



**ALBANY**  
Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion

**2025 ALBANY LEAD**

# ANNUAL REPORT

Albany Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) unites law enforcement and community partners to address low-level behaviors through care and connection rather than arrest. By prioritizing treatment and stability, LEAD strengthens public safety and builds a healthier Albany.



[www.albanylead.org](http://www.albanylead.org)

# What is Albany LEAD?

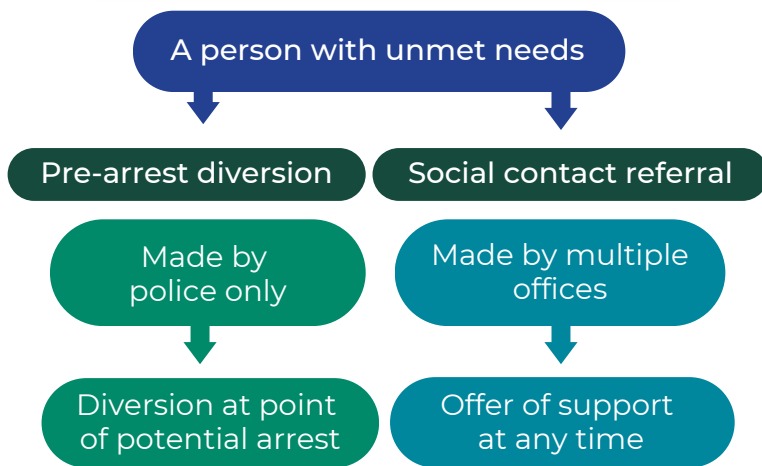
## Mission:

Albany LEAD’s mission is to help community members living with mental health or substance use challenges, poverty, or homelessness, and reduce their chances of future legal problems.

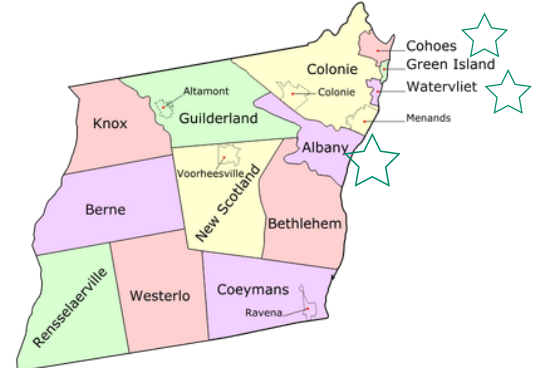
## Vision:

Albany LEAD is committed to enhancing public safety and health, with a focus on reducing racial inequality in the justice system. We bring together law enforcement, government leaders, and community figures to provide comprehensive support services.

## PATHWAYS INTO LEAD



LEAD operates in the cities of Albany, Cohoes, and Watervliet in Albany County, NY.



### *LEAD considers success on an individual basis*

One client, referred by the Albany Police Department, was facing serious physical challenges when a LEAD case manager visited them in the hospital, provided a cellphone, and helped them find stable housing through HATAS. The client also began a methadone maintenance program. For them, success means being able to take care of their health, maintaining stable housing, and keeping appointments.



# Who is Involved in Albany LEAD?

Our Policy Coordinating Group guides the work of project management and governs our initiative. Voting members of the group during 2025 included the following leaders and their designees:

## **Albany Mayor**

Kathy M. Sheehan  
Dr. Dorcey Applys as of 1/1/26

## **Albany County Executive**

Daniel P. McCoy

## **Albany County District Attorney**

Lee C. Kindlon

## **Center for Law and Justice**

### **Executive Director**

Ta-Sean Murdock

## **Albany Police Chief**

Brendan Cox

## **Central District Management Association**

### **Executive Director**

Anthony Capece

In addition, many agencies make up our Operational Work Group. We could not do our work without this amazing support. The group brainstorms, collaborates, and shares strategies to support clients twice a month. In addition to LEAD staff, regular members include:

**Albany County Department of Mental Health**

**Albany County Department of Probation**

**Albany County Department of Social Services**

**Albany County District Attorney's Office**

**Albany County Alternate Public Defender's Office**

**Albany County Public Defender's Office**

**Albany Police Department**

**The Center for Law and Justice**

**Joseph's House and Shelter**



Members of Albany LEAD attended Pastor David Traynham's ALERT Partnership Bridge Builder Awards at the STEAM Garden in April of 2025.



# The 2025 LEAD Team

LEAD in Albany County is comprised of multiple staff from different agencies. Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region oversees project management and community engagement for the initiative, while Catholic Charities and St. Catherine's Center for Children provided case management services in 2025.

