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RMS End of Week Update 8/28/2026



Charlie Miller

Governor Hochul Celebrates the Opening of the 2026 Great New York State Fair

Governor Kathy Hochul kicked off The 2026 Great New York State Fair this week, celebrating the brand new FFA Building and highlighting a series of new and returning agricultural offerings and exhibits that will further connect fairgoers to New York agriculture. Governor Hochul cut the ribbon on the new 10,500 square-foot FFA Building, which will help develop the next generation of agricultural leaders and support

agricultural education, a priority for the Governor. This year's Fair will run from August 26 through Labor Day Monday, September 7, 2026, and continues to be the most affordable state fair in the nation, and a space for families to 'Get Offline, Get Outside.'

"There is so much to love about The Great New York State Fair, and at its core, it is a place that truly honors New York's tremendous agricultural community. I'm proud of the investments we have made in this space and across the entire Fairgrounds over the last five years," Governor Hochul said.

To view the full press release click [here](#).

When planning your trip to the fair Centro is making it easy to get to the Great New York State Fair with convenient Park-N-Ride service from three locations in the Syracuse area. Customers can leave the driving to Centro and enjoy direct service to the Fair's Main Gate without the hassle of traffic or parking.

"We know getting to the Fair is part of the overall experience," said Centro Chief Executive Officer Chris Tuff. "Our goal is to make that trip as easy and convenient as possible. Whether you're heading to a concert, spending the day with your family, or just going for your favorite Fair food, Centro's Park-N-Ride is one of the easiest ways to get there."

[For more information on the Centro NYS Fair Park-N-Ride Express please click here](#)

New York State Legislature Urge The Department Of Financial Services To Reject The Excessive Health Insurance Premium Increases Proposed For The 2027 Plan Year

Dozens of Democratic state lawmakers are urging the Hochul administration to rebuff health insurers' requested premium hikes, calling it "unconscionable to allow double-digit health insurance increases without compelling evidence."

In a [letter sent recently](#) to the Department of Financial Services, the lawmakers asked regulators to reject — or substantially reduce — the proposed 2027 rate increases. They also want the department to "seriously consider" capping insurers' administrative expenses at 10 percent.

"This is precisely the moment when New York must fight to protect affordability and stabilize enrollment, not approve rate increases that will drive more people out of the insurance market," they wrote in the letter, which was spearheaded by state Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas and state Sen. Gustavo Rivera.

Health [insurance carriers asked](#) the state for average premium increases of 20.7 percent for individual plans and 25.7 percent for small group plans next year. The department is expected to announce approved rate changes by the end of this month.

For more information please click [here](#).

New York Law Against ICE Overreach and Banning 287(G) Agreements Goes Into Effect

This week the statewide ban on 287(g) agreements in the Local Cops, Local Crime Act, signed into law in May as part of a comprehensive package of immigration protections, has taken effect.

According to the press release Section 287(g) agreements allow local officers or employees to engage in or assist with federal civil immigration enforcement or otherwise perform the functions of federal immigration officers, eroding trust between immigrant communities and local institutions, and making residents less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate with law enforcement. The Local Cops, Local Crimes Act prohibits local governments and law enforcement agencies from entering into 287(g) agreements or similar arrangements that use local resources to detain people for federal immigration violations.

Prior to 2025, only one of New York's 62 counties had a 287(g) agreement with ICE. To date, 53 counties in New York have never entered into a 287(g) agreement. Of those 53 counties, seven are among the 25 safest communities in America, demonstrating that 287(g) agreements are non-essential to improving safety in New York.

In June, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit in federal district court seeking to block certain provisions of the Governor's immigration protection laws, including the 287(g) prohibition in the Local Cops, Local Crimes Act. A federal court denied the DOJ's motion for a preliminary injunction for the 287(g) provision of the law permitting the Local Cops, Local Crimes Act ban on 287(g) agreements to take effect.

Shortly after the new law went into effect 15 county sheriffs filed a lawsuit challenging the Local Cops, Local Crimes Act's ban on 287(g) agreements with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Governor Hochul and NY Attorney General James released the following statement:

"As we have said from the start, the 'Local Cops, Local Crimes Act' keeps New Yorkers safe by ensuring public safety resources go toward combating crime in our communities, not carrying out the work of ICE. The federal government claims they are going after the 'worst of the worst,' but every American has seen the reality: ICE is terrorizing communities and families with indiscriminate raids, detaining people without regard for criminal record, and using local law enforcement to deliver on the administration's mass deportation agenda.

Many of the 12 entities with these agreements have complied without incident, and the vast majority of New York's law enforcement agencies were already successfully protecting their communities without any collaboration with ICE. The claim that these sheriffs cannot do the same says more about them than it does about the law.

