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## Public Opinion Data

### **Rutgers University Study: Assassination Culture Emerging in U.S. on the Political Left**

Rutgers University's Network Contagion Research Institute released a report in April 2025 entitled "Assassination Culture: How Burning Teslas and Killing Billionaires Became a Meme Aesthetic for Political Violence."

The report begins, "Political violence targeting Donald Trump and Elon Musk is becoming increasingly normalized. Following the July 13, 2024 attempted assassination of President Trump, tolerance - and even advocacy - for political violence appears to have surged, especially among politically left-leaning segments of the population. This pattern builds on a broader trend NCRI identified in two December 2024 reports which analyzed how viral social media narratives were legitimizing political violence, particularly in the aftermath of the UnitedHealthcare CEO's assassination. The reports found widespread justification for lethal violence - including assassination - among younger, highly online, and ideologically left-aligned users."

The report continued, "A broader "assassination culture" appears to be emerging within segments of the U.S. public on the extreme left."

Findings include:

Over half of those who self-identified as left of center (56%) reported that if someone murdered Donald Trump, they would be at least somewhat justified. This includes 14.1% who said this murder would be "Completely Justified."

Similarly, half (50.2%) of those who self-identified as left of center said the murder of Elon Musk would be somewhat justified (or greater), with about 10.7% saying this is "Completely Justified."

Over 1/3 of all respondents believe it is at least somewhat acceptable to destroy Tesla dealerships to protest Elon Musk's involvement in the Presidential administration.

Those who justify the murder of Elon Musk or Donald Trump are also more likely to support Luigi Mangione's killing of Brian Thompson. This pattern suggests a broader worldview in which violence is seen as a legitimate political response—not just a reaction to individual figures. Central to this belief system is Left-Wing Authoritarianism, characterized by moral absolutism, punitive attitudes toward ideological opponents, and a willingness to use coercion for progressive aims

The strongest predictors are far-left political identity and Left-Wing Authoritarianism—suggesting this justification of violence is underpinned by politics and ideology.

From September 10-12 immediately following the assassination of Charlie Kirk, YouGov released a poll with the following:

- Liberals (18%) and Democrats (14%) more likely than conservatives (7%) or Republicans (6%) to say violence can sometimes be justified.
- 16% of liberals (24% of very liberal) say it's usually/always acceptable to feel joy about the death of a political opponent (e.g., someone expressing opposing views); 56% of very liberals say it's unacceptable.
- Younger adults (under 30): 19% say violence can sometimes be justified (vs. 51% never).

## **Wild Extremism Not New for Democrats: In 2022, 29% Supported Removing Parental Custody of Children if Parents Refused the COVID Vaccine**

Extreme views from Democrats targeted at political opponents isn't new. In 2022, Rasmussen Reports and The Heartland Institute released a poll that found 48% of likely Democratic voters supported government fines or imprisonment for those who publicly questioned the COVID vaccine's efficacy (e.g., on social media). Other key findings on Democrats/likely Democrat voters in the poll:

- 55% favored fines for unvaccinated adults.
- 59% supported requiring the unvaccinated to "remain confined to their homes at all times, except for emergencies" (house arrest).
- 48% supported fines or prison time for questioning vaccine efficacy in public forums.
- 45% supported temporarily placing the unvaccinated in "designated facilities."
- 46% supported using digital devices to track the unvaccinated for quarantine enforcement.
- 29% supported temporarily removing parental custody of children if parents refused the vaccine.

*(Contact: Jeff Mitchell 1-5137)*

## **Appropriations**

### **Regents Release Fiscal Year Budget Requests for General Fund, RIIF**

The September meeting of the Iowa Board of Regents gives the Legislature and the state a preview of the budget requests from the state universities for the next fiscal year. This year's requests are significantly different from what has been presented in previous years, as the three schools are not requesting an increase in their general operation appropriations. Instead, each school is focusing on specific issues to address.

As the home of the state's medical school, the **University of Iowa** is requesting an additional \$3.6 million to fund initiatives that would be targeted at increasing the number of physicians in rural Iowa. With the additional money, the University says it will do the following:

1. Recruit and support rural students through academic preparation and medical school pathways.
2. Launch a dedicated rural medicine track with specialized curriculum and training.
3. Build a statewide preceptor network to expand clinical training opportunities in rural communities.

4. Expand the number of medical students studying and graduating with advanced training in rural medicine from five (current number) to 10 each year. Over four years the UI will increase the total number of medical students in the rural medicine track from 20 to 40.
5. Provide scholarships to support medical students dedicated to rural medicine.

The University says the additional \$3.6 million would be “a fiscally responsible and targeted solution to Iowa’s growing rural physician shortage. The university’s rural physician program is proven to place physicians where they’re needed most, ensuring better health outcomes for underserved communities while reducing long-term healthcare costs.”

**Iowa State University** is again asking for additional funding for several of its auxiliary units that are focused on agriculture. ISU is requesting \$3 million for an initiative they are calling the Iowa Ag Tech Innovation Initiative. The new program would provide \$1.8 million for the Agricultural Experiment Station for ag tech-focused faculty, staff and programmatic support. Another \$1.2 million would be provided to Cooperative Extension Services which would be used to “scale up successful Agricultural Extension outreach programs, launch new programs and expand outreach opportunities to empower producers, ag retailers and technical professionals.”

