



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DUTCHESS COUNTY COMPTROLLER

ROBIN L. LOIS, COMPTROLLER

What does the American Rescue Plan (ARP) mean to Dutchess County Residents?

Special Update by Dutchess County Comptroller Robin L. Lois

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As we reach the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 Pandemic hitting Dutchess County, our residents receive help from the Federal Government in the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (HR 1319)* signed into law last week. This unprecedented \$1.9 trillion relief bill provides much needed aid to fund vaccination programs; funds assistance for small businesses and nonprofit agencies; expands critical assistance for food, housing, and unemployment benefits; and provides help for our schools to re-open safely - to name just a few.

The *American Recue Plan (ARP)* provides \$65 billion in direct aid to counties based on population. Dutchess County will receive an estimated \$57.5 million as part of this plan in two payments: the first to be received by the county within 60 days, and the second will be received next year. A total of \$3.8 billion will be going to the 57 counties in New York State. The following chart is a breakdown of relief for counties throughout the Mid-Hudson region:

County	Relief Funding
Dutchess	\$57,507,739
Orange	\$75,240,226
Putnam	\$19,217,590
Rockland	\$63,678,594
Sullivan	\$14,743,910
Ulster	\$34,708,351
Westchester	\$189,108,356

Source: [NYSAC Interim Summary of the American Rescue Plan](#)

These funds will help reimburse and fund the frontline work counties have provided - and will continue to provide - in responding to and mitigating the public health effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Throughout 2020 the dedicated employees and public officials of Dutchess County worked tirelessly to set up testing operations, conduct contact tracing, procure and provide PPE to first responders throughout our communities, and to help businesses navigate restrictions and operate safely. In 2021 the County adds to that list the heavy lift of distributing vaccines. All of this being accomplished with fewer employees due to the county's early retirement incentive, while absorbing declining local revenues like sales tax, hotel/motel tax, and the loss of state reimbursements. Dutchess County has been diligent in coding and tracking every dollar spent related to COVID-19 in anticipation of this Federal Aid, as these funds are specifically prohibited from being used - directly or indirectly - to offset a reduction in net tax revenue.

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Loss in tax revenue for 2020 budget to actual:

	2020 Budgeted	2020 Actual	Difference
Sales Tax	\$ 211,137,076	\$ 200,104,807	\$ (11,032,269) -5.2%
Occupancy Tax	\$ 3,460,000	\$ 2,253,124	\$ (1,206,876) -34.9%
Property Tax	\$ 105,347,280	\$ 104,347,281	\$ (999,999) -0.9%
Total Tax Revenue	\$ 319,944,356	\$ 306,705,212	\$ (13,239,144) 4.1%

**This chart does not include other non-tax revenue sources, including but not limited to State / Federal aid, fund balance, or debt reserve.*

ARP funding may also be used to assist Dutchess County in making important investments in critical infrastructure such as water, sewer, and broadband. As many county residents work from home and children continue to learn remotely, broadband has proved to be an essential need of our communities. I hope the County Legislature and County Executive will take advantage of this aid and put a plan in place to ensure every Dutchess County resident has access to affordable and adequate broadband service.

The American Rescue Plan also includes direct support to Dutchess County residents through extended unemployment insurance benefits, \$1,400 recovery rebate checks to individuals making \$80,000 or less per year (\$160,000 for joint filers), expanded earned income tax credit in 2021, health insurance subsidies with COBRA, and support to multiple employer pension plans experiencing fiscal shortfalls.

Other much needed help for our local partners and community members provided in the ARP includes:

- Support for education – support for safely reopening, enrichment programs, education technology;
- Public Health assistance - for testing, tracing, research, mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment;
- Medicaid – increased support for home and community based services;
- Housing – rental assistance, mortgage assistance, LIHEAP assistance and homelessness support services;
- Aging Services – disease preventions, long term care, senior nutrition programs;
- Agriculture – expanded existing agricultural programs;
- FEMA, Transportation, Infrastructure – includes mass transit and airports; and
- Small Business – Support for restaurants, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, expanded Paycheck Protection Programs (PPP) loans, nonprofit and digital media assistance, support for live performance venue operators.

Dutchess County was fortunately in a strong fiscal position prior to the pandemic hitting our community, which has helped us to sustain and maintain our crucial services to the public. These additional ARP funds will not only help provide for a quick recovery and enhance the ability to respond to the additional work that needs to be done until this pandemic is over, but also help Dutchess County build back better.

[The full text of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 can be found here.](#)

[A summary of the Plan by NYSAC, including a breakdown of relief to all counties, can be found by clicking here.](#)