## The Project Management Team at Trinity Alliance



Jennie Huling  
Program  
Director



Deborah Eley  
Cohoes-Watervliet  
Project Manager



Robert Ward  
Finance  
Manager



Anna Carroll  
AmeriCorps VISTA

## The Catholic Charities Case Management Team



Candace Ellis  
Executive  
Director  
(former)



Heather  
Lampmon  
Director of Special  
Projects



Diana Macy  
Case Management  
Director (former)



Renee Wendover  
Case Management  
Coordinator



Kasiem Johnson  
Case Manager



Tiana Minervini  
Director of Case  
Management



Matt Vertefuille  
Associate  
Executive Director

## The St. Catherine's Case Management Team

Not pictured, though invaluable: Case managers  
Grace Ellen Fay, Roberto Massas, Brennan O'Grady, Kyra Wands

## The Evaluation Team at UAlbany College of Integrated Health Sciences



Tomoko Udo, PhD  
Associate Dean for  
Research

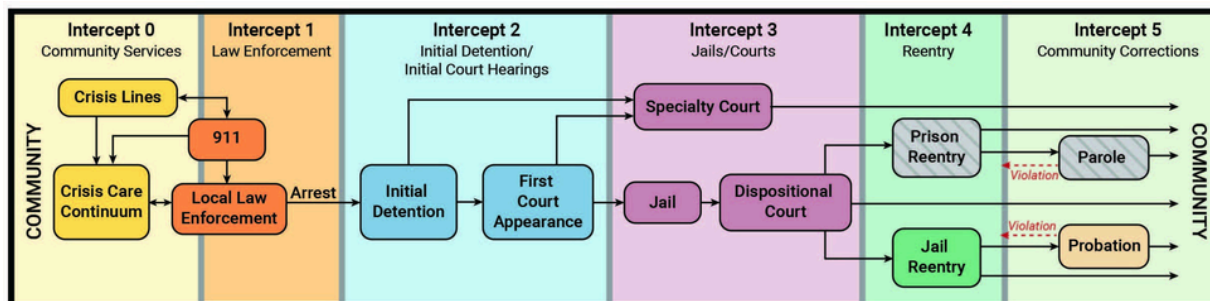


Cody Roberts  
PhD Candidate



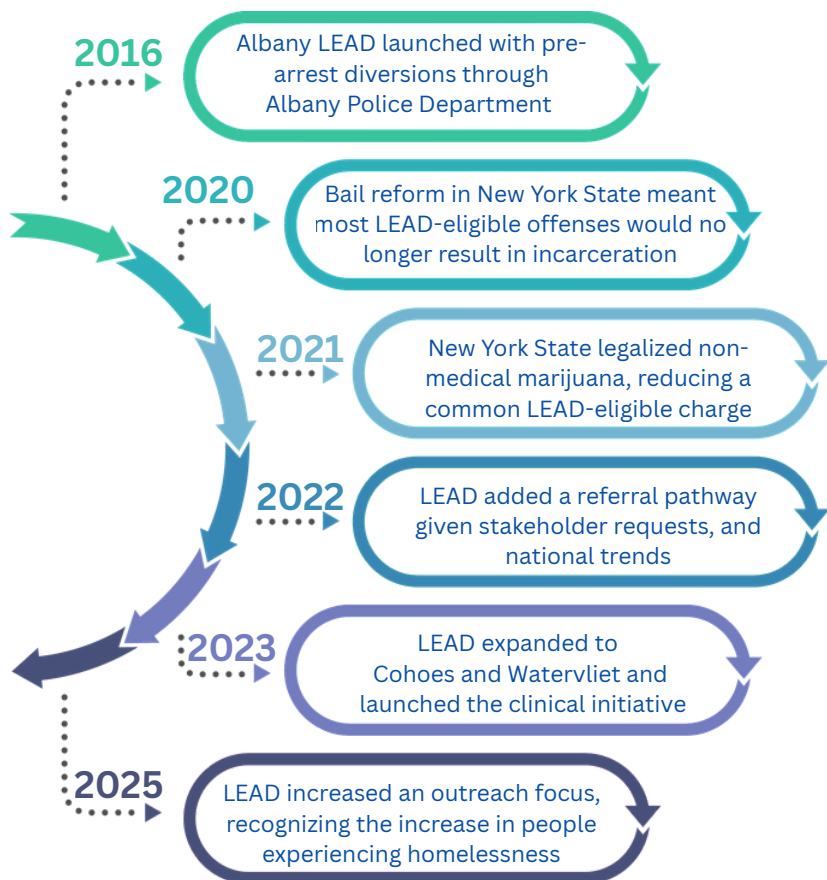
# Changes and New Directions

Since its inception in 2016, Albany LEAD has evolved from a pre-arrest diversion program, focusing solely on potential arrest situations, to a model where most participants are referred during a neutral time. This change enables earlier engagement along the Sequential Intercept Model and addresses missed diversion opportunities. Participants can now be reached by community services at intercept 0 or stakeholders at intercept 2 during court appearances, enhancing support beyond just law enforcement at intercept 1.