Iowa State is also requesting an increase of \$600,000 for the operational budget of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. This is moving into its new, expanded building which the Legislature has provided significant funding thru the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund. The operational funding increase would be partially offset with the ending of the commitment of \$250,000 for equipment in the new VDL.

At the **University of Northern Iowa**, additional funding is sought for two initiatives. UNI is asking for \$1 million to help fund lost tuition revenue due to offering in-state tuition to students from neighboring states. This began with students enrolling at the school during the 2025-2026 school year. The Legislature did provide additional funding for this in the FY 2026 Education Appropriations bill, but that funding was vetoed by the Governor.

UNI is also asking for an additional \$600,000 for its newly established nursing program. The school began offering classes for students seeking a bachelor of science in nursing in the fall of 2024. The initial class was 24 students. UNI is expecting to grow the program, with expected first year enrollment of 96 to 144 students by the fall of 2027. The additional funds would be used to support the growth in enrolled students.

The net increase requested by the three state universities from the General Fund would be \$8.55 million for Fiscal Year 2027. If enacted into law, the new money would raise the Regents portion of the General Fund to \$595.5 million.

The Board of Regents also released their request for infrastructure funding for FY 2027. This contains some projects the Legislature has heard about before, as well as a new one.

The **University of Iowa** is requesting a three year, \$20 million RIIF appropriation to expand the College of Nursing and establish a nursing simulation laboratory. The university says doing this project will allow the College of Nursing to enroll an additional 65 nursing students per year. The expansion project would cost \$40 million, with the University raising half the funds itself. They are requesting that RIIF provide the remain \$20 million over the next three years.

**Iowa State University** is again requesting funding for the renovation of Atanasoff Hall, home of the Computer Science Department. They are asking for \$8 million over two years from the state for the \$33 million project. This was included in the House’s initial RIIF proposal for FY 2026, but was not rejected by the Senate.

**University of Northern Iowa** is again requesting funding for the Commons Modernization project. The building would continue to be home to the UNI Foundation and be the location of the Center for Civics Education. As was its request last year, UNI is asking for RIIF to fund the vast majority of the project with the state providing \$29.9 million in funding over four years for the \$33.2 million project. The FY 2026 infrastructure budget did provide \$1 million to UNI in FY 2026 to begin work on the project.

In addition to the specific building projects requested, the Regents are also requesting funding to make the year's payments for academic building revenue bonds. This is done through the Tuition Replacement program, as these bonds are backed by student tuition. The FY 2027 request is for \$25 million, which is \$600,000 less than the FY 2026 appropriation. These bonds are expected to be paid off by Fiscal Year 2036.

The Board of Regents will act on these proposals at their meeting week before forwarding the final package to the Governor and the Legislature for consideration.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

## Agriculture

### IDALS Secretary Naig Announces 9 Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grants

On Wednesday Sept. 17, 2025, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship issued a press release relaying that Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig has announced nine Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant recipients to expand small-scale meat processing capacity within Iowa. These cost-share grants, totaling \$355,000, will help small businesses, many of whom are located in rural communities, make essential equipment purchases and facility improvements. Projects include the addition of new smokehouses, installation of freezer systems, expansion of processing lines, and the replacement or modernization of vital equipment, among other improvements.

The Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant replaces a previous program that was created in 2021 and administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority. The Legislature authorized this new Choose Iowa grant program during the 2024 legislative session and allocated nearly \$250,000 for its first year. An additional \$250,000 was authorized during the 2025 session. This round of funding is utilizing appropriations from both fiscal years. Choose Iowa received 23 grant requests totaling over \$1.5 million, showing strong interest and demand from processors statewide. The investment of \$355,000 will leverage a combined investment of approximately \$1.94 million across nine counties. Awardees could receive up to \$100,000 and are required to provide at least a one-to-one financial match.

Weaver Meats | **Afton** | \$40,000

Purchase of a RTE cooler and Enviro-Pak smokehouse.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$105,119

Cherokee Locker | **Cherokee** | \$75,000

Purchase of a freezer and expansion of the cut and packing line.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$512,287

Maxwell Custom Beef (formerly Amend Packing Company) | **Des Moines** | \$20,000

Upgrade and modernization of processing equipment.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$57,683

Tiefenthaler Quality Meats (Food Locker Service, Inc.) | **Holstein** | \$45,000

Addition of a smokehouse.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$129,877

Milo Locker Meats (Tribal Meat LLC) | **Milo** | \$75,000

Purchase and installation of a freezer facility.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$282,000

Friedrichsen Meat Company | **Sutherland** | \$25,000

Purchase of a meat slicer, vacuum sealer and automatic double clipper for ground meat packaging.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$110,436

Skoglund Meats | **West Bend** | \$25,000

Addition of a smokehouse.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$292,180

Winthrop Locker LLC | **Winthrop** | \$25,000

Purchase of a 500T smokehouse.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$62,166

Yetter Locker | **Yetter** | \$25,000

Incorporate harvest floor improvements, a rail processing cooler, and a finished product walk-in freezer.