This lawsuit is nothing but a frivolous waste of taxpayer dollars. The courts have already declined to block this law once, and we are confident they will do so again. In the meantime, we expect all law enforcement agencies in New York to uphold state law."

Yesterday, Governor Hochul and New York Attorney General James announced a lawsuit against the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office for failing to comply with New York's Local Cops, Local Crimes Act (LCLCA), which requires local law enforcement agencies to dissolve all agreements under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act by August 25, 2026.

The Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office has maintained a 287(g) agreement with ICE since March 2020. After the LCLCA was enacted, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) notified the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office of the new law and requested information regarding the status of the agency's 287(g) agreement. The OAG did not receive a response confirming that the agreement had been terminated or would be terminated by the August 25 deadline. On August 19, OAG issued a formal investigative demand pursuant to New York Executive Law Section 63-E, or subpoena, seeking documents sufficient to show what actions the agency had taken to terminate its 287(g) agreement. The OAG still has not received confirmation that the agreement has been terminated. Meanwhile, officials in Rensselaer County have made public statements indicating their intent to defy the law, with one telling a reporter that OAG and the Governor's Office "could take that letter, crumple it up and shove it."

Of the 12 law enforcement agencies that had 287(g) agreements before the Local Cops, Local Crimes Act took effect, the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office is the only one that has not indicated its intent to dissolve its agreement.

The state alleges that the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office has failed to perform duties required of it under state law. The suit requests that the Rensselaer County Supreme Court order the Sheriff's Office to exercise the termination provisions in its 287(g) agreement and to declare the agreement void and unenforceable under New York law.

Today's lawsuit is the first legal action brought by the OAG's newly established Office of Immigrant Trust (OIT) under the LCLCA. The OIT was created to enforce New York laws limiting state and local involvement in federal civil immigration enforcement and is authorized to investigate potential violations and bring civil actions when warranted.

[To view the full press release on the Local Cops, Local Crime Act going into effect please click here.](#)

[To read the full statement on the lawsuit by the 15 county sheriffs please click here.](#)

[For more information about the suit filed against the Rensselaer County Sheriff please click here.](#)

NY's Medicaid Fraud Watchdog Shows Declining Performance

Enforcement by the New York's Office of Medicaid Inspector General has dropped in recent years across a range of benchmarks – a sign that the state's anti-fraud efforts have slackened even as its Medicaid spending soared.

A review of [annual reports](#) from the office, known as OMIG, shows that the number of audits it has generated, the amount of money it has recovered and the number of cases it has referred to other agencies have all declined in recent years.

From 2019 to 2024, audits were down 62 percent, inflation-adjusted recoveries were down 27 percent, and total referrals were down 44 percent (see table).

Selected OMIG performance benchmarks

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	% change, 2019- 24
Staff (FTEs)	405	409	391	405	442	472	17%
Audits finalized	1,842	1,240	943	1,123	891	702	-62%
Recoveries (\$millions)*	302	260	228	322	245	220	-27%
Referrals to MFCU and other agencies	768	392	827	1,116	655	431	-44%

**In constant 2024 dollars*

Table: Empire Center • Source: [Office of the Medicaid Inspector General](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

During that same period, New York's [Medicaid spending](#) increased 65 percent, from \$72 billion to \$101 billion, and OMIG's staffing rose 17 percent, from 391 to 472.

As a result, the number of completed audits per billion in spending dropped to its lowest level in the agency's 20-year history, while the number of audits per full-time equivalent employee dropped to its second-lowest level (see charts).