The Sequential Intercept Model was developed by Policy Research Associates and is used here for educational purposes.

Since 2016, public safety and health systems in Albany and New York State have evolved significantly. LEAD has adapted its operations to remain effective, meet community needs, and engage target populations. Key impactful changes are highlighted below.



## Outreach-focused



Our team is thankful to have collaborated with Catholic Charities Care Coordination Services since 2016. In late 2025, St. Catherine's Center for Children's Homeless Services took over direct service provision for LEAD. These organizations have led our street-based, outreach-focused services, serving as local experts within our community.



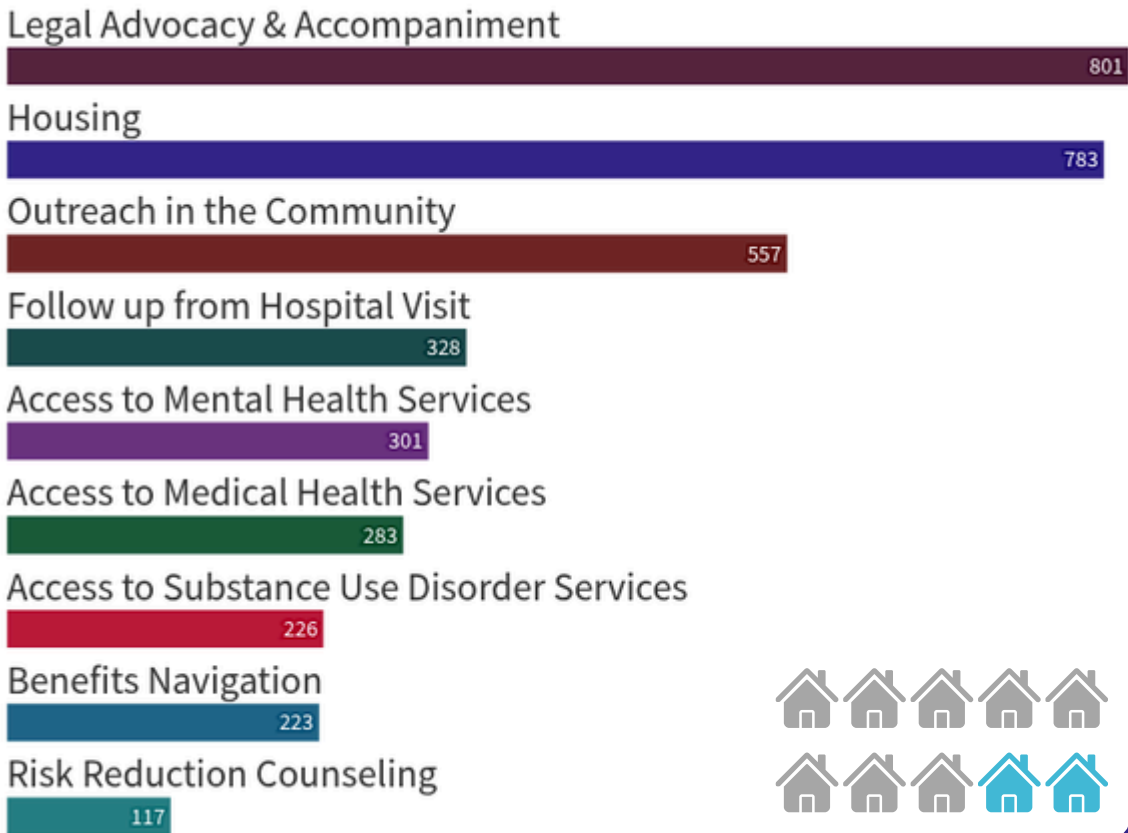
# Service Snapshot

**186**  
People Engaged

In 2025, 186 people were served in Albany alone. During this year, we saw a change in the most common service type LEAD clients received. For the first time, legal advocacy and accompaniment rose to the most common service, followed by housing assistance. It is not surprising that this was the most common need as we saw newly engaged clients being sent primarily by Albany Police Department, the Albany County Public Defenders’ Offices, and Albany County Probation.