Anticipated Total Project Cost: \$388,872

[Full details](#) about the grant requirements are available on the [Choose Iowa website](#).

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

## Commerce

### September is Life Insurance Awareness Month

The following was provided by the Iowa Insurance Division:

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, making it an ideal time to educate yourself about this important financial decision. According to the [Life Insurance Marketing and Research Association](#) (LIMRA), 44% of consumers are only somewhat or not knowledgeable about life insurance.

Life insurance pays a death benefit to your named beneficiaries when you die. It can be a safety net to avoid challenging times if a loved one who contributed earnings to a household passes away unexpectedly. The policy proceeds may be used to help cover funeral expenses, mortgage payments or rent, daily living expenses, college tuition, outstanding loans, and uncovered medical bills. It can also help preserve generational wealth. Beneficiaries may be named with different percentage payouts, or you may designate a charity or church to receive the benefits.

There are two main classes of life insurance coverage: term and cash value. Term insurance provides coverage for a period of time and may be very affordable. Cash value life insurance is a permanent type of insurance that offers protection with two components: the death benefit for beneficiaries and a cash value that grows over time. This cash value may be accessed through various means, including loans, withdrawals, or full surrender.

After receiving a life policy, always review it and ensure you understand all the terms and conditions. There is a 10 day free look period on the policy, where you can return it to the insurer and receive a refund. The free look period is 30 days if it is a replacement of an existing life policy. Also, periodic reviews of all your insurance policies with your agent ensures the coverage amounts and terms still fit within your financial plan.

Life insurance premium rates are based on age, health, lifestyle, and the coverage amount. The younger and healthier you are, the cheaper the premiums may be. Also, when determining the coverage amount look at your financial goals, debts, dependents, and income. Know the expiration date on a term policy, as you may be able to renew but with a significant increase in premiums (which is frequently a default or automatic option), convert to permanent coverage, or purchase a new policy. Life insurance coverage may be available through your employer, but it is often not enough, and is dependent upon your continued employment.

Caregivers commonly find old life insurance policies in the possessions of a loved one. The National Association of Insurance Commissioners [life insurance policy locator](#) is free and can assist with finding long-lost life insurance policies of a deceased family member or loved one.

Since insurance is complicated, the Iowa Insurance Division has developed the [Save4Later](#) and [SmarHER Money](#) websites to help Iowans plan, earn, save, and retire by learning the basics of financial literacy and insurance concepts. Learning about the role of life insurance in your financial plan is essential for protecting your family's financial future.

*(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)*

## Economic Growth

### Workforce Housing Tax Credits Awarded in 36 Iowa Counties

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) announced \$35.9 million in workforce housing tax credits to support development in 36 counties across the state. The awards will fund 63 projects expected to create nearly 2,000 new residential units — 1,217 in large communities and 752 in smaller towns.

IEDA received 137 applications requesting about \$83 million in tax credits. Of the \$35 million available for fiscal 2026, \$17.5 million was specifically reserved for projects in Iowa's 88 least-populated counties. Applications were evaluated on readiness, financing, community impact, developer experience, and innovation.

Examples of funded projects include:

**Atlantic (Cass County)** — Vision Atlantic Inc., a local nonprofit, will add 10 duplex-style homes in the Camblin Hills development. Located near school facilities, a planned childcare center, and other services, the properties are expected to appeal to workers at large employers like Cass Health, where nearly half of employees currently commute into town.

**Charles City (Floyd County)** — Urbandale-based Kading Properties will construct Union Place, a 74-unit rental townhome community on land donated by the city and the Charles City Area Development Corp. The site is within a half mile of major employers including Cambrex, Floyd County Medical Center, and Zoetis.

**Cumming (Warren County)** — Diligent Development of West Des Moines will create a mixed-use building with 32 apartments, 16 garages and ground-floor retail in Middlebrook, Iowa's first agrihood and an extension of the city's historic downtown. The investment will help address workforce housing needs near Hy-Vee's new distribution center and other growing employers.

**Oskaloosa (Mahaska County)** — West Des Moines-based Hubbell Realty Co. will develop about 50 two-bedroom, two-story townhomes off Coal Mine Road on the west side of town. The effort responds to strong rental demand driven by expansions at Clow Valve Co., Mahaska Health, and Musco Lighting.

The Workforce Housing Tax Credit program supports projects that redevelop abandoned, vacant, or deteriorated properties. For more information about the program, visit [iowaeda.com/workforce-housing-tax-credit](http://iowaeda.com/workforce-housing-tax-credit).

(Contact: Kristi Kiouss 2-5290)

## Education

### What to do When an Educator Publicly Praises a Political Assassination

Charlie Kirk's assassination seemed to bring out the best, and the worst, in people on social media. Shockingly, Iowans saw some of the worst from those working in fields we normally trust. Unfortunately for the vast majority of those in the education profession, a few of their colleagues posted reprehensible comments. It is reasonable that Iowans are concerned that these individuals felt it was normal to share their support for a political assassination. There are allegedly teachers, nurses, guidance counselors, professors, and other faculty that felt the need to publicly praise a politically motivated murder on their social media accounts. Many in the Legislature are demanding actions be taken to prevent these people from influencing students with their heinous support of Charlie Kirk's murder.