OMIG audits per billion in Medicaid spending

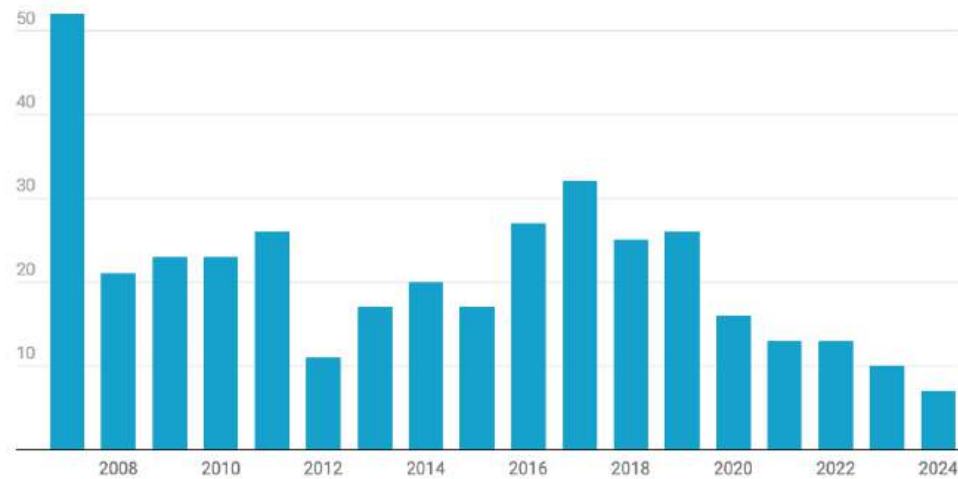


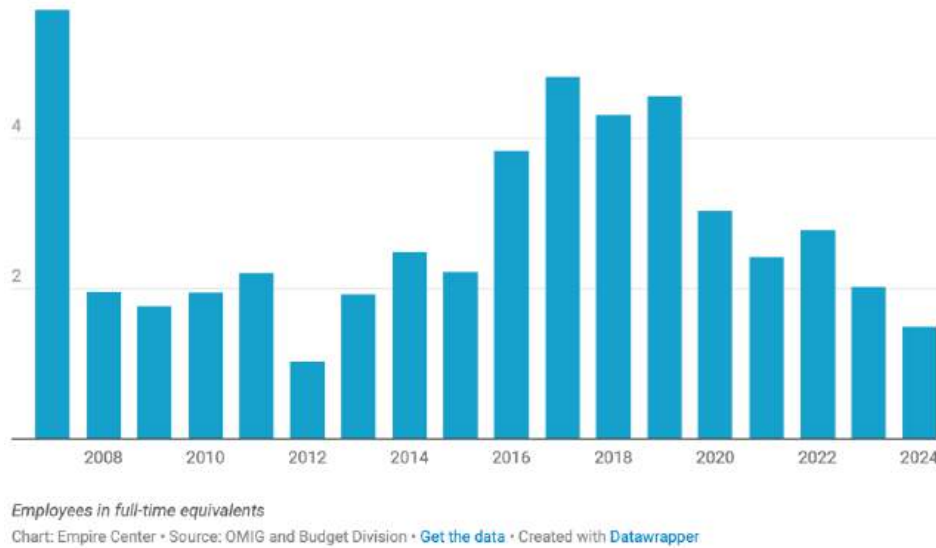
Chart: Empire Center • Source: OMIG and Budget Division • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

[Established in 2006](#) as an independent agency within the Health Department, OMIG is charged with defending against fraud, waste and abuse in Medicaid, a safety-net health plan for the low-income and disabled.

Under its original director, James Sheehan, the office developed a reputation for aggressive enforcement – and drew complaints from the state’s politically powerful healthcare industry.

That changed in 2011, when a newly elected Gov. Andrew Cuomo [removed Sheehan](#) and signaled a less adversarial auditing approach. The agency’s staffing declined through Cuomo’s first two terms and dropped to an all-time low during the first year of the pandemic.

Finalized OMIG audits per employee



Budgeted staffing levels have been growing on Governor Hochul’s watch but, as of this year, remain 9 percent below their 2011 peak.

Despite the additional personnel, the office’s output has generally been trending down. From 2019 to 2024, the number of finalized audits dropped from 1,842 to 702, the amount of money recovered (in constant 2024 dollars) fell from \$302 million to \$220 million, and the total cases referred to other agencies for follow-up dropped from 768 to 431.

These declines come at a time when the Trump administration is raising an alarm about Medicaid fraud and pressuring New York and other states to crack down.

Responding to a list of [50 fraud-related questions](#) from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, state [Health Department officials pointed](#) to OMIG as evidence of “robust oversight.”

New York is one of only three states to have created an Office of Medicaid Inspector General dedicated solely to identification, prevention, and remediation of [fraud, waste and abuse] in the Medicaid program. OMIG’s statewide, multidisciplinary workforce consists of more than 480 staff as of March 2026—including auditors, investigators, nurses, pharmacists, data analysts, compliance specialists, program administrators, and legal and technical staff—and reflects the State’s substantial and sustained efforts in robust oversight to protect against [fraud, waste and abuse].

The state’s letter did not discuss OMIG’s declining productivity.

Another agency charged with Medicaid oversight – the attorney general’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit – has also shown signs of diminishing effectiveness in recent years, which the Trump administration cited as a reason to [suspend its federal funding](#).

A [review of federal data by the Empire Center](#) found that the unit’s enforcement activities have declined during the term of the current attorney general, Letitia James, and that its performance ranks among the worst in the U.S. when adjusted for the scale of New York’s Medicaid spending.

For more information please click [here](#).

Governor Hochul Delivers Remarks About The Impact Of Federal Tariffs On New Yorkers

Earlier this week, Governor Hochul delivered remarks at the opening day of the New York State Fair about the disastrous impact federal tariffs on Canada have had on New Yorkers and the economy.

