

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
BROOME COUNTY – PUBLIC SAFETY (POLICE SERVICES)**

Community Profiles

Broome County is situated in the eastern part of the Finger Lakes region of New York State. The county, its principal municipality, the City of Binghamton, the Town of Vestal and the Villages of Johnson City, Endicott and Port Dickinson, are exploring a consolidation of police services. Broome County and the City of Binghamton are of average size and have slightly higher than average revenues from federal and state aid, a sign of economic distress.

<b>2005</b>	<b>Broome County</b>	<b>NYS County Average<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>City of Binghamton</b>	<b>NYS City Average<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Population</b>	220,536	192,424	47,380	37,146
<b>Revenue from State and Federal Aid</b>	28.1%	26.1%	27.8%	24.9%

<sup>1</sup>Excludes New York City

Background

A common observation in Broome County is that many levels of government provide similar or identical services, leading to taxes that are higher than necessary. Consolidation of services, including police services, has been an issue in Broome County since the 1970s. The most recent police consolidation plan is to merge each of the five jurisdictions that make up the urban core of Broome County into a new Broome County Metropolitan Police Force. The legal structure of the proposal is for each municipality to enter into a five-year inter-municipal agreement with Broome County. Each agreement would require approval by the town and village boards, the County Legislature, and the voters in a referendum. Under the agreement, the Metropolitan Police Force would provide police services for the cost of each participating municipality's estimated 2007 budgets for police services. After the five-year period, each municipality would retain the option to leave the consolidated force and reestablish their pre-existing operations. The proposal addresses the compensation of this force by continuing to honor all current bargaining unit agreements for police personnel. New employees of the Metropolitan Police Force would be represented by a new Police Benevolent Association. As allowed under regulations governed by the Taylor Law, bargaining units may consolidate. The proposed plan aims to reduce police service costs by \$7.7 through attrition of current supervisory positions, while maintaining the same number of police officers, over a five-year period.

Outcome

The plan has been presented to municipal and police officials throughout Broome County, as well as to the public. No municipality has yet voted on or begun drafting a resolution on the police service proposal. Police unions may be the biggest obstacle for any consolidation because fringe benefits and other aspects of the contracts, such as sick time buy-outs, are not uniform. Thus, a renegotiation may force some current officers to give up benefits that they wish to protect.