These are the general steps that may be taken by parents, guardians and community members when they have concerns about public school districts or their governing boards.

#### Local Remedies

Parents, guardians and community members should work with district staff to resolve disagreements or concerns. Potential actions include:

- Contact the teacher or service provider
- Contact the principal or direct supervisor for assistance
- Contact the superintendent
- Contact the school board
- Make a formal request of or complaint to the school board

Some formal requests are made of local boards on a routine basis, such as open-enrollment. School boards may also take action on requests made of them by parents, guardians and community members that are not routinely found on the agenda. An example might be a request to review curricular materials. Parents, guardians and community members should read and understand their local board's policies on making requests or filing complaints.

If a local school board makes a decision on a formal request, it may be subject to administrative review by the state board or the director of the Department and/or to further challenge in district court ([Iowa Code 290.1](#)).

House File (HF) 868 signed by the Governor on June 8, 2021 includes a requirement for a local board of directors of a school district to add a proposal to its agenda that is specified on a petition filed in accordance with law within 30 days of receipt of the petition. The petition must be signed by eligible electors of a school district equal to at least 10% of the persons who voted in the last preceding election of school officials, or 500 eligible electors, whichever is less.

**Petition Process Guidance** - Provides school districts, local school boards, and eligible district voters with information related to the petition process

### **Calls to the Department of Education**

Parents or guardians who call the Department are generally provided with the contact information for the **school improvement consultant** who serves their area of the state. Consultants ask the same questions of all parents to determine how to handle their concerns, many of which help inform parents of potential next steps. In general, before the Department can or should take action that interferes with the local process for dispute resolution, parents should exhaust all opportunities available to them to settle disagreements by engaging with the district. If the Department is contacted about any of the following, intervention may be required:

- Potential violation of the rights of a student with a disability, including bullying
- Potential bullying or harassment of a student on the part of a staff member
- Potential harm to a child or student
- Any other act in disregard of legal requirements that places students or staff at risk

### **Board of Educational Examiners**

Parents and guardians may file a complaint with the Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE), if appropriate. Department of Education staff are required to file a report of any misconduct suspected of an educator licensed by the BOEE (**Iowa Code 256.160(2)**).

### **Complaints**

If you are interested in filing a complaint with the Board of Educational Examiners (Board), first check that the person you are interested in filing the complaint against is a licensed practitioner. Use the **License Search** to look up practitioner licenses.

### **Basic Requirements**

**Note:** only certain individuals are allowed to file complaints under the laws and rules that govern the Board. These include:

- licensed practitioners employed by a school district, educational entity or recognized local or state professional organization
- parents or guardians of students involved in the alleged complaint

Complaints to the Board must be signed. The Board cannot take action on anonymous complaints.

To warrant investigation by Board staff, complaints must:

- relate to an alleged violation of one or more of the standards of practice in the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (**Iowa Administrative Code 282-25**).
- be of a sufficient magnitude to warrant a hearing by the Board.
- have sufficient, concrete evidence (not just suspicion or conjecture) to support the allegations.
- be filed within three years of the events in question, unless there is good cause for a delay.

### **Before Filing a Complaint**

Potential complainants should first make every effort to resolve issues at a local level. The Board complaint process involves many steps and in some cases it can take months to arrive at a final resolution. While the Board has the power to impose sanctions on a practitioner's license (such as a public reprimand, suspension, or revocation), it does not have the power to order local school districts to take any particular action. Therefore, working with local administrators and/or school board members can sometimes address a potential complainant's concerns more quickly and effectively.



### **Complaint Resolution Process**

- If a complaint meets the basic requirements outlined above, it will be assigned to a Board investigator.
- The investigator will gather documents, conduct interviews as needed, and prepare a report for review by the Board.
- The Board will then determine whether there is probable cause to believe there has been a violation of the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.
- If probable cause exists, the case will be set for hearing before an administrative law judge.
- Following the hearing, the administrative law judge will draft a proposed decision.
- The Board will then review the proposed decision and make a final determination as to whether there has been an ethical violation and, if so, what sanction is appropriate.

### **[Board Complaint Resolution Process Flowchart](#)** **[Required Reporting of Ethics Violations Memo](#)**

## **Appeals and Petitions to the Director of the Department of Education**

### **Appeals**

Certain decisions may be appealed to the director of the Iowa Department of Education as outlined in specific state statutes. [See specific Iowa Code references, procedures and timelines for specific appeal types.](#)

### **Petition for Review of Accreditation**

[Iowa Code 256.11](#), subsection 10, paragraph "b" requires the Department to conduct an accreditation review for any district or accredited nonpublic school if:

1. A petition is filed with the director of the department signed by a number of eligible electors residing in the district equal to at least 20% of the registered voters of the school district, or
2. A petition is filed with the director of the department signed by 20% or more of the parents or guardians who have children enrolled in the school or school district.