**29** On average, each LEAD client received 29 service contacts.

## Most Common Service Types, 2025



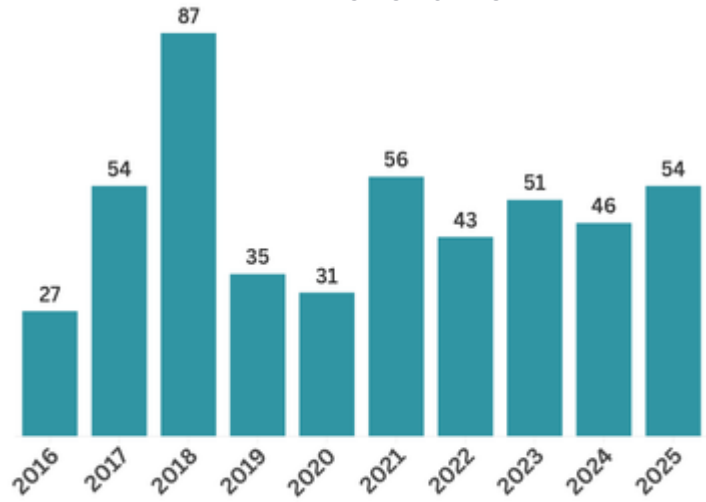
**Almost 80%** of LEAD clients were experiencing homelessness or in temporary housing at time of engagement.



# 2025 Diversions and Referrals

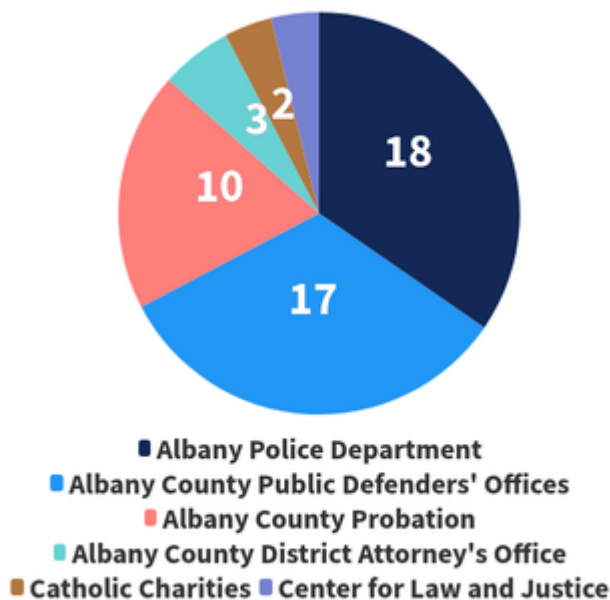


### Albany Diversions and Referrals, over time



LEAD diversions and referrals are meant for people with history in the criminal justice system who are affected by substance use, mental health, poverty, or homelessness.

### Albany Referrals by Source, 2025



#### Meaningful changes

When we first met a client in January of 2025, he had multiple outstanding warrants from different jurisdictions. He was living on the street, afraid to apply for housing due to the warrants.

By October, he had willingly surrendered himself on warrants in two jurisdictions, allowing himself to be arrested, processed, and go before a judge, where he could have been remanded to jail—his worse fear.

These days he is housed through a local service provider and on track with probation. Having addressed his legal matters, he is now able to dream bigger, planning for employment and visitation with his child.

\*Additional referrals were also received from the Albany County Department of Mental Health and Albany County Regional Treatment Court



# LEAD Clinical Initiative



**Daniel P. McCoy**  
Albany County Executive




The LEAD clinical team at the Albany County Department of Mental Health

Launched in 2024, in partnership with the Albany County Department of Mental Health, the LEAD Clinical Initiative is staffed by a full-time **Licensed Clinical Social Worker** and part-time **Doctor of Nursing Practice** psychiatric provider who work closely with case management.

This project brings clinical services to individuals who may otherwise not receive them. Many clients who utilize this service previously had no access to mental health services.

