

2016-17 Legislative Priorities: End-of-Session Status

Policy Priority	Status	Explanation
<p>Enact a Funded Minimum Wage Hike</p>	 	<p>The Budget included a phased-in minimum wage increase for all workers across the state with a faster phase-in schedule for New York City and other parts of the State. The budget included a limited amount of funds to cover a small portion of the wage increase for health and human services workers employed by non-profit organizations funded by contracts with certain State agencies. Further work needs to be done to ensure that the State fully covers the costs of the wage increase for health and human services workers employed by non-profit organizations under State contract.</p>
<p>Enact Paid Family Leave</p>		<p>The Budget includes legislation to implement a Paid Family Leave (PFL) program. Once fully implemented, New York’s program will be the most generous in the nation, and will provide eligible employees 12 weeks of job-protected leave to bond with a new child, care for a seriously ill family member, or to address issues related to a spouse, child or parent’s active military duty. The benefit will be available to full and part-time employees employed by private businesses of all sizes who have been employed at the business for at least 26 weeks. The wage replacement is funded by a small employee-paid withholding.</p>
<p>Increase Investments in Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting</p>		<p>The Budget included \$3.5 million for Nurse-Family Partnership, \$500,000 less than last year’s funding and maintained flat funding for Healthy Families New York at \$23,288,200. The final budget does not invest in Parents as Teachers or the Parent-Child Home Program. A significantly higher investment is needed if New York is committed to serving all families in need and ensuring the best health and social outcomes for mothers, infants and families.</p>
<p>Strengthen Children’s Behavioral Health</p>	 	<p>The Budget included \$175,000 for the design of a data collection plan and analysis of children’s behavioral health services to evaluate service effectiveness, identify performance outcome measurements, and quality benchmarks in preparation for managed care and value-based payment. This investment is less than the need but</p>

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		lays the groundwork for necessary measurement and improvement. The Budget assumed funding for six new Medicaid services for children pending approval from the federal government.
<p>Increase Investments in Programs Proven to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families in Child Welfare</p>		<p>Post-Adoption Services. The Budget included \$5 million in post-adoption services and prevention services to prevent children from entering foster care. The budget also included new language to appropriately clarify that the funds are to be used for this purpose.</p>
		<p>Kinship Services. The Budget included a total of \$2,238,750 in funding for kinship caregiver services. This was an increase of \$900,000 over last year's final budget. The budget also increased funding for the statewide kinship navigator information and referral network to \$320,500, a \$100,000 increase over last year. Kinship caregiver programs offer important support and services to people who care for relatives' minor children outside of the formal foster care program. Programs provide information about family members' rights, support to meet children's education and health care needs, and assistance with obtaining benefits.</p>
		<p>Preventive Services. The Budget included \$635 million for open-ended preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services. This means the State is covering 62% of these costs (and the counties 38%), notwithstanding that the State is statutorily-mandated to cover 65%. The Budget allocated flat funding of \$12 million for the Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) program, continuing to limit that funding to programs that were funded when the program was cut in 2008.</p>
		<p>Housing Subsidy for Foster Families and Youth The State did not advance legislation that would have increased the housing subsidy for housing-insecure families involved in the child welfare system and youth who have aged out of foster care from \$300 to \$600. The legislation would also have allowed youth aged out of foster care to have roommates, important for companionship, and to allow for the sharing of expenses, and would have increased the upper age limit to 24 so that youth who age out of foster care at 21 could avail themselves of the subsidy for 3 years. The failure to enact this sensible legislation means that the housing subsidy remains at the rate set in 1988, and leaves former foster youth at heightened risk of homelessness.</p>

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Foster College Success		<p>The Budget included \$3 million in funding for the Foster Youth College Success Initiative (FYCSI) to support youth in foster care to pursue higher education. The funds will help with tuition, books, and living expenses. The additional funding will allow a new cohort of eligible students to benefit from the program designed to help former foster youth complete college.</p>
Raise the Age		<p>Governor Cuomo included a proposal in his 2016-2017 Budget to raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 16 and 17-year-olds. The proposal would have held youth charged with misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies accountable in Family Court and created a special designation within the adult Criminal Court to handle the cases of youth charged with violent felonies. The proposal was not included in the final budget and failed to be voted on this session. As a result, New York remains one of only two states in the nation that continues to automatically try all 16- and 17-year-olds as adults; the other state is North Carolina.</p>