### **State Board**

The State Board of Education may hear from parents, guardians and community members if they have exhausted their local remedies. There are formal and informal options for bringing issues before the state board.

### **Informal**

- Parents, guardians, or community members may always speak during public comment at state board meetings. Public comment may also be taken in print and read at the meeting if the board president chooses to do so.
- State board members have iowa.gov email addresses and receive messages from members of the public regularly.
- Community members may provide information to the state board as a group, such as a letter or informal petition.

### **Formal**

The state board hears formal appeals from students, parents, or guardians. [See specific Iowa Code and Iowa Administrative Code references and timelines for formal appeals.](#)

### **District Court**

Certain final decisions by a local school board will give rise to a right for the injured party to pursue the issue in district court. This is only true for final action of the local board for some decisions. Only individuals sufficiently impacted by the board's decision will have the ability to challenge the decision in district court.

<https://educate.iowa.gov/educator-licensure/ethics-complaints>

<https://educate.iowa.gov/pk-12/parent-guardian-community-concerns>

(Info from the Iowa Department of Education)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

## Environmental Protection

### MAHA Commission Unveils Sweeping Strategy to Make Our Children Healthy Again

On Tuesday, September 9, 2025, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a press release announcing that the Make America Healthy Again Commission (MAHA Commission) [has](#) released the [Make Our Children Healthy Again Strategy](#), a sweeping plan with more than 120 initiatives to reverse the failed policies that fueled America's childhood chronic disease epidemic. The strategy outlines targeted executive actions to advance gold-standard science, realign incentives, increase public awareness, and strengthen private-sector collaboration. The MAHA Commission is tasked with investigating and addressing the root causes of America's escalating health crisis, with a focus on childhood chronic diseases.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Dr. Marty Makary commented-- "*For too long health care has used a reactive approach to chronic diseases. I am pleased to support the findings of the MAHA commission and to promote a more proactive approach, tackling root causes undermining the health and happiness of American children.*"

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Dr. Jay Bhattacharya summarized-- "*The MAHA Report provides a blueprint for the entire government to focus on solving the chronic disease crisis facing American children. We must make America healthy again so our children live longer and healthier lives than we will.*"

#### Key Focus Areas of the Strategy:

**Restoring Science & Research:** Expanding NIH and agency research into chronic disease prevention, nutrition and metabolic health, food quality, environmental exposures, autism, gut microbiome, precision agriculture, rural and tribal health, vaccine injury, and mental health.

**Historic Executive Actions:** Reforming dietary guidelines; defining ultra-processed foods; improving food labeling; closing the GRAS loophole; raising infant formula standards; removing harmful chemicals from the food supply; increasing oversight and enforcement of direct-to-consumer prescription drug advertising laws; improving food served in schools, hospitals, and to veterans; and reforming Medicaid quality metrics to measure health outcomes.

**Process Reform & Deregulation:** Streamlining organic certification; easing barriers to farm-to-school programs and direct-to-consumer sales; restoring whole milk in schools; supporting mobile grocery and processing units; modernizing FDA drug and device approval; and accelerating EPA approvals for innovative agricultural products.

**Public Awareness & Education:** Launching school-based nutrition and fitness campaigns, Surgeon General initiatives on screen time, prioritizing pediatric mental health, and expanding access to reliable nutrition and health information for parents.

Private Sector Collaboration: Promoting awareness of healthier meals at restaurants, soil health and land stewardship, and community-led initiatives, and scaling innovative solutions to address root causes of chronic disease.

With this strategy, the MAHA Commission leads the most ambitious national effort ever to confront childhood chronic disease and Make America Healthy Again.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

## Health and Human Services

### Iowa Ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in Physician Salaries

Recently, Physician Side Gigs released its average physician salaries by state, with comparisons to cost of living. In [this report](#), Iowa ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation with an average salary of \$464,000 a year. Additionally, in comparing cost of living between states and salaries, Iowa ranks 7<sup>th</sup>.

This information builds on the work the legislature did this session to continuously improve Iowa's health care workforce. Even with high national rankings in health care affordability, access and quality, Iowa still ranks 44<sup>th</sup> per capita for physicians. The legislature focused on growing and training our own that want to practice in rural areas, creating more training opportunities, and decreasing administrative burden on health care providers. All the bills below passed both chambers and were signed by the Governor in 2025.

- **Governor Health Care Bill** – HF 972 came from the Governor to do the following:
  - Require DHHS to request federal approval for a health care hub-and-spoke partnership funding model to establish regional collaboration between health care providers in rural areas
  - Consolidated five health care loan repayment programs into one called the Health Care Professional Incentive Program within DHHS that will award loan forgiveness or bonuses based on high-need health care professions in shortage areas. Provides for transition of funds to continue to support those with existing awards.
  - Repeal existing residency and fellowship programs, with transition provisions, and converts those programs to the Medicaid graduate medical education efforts. The Governor has said that this will create a projected 115 new residency slots at our 14 training hospitals and will bring 460 new physicians to Iowa in four years.
  - Eliminates the Health Facilities Council and replaces it with DHHS as the decision maker regarding certificate of need
  - Requires DHHS to bid out the Iowa Health Information Network
- **University of Iowa Health Care** – HF516 focuses our state institution and medical school on growing the physician workforce for the entire state. This bill requires the University of Iowa medical school and dental school to have at least 80% of their students be residents of Iowa, as well as priority admission to residents of Iowa who apply to these programs. This bill also requires specific questions regarding upbringing and intent to practice in Iowa by applicants for these programs as well as residency programs at UIHC. This bill requires an annual report by UI regarding the same schools and UIHC medical residencies demographic information.

