1, 2023- September 30, 2024 OCFS-5011, <i>Universal Application for Youth Sports Funding</i>

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioner Memorandum (LCM) is to advise municipal youth bureaus on the availability of a new funding allocation for youth team sports (YTS). This LCM provides notification of allocation for the program year October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, for YTS and offers guidance for utilization of the funds at the local level.

### II. Background

A new fund was created under the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) in the state fiscal year 2023-2024 budget to provide awards to support youth team sports programs for underserved youth under age 18. The funding supports youth development through team sports programs. The funding, which will be allocated to the municipal youth bureaus, must be awarded to local community-based organizations and nonprofits. Youth bureaus may, in limited circumstances, be approved to directly operate or fund programming. This allocation provides \$10 million for the period of October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024.

### III. Program Implications

Each municipal youth bureau will receive a YTS allocation to serve youth under age 18 based on county census data. OCFS will approve the plans, and municipal youth bureaus will claim in the same manner as the current Youth Development Program funding.

Similar to the Youth Sports and Education Opportunity Funding (YSEF), 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. Unlike YSEF, 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 are in competition with two

or more opposing individuals. Sporting activities where individuals engage in competition on behalf of an organized group (such as singles tennis, team golf, or racing sports such as swimming or skiing) are included in this definition.

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,<sup>1</sup> considering factors including, but not limited to the following:

- Historically under-resourced communities.
- 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.
- Marginalized communities or groups with higher barriers to participation in team sports (e.g., youth with disabilities; 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.
- Neighborhoods that experience higher rates of crime and violence and low-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 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.

### ***Advertising Funding Opportunity***

To provide equitable access to government funding, OCFS has provided 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 the funding at the local level must be widely advertised, and adequate time frames for inquiries and application must be provided. Municipal youth bureaus will provide information and technical assistance to interested organizations on how to apply for available funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Data sources to consult in assessing local needs include, but are not limited to, the New York State Council on Children and Families Kids’ Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse, <https://www.ccf.ny.gov/council-initiatives/kids-well-being-indicators-clearinghouse-kwic/>; 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>.

### ***Eligibility and Funding***

Municipal youth bureaus will contract with local nonprofit or community-based organizations, directly for up to \$50,000 per award. Organizations may receive multiple awards. 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 there were no entities eligible to administer the program. YTS funds can supplement existing municipal youth team sports programming; however, it cannot be used to supplant existing municipal funding to such programs.

Approved costs include but are not limited to the following:

- Coaches/instructors/direct service staff/mentors (including training/professional development).
- Referee fees.
- Purchase of equipment or uniforms.
- Capital investment (e.g., swimming facilities, fields, fences, storage, lighting).
- Instruction or coaching necessary to support youth's ability to participate in team sports.
- Facility/field space.
- A maximum of 10% of the total allocation may be used to support administrative/overhead costs by the municipal youth bureau.

Programs eligible for funding must meet the criteria below:

- Provide team sports activities for youth under age 18 in under-resourced communities.
- Serve youth in New York state.
- Have a child protection policy in place that includes adherence to local city, agency, school district, and state child protection guidelines.
- Collect registration data, including participant demographic information, as required by OCFS in a manner that allows for accurate reporting of anonymized aggregate data.

Organizations and activities not eligible for funding are the following:

- 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.
- Support for 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.

### ***Touchstone Life Areas and Services, Opportunities and Supports (SOS) in the Quality Youth Development System (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 the YTSA are as follows:

- Life Area: 2PEH Physical and Emotional Health
- SOS: 0232 Year-Round/Seasonal Activities
- Performance measures:
  - How Much: 0232A.1 # of youth participating (unduplicated)
  - How Well: 0232B.4% of youth completing the program
  - Better Off: 0232C.1 #/% reporting they have improved their ability to socialize/interact with peers/family/other members of the community

#### **IV. Effective Date**

This directive is effective as of October 1, 2023, and relates to programs operating from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. Claims for this period are due by March 31, 2025.

#### **V. Contacts**

For questions or technical assistance, please use the subject line Youth Team Sports Allocation and email [YouthBureau@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:YouthBureau@ocfs.ny.gov).

*/s/ Nina Aledort, Ph.D.*

**Issued by:**

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Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success