During the event Governor Hochul said that she wanted to take a moment to address the disastrous impacts of federal tariffs on millions of everyday New Yorkers and how New Yorkers in our state and elsewhere are being slammed by them. She said they're only getting worse because of the misguided war with Canada and now this threat of 50 percent tariffs on Canadian cars and trucks and auto parts and steel. This is doing nothing more than wreaking havoc on the American economy, all from his social media account. So, it's basically taking money out of our pockets, your pockets, and raising costs for everyday New Yorkers just so the President can settle some personal scores.

She went on to say make no mistake, these diversionary tactics from the President trying to deflect his never-ending war with Iran, this is, again, another deflection. Let me take you back. The war with Iran was a deflection because questions around Jeffrey Epstein were getting too hot, so we go to war with Iran. Now the questions around Iran are getting too hot, so now we're going to war with Canada. See the pattern? This is going to do nothing more than make Americans' lives more painful, grocery prices, dairy prices, gas prices and energy prices.

To view the full comments please click [here](#).

Governor Hochul, New York leaders reject Trump's plan to rename Lake Ontario

President Trump announced Thursday that he plans to rename Lake Ontario “Lake America,” drawing swift criticism from New York officials. “We’re going to be changing the name effective immediately of Lake Ontario to Lake America,” Trump said.

The move comes amid escalating trade tensions between the United States and Canada. After trade talks broke down last week, Trump imposed \$20 billion in tariffs on Canadian imports. Canadian officials responded with “dollar for dollar” retaliatory tariffs. Lake Ontario is bordered by the Canadian province of Ontario to the north, west and southwest, and by New York State to the south and east.

As with Trump's effort to rename the Gulf of Mexico to the “Gulf of America,” the name change would apply only to federal entities. Canada and New York, which borders the lake, are not required to recognize the new name.

Gov. Kathy Hochul quickly rejected the proposed name, writing on social media that “New York won’t be calling it that.” Governor Hochul also criticized the president in an interview with NY1.

“I’m speechless. It is so patently absurd,” she said. “Shame on them for deflecting from the real needs that Americans are feeling that we have here in New York. The high cost of energy, prescription drugs, utility bills, groceries. And this is what the president spends his time on? Renaming a lake that was named after our Indigenous peoples. Shame on you.”

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer called the move “juvenile” and said Trump's trade policies would hurt New Yorkers.

“Instead of lowering costs and cancelling his damaging tariffs, Trump is doubling down on a juvenile effort to rename one of the Great Lakes. He’s escalating his reckless tariff war with our closest trading partner and ally, which will continue to drive up costs for Upstate New York families, seniors and small businesses. It’s a pathetic attempt at distraction, and it’s working families who are paying the price,” Schumer said in a statement.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries also criticized the announcement, arguing that the effort would cost taxpayers.

“Donald Trump picked a fight with Canada that is costing you money. Instead of fixing it, he is spending your tax dollars to rename Lake Ontario. Republicans don’t give a damn about making your life more affordable,” Jeffries wrote on social media.

The name Ontario comes from an Indigenous word meaning “lake of shining waters.”

To view the full news article please click [here](#).

[Five Years Of Governor Hochul](#)

To mark five years of Governor Hochul her office issued a press release detailing some of her administrations accomplishments. It stated: On August 24, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul took her oath of office as the 57th Governor of New York. In Governor Hochul's inaugural address, she laid out a clear vision: make New York more affordable, safer and fairer for every family. The Governor pledged to take on the State's toughest challenges head-on and invest in what makes New York, New York.

Five years later, [Governor Hochul has delivered on that promise](#), putting money back in New Yorkers' pockets, keeping communities safe, defending fundamental rights from Washington's attacks and fighting for hardworking families. And she's just getting started.

Governor Hochul's Accomplishments Website [Here](#).
To view the full press release please click [here](#).

Helpful Links and Resources

[2026 RMS HMM End of Session Update](#)

[RMS Revenue and Tax Final Budget Table](#)

[RMS Health/Mental Hygiene Final Budget Table](#)

[FY 2027 Enacted Budget Financial Plan](#)

[Empire State Development Tariff Resource Guide](#)

[NYS COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard](#)

[NYS COVID-19 Fatalities Tracker](#)

[Eliminating Distractions In Schools Resource](#)

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Department of Financial Services information and resources](#)

[New York COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page](#)

Department of Health

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

[COVID-19 Guidance for Medicaid Providers](#)

Office of Mental Health

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html>

OPWDD

<https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance>

State Education Department

<http://www.op.nysed.gov/COVID-19.html>

NYS Department of Labor

<https://dol.ny.gov/>