- This bill requires the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics to offer an interview for the medical residencies of some of the most-needed specialties in Iowa to those with an Iowa connection.
- This bill codifies requirements that were placed into session law in 2019 in House File 532. Additionally, it adds fellowships to the requirement that UIHC prioritize Iowans.
  - Requires medical residencies at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinic to give priority to applicants that have an Iowa connection (resident of Iowa, went to undergrad in Iowa, or medical school in Iowa).
  - Requires primary care residencies (family medicine, OB, psych, and internal medicine) at UIHC to provide the opportunity to participate in a rural rotation to expose those medical residents to rural areas of Iowa.
  -
- **Assaults on Health Care Providers** – HF310 expands the health care provider definition under the code chapter that provides enhanced penalties for assaulting a person engaged in certain occupations.
- **Prior Authorization** – HF303 came from the Iowa Medical Society to set up timelines for determination from health insurers on prior authorizations, requires insurers to review health care services that require prior auth, requires reporting to IID regarding PAs and allows IID to investigate complaints.
- **Credentialing Timeline** – HF875 provides a timeline for an insurer to respond to a provider seeking to be credentialed in-network and to provide a reason for denial.
- **Residency Start-Up Funds** – HF1049 provides \$2.3 million additional funds to start-up graduate medical education efforts in the Medicaid GME program. These funds will bring 20 new residency programs online in Iowa to train Iowa's doctors.
- **Physician Assistant Compact** – HF300 adds Iowa to the interstate license for Physician Assistants Compact. 16 states currently have enacted this compact (Including Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin). The compact is effective and is now in the implementation process which will take 18 to 24 months.
- **Loan Forgiveness** – SF647 consolidated health care loan forgiveness programs into one program and increased funding from \$4.2 million to almost \$8 million.

## **Iowa Medicaid Annual Provider Training Registration Deadline Tomorrow**

The following was provided by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services:

### **You're invited to the 2025 Annual Medicaid Provider Training!**

Join us for a full day of insights and networking—available either in person or virtually. Brought to you by the Provider Outreach team.

**Same great content, whichever format you choose.** This registration form covers both options.


**Registration Deadline:** September 19, 2025

After registering, you'll receive a confirmation email. Virtual attendees will also receive their Zoom link shortly after the deadline.

To help us plan, please select **one option only**: in-person *or* virtual.


### **In-Person Session**

 *Location:* State Historical Building, Des Moines, Iowa

 *Date:* Tuesday, September 30, 2025

 *Time:* 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (CT)

### **Virtual Session (via Zoom)**

 *Date:* Tuesday, October 14, 2025

 *Time:* 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (CT)

Click here to register:

[https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=TXssjVoIF0aFNjinbRmw2u3fcTITUQpHrBcn3Wi3zHJUQVpaSExaRkxFOIFGNjFQVTYxVVVDSzUzSi4u&route=shorturl&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=TXssjVoIF0aFNjinbRmw2u3fcTITUQpHrBcn3Wi3zHJUQVpaSExaRkxFOIFGNjFQVTYxVVVDSzUzSi4u&route=shorturl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

Click here for the agenda:

[https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16900/download?inline=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16900/download?inline=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

For additional questions, please contact Provider Outreach at [ime-providerservices@hhs.iowa.gov](mailto:ime-providerservices@hhs.iowa.gov)

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

## **Labor**

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services—Who Do They Serve?**

#### **Students:**

Vocational Rehabilitation Services can begin working with students once they are 14 years old. If you are a parent, guardian, or educator of a student that could use VR services, there are resources available as well.

VR can provide services tailored to the student's specific needs. Supports start in high school and continue until retirement. Services available to assist include:

Counseling and Guidance Services  
Career Exploration Assessments  
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)  
Help with Post-Secondary Training  
Job Seeking Skills Training  
Job Placement  
Assistive Technology

This list is updated regularly throughout the school year and as Vocational Rehabilitation staff receive new information.

#### **Transition Alliance Program (TAP)**

TAP is a partnership between VR and Iowa community school districts. You can receive help in vocational training, independent living, and post-secondary education.