## Main Functions

- ✓ Evidence-based therapy
- ✓ Medication Management
- ✓ Consistent Outreach



**24** clients engaged in 2025, otherwise unlikely to access treatment

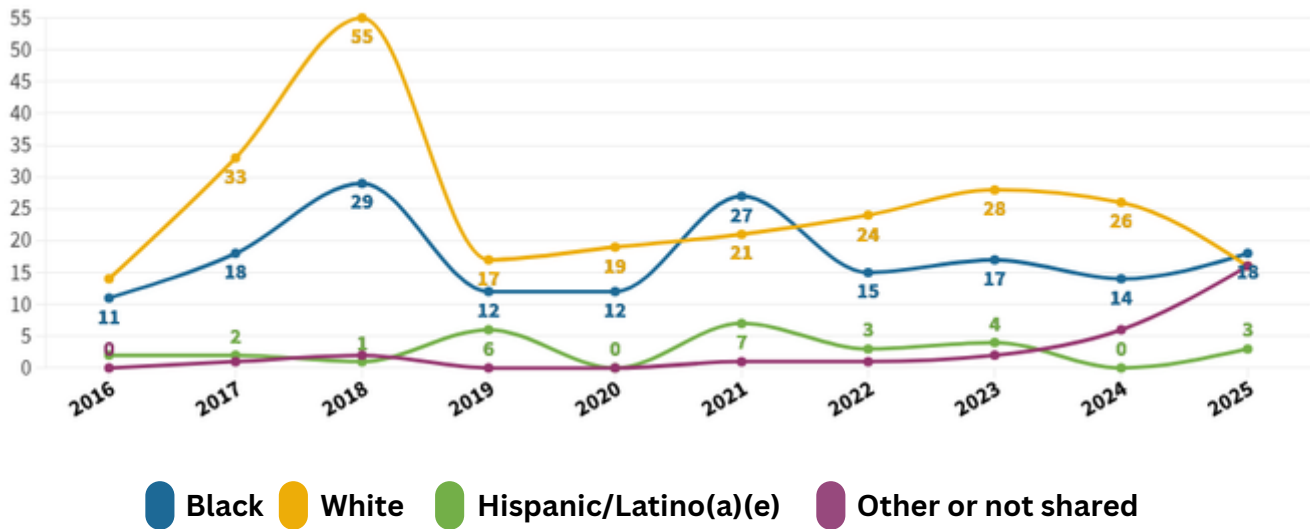
## 2025 Engagement

- ✓ **13** people participated in the intake process (initial therapy and medication management) or on-going treatment
- ✓ **2** individuals participated in therapeutic counseling without medication management
- ✓ **5** people engaged in relationship-building and assessment
- ✓ **4** additional people were outreached or offered connections but did not participate in services



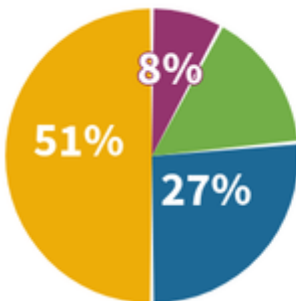
# New Referrals by Race

We track and regularly discuss the racial breakdown of people who are diverted and referred to LEAD. According to analysis by the Prison Policy Initiative of Northampton, MA, racial disparities impact people of color, and Black people, especially, due to racial discrimination in multiple systems such as health, housing, education, and criminal justice. We strive to engage a similar proportion of people of color in our services as are incarcerated locally in recognition of these disparities.

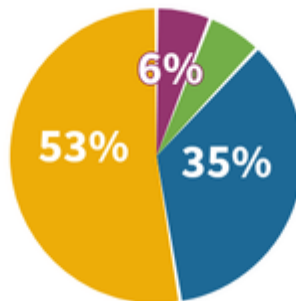


While we are still working to connect with more people of color on new referrals, recent evaluation data shows that engagement in the program remains high for Black clients over an extended period of time. Black clients accounted for 48% of all service participants in 2025.

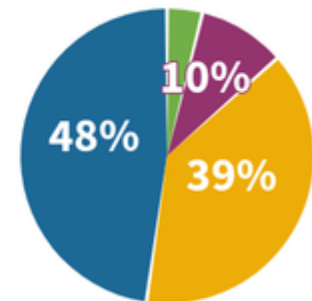
**2024 Albany Census**  
(American Community Survey)



**Diversions and Referrals Over Time**



**Clients Served in 2025**



# LEAD in Cohoes & Watervliet

In 2023, supported by a federal grant, LEAD in Albany County expanded into the cities of Cohoes and Watervliet. This move made sense given that the people we serve regularly move across jurisdictions in the Capital Region. Additionally, service providers are very concentrated in the city of Albany, which can lead to barriers to accessing services for residents who live further out in the county.

