

YOUTH TEAM SPORTS FUNDING (YTS)

YTS funding must be awarded to local community-based organizations and nonprofits. Youth bureaus may, in limited circumstances, be approved to directly operate or fund programming. Those circumstances are described in the Eligibility and Funding section below.

Similar to the Youth Sports and Education Opportunity Funding (YSEF), YTS is grounded in the principles of positive youth development. It is intended to provide support to local team sports programs across New York State in communities where such programs may be scarce or under-resourced. Unlike YSEF, YTS has a sole focus on team sports. For the purposes of YTS, a "team sport" is defined as an organized physical activity in which groups of two or more individuals compete with two or more opposing individuals. Sporting activities where individuals engage in competition on behalf of an organized group, including, but not limited to, team tennis, team golf, or racing sports such as swimming or skiing, are included in this definition.

YTS may be used to fund programming that provides opportunities for youth in under-resourced communities to learn and participate in team sports activities. This may include educational instruction necessary to prepare youth to participate in team sports.

To ensure that funding is going to the intended population, municipal youth bureaus must distribute funds based on local need,¹ considering factors, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Historically under-resourced communities.
- High rates of public housing and/or family homelessness.
- Opportunity zones or neighborhoods/cities/areas deemed "low-income" via externally available tools like the New York State Council on Children and Families Kids' Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse.
- Marginalized communities or groups with higher barriers to participation in team sports (e.g., youth with disabilities; girls; transgender/gender non-binary youth; and youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning).
- Federally and/or New York State-recognized tribes and tribal organizations.
- Neighborhoods that experience higher rates of crime and violence and low-performing schools.

All funded programs must aim to foster the following:

- Physical health and well-being - Increasing physical activity and positive relationships to one's body.
- Mental health and well-being - Improving outcomes related to youth mental health, and social and emotional skills development and connectedness.
- Employment - Increasing qualifications and skills, such as collective problem-solving, teamwork, and dispute resolution, which help prepare youth for suitable employment.
- Community cohesion - Breaking down barriers to reduce discrimination, crime, and violence in communities, and help young leaders emerge.

Eligibility and Funding

Municipal youth bureaus will contract directly with local nonprofit or community-based Organizations. Funding may provide general operating support to give programs flexibility to efficiently allocate resources for quality programming.

Municipal youth bureaus seeking to directly operate or fund a project must first demonstrate to OCFS that diligent outreach and recruitment activities were conducted to all known eligible entities and articulate the outcomes of such activities to OCFS. In addition, municipal youth bureaus must submit to OCFS an attestation stating they conducted outreach to all known nonprofit and community-based organizations in their municipality and that there were no entities eligible to administer the program. YTS funds can supplement existing municipal youth team sports programming; however, they cannot be used to supplant existing municipal funding for such programs.

Line-item budgets should focus on programming costs, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Coaches/instructors/direct service staff/mentors (including training/professional development) necessary to support youth's ability to participate in team sports.
- Referee fees.
- Purchase of equipment or uniforms.
- Capital investment (e.g., swimming facilities, fields, fences, storage, lighting).
- Facility/field space cost.
- Purchase of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) by local nonprofit or community-based organizations to support the requirements of Chapter 681 of the Laws of 2023, as amended by Chapter 9 of the Laws of 2024.

Programs eligible for funding must meet the criteria below:

- Provide team sports activities for youth under age 18 in under-resourced communities.
- Serve youth in New York State.
- Have a child protection policy in place that includes adherence to local city, agency, school district, and state child protection guidelines.
- Collect registration data, including participant demographic information, as required by OCFS in a manner that allows for accurate reporting of anonymized aggregate data.

Organizations, expenditures, and activities not eligible for funding are the following:

- For-profit organizations or businesses.
- Private foundations, as defined in section 509(a) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.
- Organizations that discriminate based on age; ethnicity/race; political affiliation; religion; sexual orientation; gender; gender identity; physical or other disability; national origin; or any protected characteristic under local, state, and/or federal law.
- Research or project-planning activities.
- Elite or private sports camps, programs, or teams.
- Endowments, memorials, budget deficits, or fundraising activities.
- Religious organizations whose sports programs do not have a secular and community focus.
- Lobbying, political, or fraternal activities.

Touchstone Life Areas and Services, Opportunities and Supports (SOS) in the Quality Youth Development System (QYDS)

Municipal youth bureaus will be required to report demographics and outcomes through the Quality Youth Development System (QYDS). The Life Area and Services, Opportunities and Supports (SOS) selections that will be required in QYDS for the YTS are as follows:

- Life Area: 2PEH Physical and Emotional Health
- SOS: 0232 Year-Round/Seasonal Activities
- Performance measures:
 - How Much: 0232A.1 # of youth participating (unduplicated)
 - How Well: 0232B.4% of youth completing the program
 - Better Off: 0232C.2 - Number and percent of youth who attain/or improve on a skill and/or report an increase in knowledge/awareness