#### **Why Choose TAP?**

TAP has many benefits for you including:

- individualized attention
- one-on-one help for career and educational opportunities
- development of job- seeking and job-keeping skills
- help in locating and maintaining employment
- community mobility and driver permit training
- help with individual housing, medical, and financial matters
- year-round support

#### TAP Services

Different services are available as part of TAP, including:

##### Job Exploration Counseling

- Work-Based Learning Experiences
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Post-Secondary Training Opportunities
- Self-Advocacy Instruction
- Job Placement
- Independent Living skills

#### TAP Resources

[TAP Manual](#)

[Collaborative Assessment of Student Performance](#)

[Student Interview for Transition Planning](#)

[Parent Interview for Transition Planning](#)

[Contact TAP](#)

#### **Pre-Employment Transition Services**

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are activities for students with disabilities. It provides an early start at job exploration. It also assists with making decisions about post-secondary education or employment.

Some of the Pre-ETS activities that they provide include:

- Job Exploration Counseling allows you to learn about different career options. You also learn work skills needed to be successful.
- Work-Based Learning Experiences connects you to real-life work activities and future career options.
- Counseling on Opportunities gives you guidance on post-secondary education and training opportunities.
- Workplace Readiness Training helps you develop employability, social, and independent living skills.
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy teaches you self-advocacy skills. These skills are needed in education, work, and community settings.

#### **How can I access Pre-ETS?**

You can take part in Pre-ETS activities if you are eligible or potentially eligible.

#### [\*\*What is the difference between eligible and potentially eligible?\*\*](#)

Talk with your school staff or your VR high school contact to sign up and learn more.

#### **Local School Plan**

Local School Plans outline the responsibilities of the Local Education Agency (LEA), Area Education Agency (AEA),

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services, [Iowa Department for the Blind \(IDB\)](#), and other partners involved in providing [Pre-Employment Transition Services \(Pre-ETS\)](#) and other transition services within the district.

Reach out to your local school contact to get a copy of the Local School Plan for your district. The following list is updated regularly throughout the school year and as Vocational Rehabilitation staff receive new information.

### [View the VR High School Contact List](#)

#### **Training Resources**

[Local School Plan: Intent and Collaboration \(Video\)](#)

[Local School Plan: Template Training \(Video\)](#)

Local School Plan Resources

[Local School Plan Template \(2025-2026 School Year\)](#)

[Department of Education/ Local Education Agency/ Iowa Department for the Blind/ IVRS Collaboration](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

#### **Post-Secondary Education**

VR may be able to help you with post-secondary training. Post-secondary training is the training you get after getting your high school diploma or GED. This can include training at:

- Universities
- Colleges
- Community colleges
- Career or technical schools
- Vocational or trade schools
- Centers for continuing education
- Apprenticeships
- Certifications

#### **Resources**

[Accessibility Services Comparison Chart](#)

[Are there IEPs and 504 plans in college?](#)

[FAFSA](#)

[High School vs College](#)

[ICAN](#)

[Iowa Registered Apprenticeship Programs](#)

[Transition Checklist for High Schoolers](#)

[Transition Planning Roadmap for High Schoolers](#)

[Types of college accommodations and services](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

*(Info from Vocational Rehabilitation Services under Iowa Workforce Development)*

*(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)*

## **Natural Resources**

### **DNR: Save the Date: Statewide Volunteer Day is September 27**

On Tuesday, Tuesday, September 9, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release announcing that Iowa state parks have set Saturday, September 27, 2025, as annual Volunteer Day, when Iowans are invited to lend a hand at several state parks and forests hosting volunteer events. Interested Iowans are asked to join park staff to help care for Iowa's natural areas, freshen up campgrounds and facilities, and spend time outdoors. Clean-up efforts will be unique for each park depending on needs, and may include litter pick-up, staining or painting buildings, removing invasive species, rebuilding picnic tables, harvesting prairie seeds and more. The state parks and forests participating include:





- Bellevue State Park, Bellevue
- Blackburn State Park, Thurman
- Geode State Park, Danville
- Lake Darling State Park, Brighton
- Lake Macbride State Park, Solon
- Lake Manawa State Park, Council Bluff
- Lake of Three Fires State Park, Bedford
- Ledges State Park, Madrid
- Palisades-Kepler State Park, Mt. Vernon
- Pilot Knob State Park Forest City
- Prairie Rose State Park, Harlan
- Shimek State Forest, Farmington
- Wapsipinicon State Park, Anamosa
- Waubonsie State Park, Hamburg
- Yellow River State Forest, Harpers Ferry

Citizens interested in volunteering can find complete details on times, meeting locations and activities at <https://www.iowadnr.gov/places-go/state-parks/statewide-volunteer-day>.

## **DNR Touts 2025 Volunteer Fire Department – Wildland Fire Assistance Grants Available**

On Tuesday, September 9, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release announcing that the DNR Forestry - Fire Program, working in coordination with the US Forest Service, has grant money available for Iowa's rural fire departments to help battle wildfires. Applications are due on October 31, 2025. The grant provides 50 percent reimbursement for wildland fire equipment with a maximum reimbursement grant of \$4,500 per department. The grants offer funding assistance for wildfire suppression equipment, slide-in units, hoses, nozzles, adapters, portable tanks and pumps, personal protective equipment and communications equipment. Additionally, if a fire department has a special need that can be tied directly to wildfire suppression, this grant allows for such special requests.

The grant application package and the Wildland Fire Report form are available online, [www.iowadnr.gov/fire](http://www.iowadnr.gov/fire).