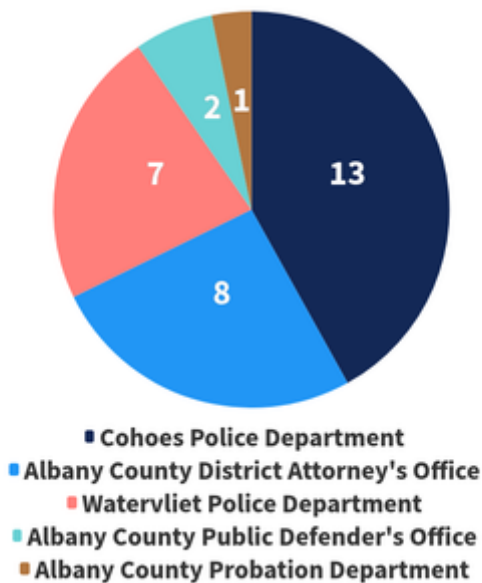


\*Some clients may be duplicated in this number given the direct service agency change during 2025.

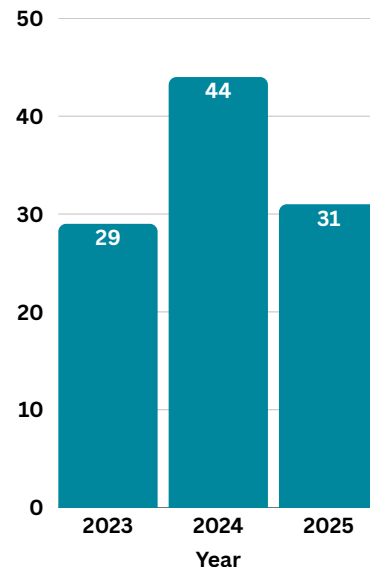


In 2025, 31 people were newly referred in this jurisdiction, while almost 80 people were served. The most frequent service types included legal advocacy and accompaniment and housing, similar to services received in the city of Albany.

### Cohoes-Watervliet Referrals, by Source, 2025



### New Referrals and Diversions, over time



# Expenses and Resources

## LEAD in Albany County

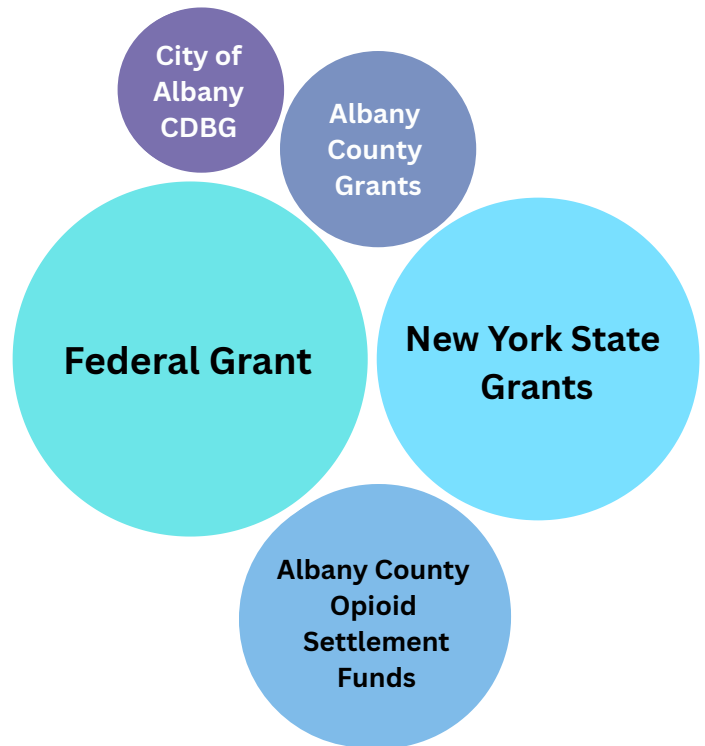
### Approximate Expenditures, 2025

Total: \$794,862; excludes in-kind spending



LEAD in Albany County has relied on a changing mix of time-limited resources since the project began. We are grateful to the many governmental, foundation, and community entities that have financially contributed to this work.

## 2025 Funding Sources



In 2025, about 35% of funding came from the federal government, 29% from New York State grants, 19% from Albany County Opioid Settlement Funds, 10% from other Albany County grants, and 8% from City of Albany Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

Project managers and the Policy Coordinating Group continue to seek sustainable funding to ensure operation of LEAD for the long term.





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