

Creating And Funding A First Responder Outreach Specialist Position For The Ulster County Sheriff's Officer Wellness Unit

Referred to: The Laws, Rules and Government Services Committee (Chairman Kovacs and Legislators Gavaris, Hansut, Harmon, Kitchen, Levine, and Uchitelle), and The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Gavaris and Legislators Collins, Hansut, Kovacs, Nolan, Roberts, and Uchitelle)

Chair of the Legislature, Peter J. Criswell, and Chairwoman of the Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee, Gina Hansut, offer the following:

WHEREAS, in 2022 the New York State Division for Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) issued accreditation standards, mandating that accredited agencies create an officer wellness program to address 1) access to resources, 2) prevention and intervention, 3) peer involvement & support, 4) critical incident response; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Sheriff's Office (USCO) Criminal Division was originally accredited in 1992, the first in the state to achieve the distinction, has successfully undergone five re-accreditation assessments since then, and is currently accredited by the DCJS; and

WHEREAS, agencies around the country are recognizing the importance of monitoring and tending to employees' health and wellness with the goal of promoting a department-wide culture of wellness, providing support and services when they are needed, and keeping the department healthy; and

WHEREAS, nationally collected data shows that mental health disorders present at higher rates in the first responder community resulting in increases in suicide, substance abuse, divorce, financial strain, PTSD and accumulative stress disorders; and

WHEREAS, while the UCSO has long offered wellness-related programs such as peer support, and stress management training, services are decentralized, and lacking an individual dedicated to ensuring the wellness of the UCSO's personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature adopted Resolution No. 220 on May 14, 2024 which created and funded four (4) positions for the Ulster County Sheriff's Officer Wellness Unit; and

WHEREAS, one of the positions established in Resolution No. 220 on May 14, 2024 was not funded in the 2026 Adopted Budget; and

Resolution No. 649 December 16, 2025

**Creating And Funding A First Responder Outreach Specialist
Position For The Ulster County Sheriff's Officer Wellness Unit**

WHEREAS, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to wellness addressing all of the county's first responders including Law Enforcement, Fire Services, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Dispatchers, and other First Responders; and

WHEREAS, existing county resources are insufficient to meet the current and increasing wellness needs of Ulster County first responders; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the 2026 Ulster County Budget is hereby amended as follows to create the following position effective January 1, 2026:

CREATE

<u>POSITION #</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
3110-XXXX (PL#) *Annual Salary Annual Benefits \$36,740.00	First Responder Outreach Specialist (UCSEA; 80-hours)	\$ 81,140.00*

INCREASE

AMOUNT

AA.3110.1818-1300.1300 (App. #)	Regular Pay	\$ 81,140.00
AA.3110.1818-8000.8000 (App.#)	Retirement	\$ 12,163.00
AA.3110.1818-8010.8010 (App.#)	Social Security	\$ 6,207.00
AA.3110.1818-8020.8020 (App.#)	Health Insurance - Dental	\$ 884.00
AA.3110.1818-8020.8035 (App.#)	Health Insurance	\$ 17,372.00
AA.3110.1818-8020.8055 (App.#)	Health Insurance - Optical	\$ 114.00

Resolution No. 649 December 16, 2025

**Creating And Funding A First Responder Outreach Specialist
Position For The Ulster County Sheriff's Officer Wellness Unit**

AA.9900.9900-3700.9990 Appropriated Fund Balance \$117,880.00
(Rev.#),

and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: NOES:

Passed Committee: Laws, Rules and Government Services on

Passed Committee: Ways and Means on

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

\$117,880.00 - 2026 INCREASE TO APPROPRIATED FUND BALANCE

\$117,880.00 - 2026 APPROPRIATIONS