*(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)*

## **Public Safety**

### **Less Individuals Returning to Prison in Iowa**

Last week the Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC) announced a reduction in the state's recidivism rate. Recidivism is when an individual who has served time in an Iowa prison returns to an Iowa prison within three years of release. Measuring recidivism allows the state to evaluate the success of reintegration programs.

According to the DOC press release, recidivism has decreased by 3%. This is the lowest recidivism rate in the past decade. The DOC is run by Director Beth Skinner, who has worked with her team to continually bring down this rate and offer the necessary assistance to individuals as they are released from incarceration.

The DOC attributes the reduction to multiple efforts, including;

- Prioritizing institutional and community-based treatment for high-risk individuals
- Continuously utilizing evidence-based practices
- Aligning and improving reentry practices

- Increasing access to treatment, education and vocational opportunities
- Training staff in core correctional practices (CCP)
- Enhancing case management training

House Republicans are proud to support the DOC's efforts to reduce recidivism and make Iowa a safer state for everyone.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

## State Government

### National Voter Registration Day

September 16 was National Voter Registration Day and a great reminder to double check and ensure you are registered to vote in November. You can go to the Iowa Secretary of State's website and check if you are registered to vote [here](#). Even if you are registered to vote you can enter your information and look up your polling location as they can change between elections.

#### How to Register to Vote

If you are not already registered to vote or have moved since the last time you voted there are several easy ways to register. If you have a drivers license or state issued ID card you can register online through the [Iowa DOT website](#). Additionally, you can register to vote through the mail by filling out and returning your completed [voter registration form](#) to your county auditor's office. You can register in person at your county auditor's office or on election day at your polling location. In order to register to vote you must be a U.S. Citizen, an Iowa resident, and be 18 years old on election day. Individuals who register by mail will need to verify their citizenship status in person before they are allowed to vote.

#### Absentee Ballot Requests

All Iowans are now able to request their absentee ballots for the 2025 city and school board elections. Registered voters can submit a written application in their County Auditor's office or submit a completed [Absentee Ballot Request Form](#) via mail to the County Auditor's office. In order to request an absentee ballot, the voter must provide their name, date of birth, their residential address, Iowa driver's license/ID number, or their four-digit Voter PIN. Absentee ballot requests must be received by the County Auditor's office by 5:00 pm October 20. You can find your County Auditor's information [here](#) or for any other questions regarding registering to vote or absentee ballot requests can be found at <https://voterready.iowa.gov/>

The Iowa Constitution is clear, all political power is inherent in the people. Iowans take that right seriously and have continued to turn out to vote at high rates of participation. If you haven't already, take the time to register or update your voter registration.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

## Veterans Affairs

### Armed Forces 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration at Camp Dodge on September 20<sup>th</sup>

The following was provided by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs:

On behalf of our good friends at the [Iowa Gold Star Military Museum on Camp Dodge](#), [Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs \(IDVA\)](#) extends their invitation to attend the Armed Forces 250th Birthday Celebration at the [Freedom Center on Camp Dodge](#), Johnston, Sept. 20th, from 4-7 p.m.

**All members of the public and media are invited to attend.**

Visitors can expect refreshments, historic military vehicles, reenactors and displays of period uniforms, museum experts, the [Iowa Military Veterans Band](#), and more!.

Media and public contact for this event is Mike Vogt, 515.252.4531, or [michael.vogt@iowa.gov](mailto:michael.vogt@iowa.gov).

- **Who:** [Iowa Gold Star Military Museum](#) invites all who wish to attend.
- **What:** Armed Forces 250th Birthday Celebration.
- **When:** Sept. 20th, 4-7 p.m.

**Where:** [Camp Dodge Freedom Center, 7105 NW 70th Ave, Johnston, IA 50131](#).

*(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)*

## Ways & Means

### Senate File 657—Final Divisions of the Economic Development Tax Credit Overhaul Protect Taxpayer Investments

This article will focus on the last six divisions of Senate File 657 that made changes to existing programs.

Division XVI made changes to the Major Economic Growth Attraction (MEGA) program. It specified that if an eligible business does not comply with the requirements of the program, a county may take action to recover the value of the property taxes not collected as a result of the exemption provided to the eligible business. This division also states that an eligible business that is entitled to a sales and use tax refund pursuant to the MEGA program is to receive the sales and tax refund on a quarterly basis rather than annually over a five-year period.

Division XVII created a mechanism empowering IEDA to reduce or eliminate financial assistance in response to a layoff applicable to all of IEDA's programs. If a business who has received some sort of benefit from IEDA subsequently eliminates jobs—IEDA will have authority to claw back some of those incentives.

Division XVIII made technical and conforming changes.

Division XIX relates to the Research Activities Tax Credit (RAC). The division provided that hog producers can qualify for the RAC if they are engaged in agriscience research. This change applies retroactively to January 1, 2017, for tax years beginning on or after that date.

Division XX also made conforming changes.

Finally, Division XXI extended the E-15 Promotion Tax Credit until 2028.

*(Contact: Kristi Kiious 2-5290)*