



# State Emergency Operations Center Update for August 2020 Severe Storm

Updated: August 25, 2020

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## *Introduction*

A severe storm with damaging winds swept across Iowa beginning the morning of August 10, 2020. This storm, known as a derecho, caused extensive property damage to homes, and crops, electrical power distribution systems, and other infrastructure.

Official National Weather Service reports on the storm can be found at: [Des Moines Forecast Office](#) and at [Quad Cities Forecast Office](#). These sites are updated as new storm information becomes available.

## Governor's Office

### Presidential Disaster Declaration

On Aug. 17, Gov. Kim Reynolds received notification that President Trump had granted her request for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for 16 counties that have been severely impacted by the Aug. 10 severe storms.

The declaration makes available FEMA's Public Assistance Program, which puts into motion long-term federal recovery programs to help public entities and select nonprofit organizations. The 16 counties eligible to apply for Public Assistance funding under this declaration are Benton, Boone, Cedar, Clinton, Dallas, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Muscatine, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story and Tama. This declaration also includes eligibility of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program which provides assistance for actions taken to prevent or reduce long term risk to life and property from natural hazards for all counties in the state of Iowa.

On Thursday, Aug. 20, President Trump approved Governor Reynolds' request for funding under FEMA Individual Assistance Program for Linn County. The program provides disaster-affected homeowners, renters, and businesses with services to maximize recovery, including assistance with housing, personal property replacement, medical expenses, and legal services. More information about the program and how to apply is available [here](#).

The governor's request for federal Individual Assistance Program for Audubon, Benton, Boone, Cass, Cedar, Clarke, Clinton, Dallas, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hardin, Iowa, Jackson, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Madison, Marshall, Muscatine, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story, Tama, and Washington counties is under review.

On Aug. 21 Gov. Reynolds requested a USDA Secretarial Disaster Designation from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue for 57 Iowa counties impacted by the August derecho. This designation, which is in addition to the President's disaster designation, would allow Iowa producers to access USDA disaster programs. The counties included in the request are: Adair, Audubon, Benton, Black Hawk, Boone, Buchanan, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Cedar, Cherokee,

Clinton, Crawford, Dallas, Delaware, Des Moines, Dubuque, Greene, Grundy, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Ida, Iowa, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Keokuk, Lee, Linn, Louisa, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Marshall, Monona, Monroe, Muscatine, Plymouth, Polk, Pottawattamie, Poweshiek, Sac, Scott, Shelby, Story, Tama, Van Buren, Wapello, Warren, Washington, Webster, and Woodbury. The USDA Secretarial Disaster Designation is under review.

### Governor's Disaster Proclamations

On Friday, Aug. 21, Gov. Reynolds signed a new proclamation continuing the Public Health Disaster Emergency for another 30 days. The proclamation also authorizes school districts with buildings damaged by the derecho natural disaster to offer instruction by primarily remote learning with approval of the Department of Education. Those unable to conduct even primarily remote learning because of the derecho may apply for a waiver of instructional time.

Governor Reynolds has issued six disaster proclamations to provide resources for counties impacted by this disaster. These proclamations made state resources available and also activated the Iowa Individual Assistance Program. See the proclamations and press releases at <https://governor.iowa.gov/>.

## *State Agency Updates*

### Department of Homeland Security

- The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is coordinating the distribution of state resources through the State Emergency Operations Center.
- HSEMD continues to take and fill requests from county emergency managers, including: generators, debris removal in counties throughout the state and at the Iowa Veterans Home, food, water, ice, cooling shelters, congregate shelters, and noncongregate shelters.
- HSEMD staff is assisting FEMA with additional damage assessments.
- HSEMD continues to share information on disaster impact and assistance resources through social media, and amplify the messaging of other state agencies and of local agencies.
- HSEMD public information staff is coordinating with state agencies in the collection of information devoted to the response to, and recovery from, this event, and also for a daily update for the public on state actions and available resources at <https://disasterrecovery.iowa.gov/>
- Iowans who have not reported damage are still urged to do so at [www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov](http://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov).

### Department of Public Health

- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) office working with local WIC agencies to provide certification services and program information at planned community assistance centers. WIC vendor management staff have been in touch with local vendors to ensure stores are up and running and food items are available for purchase.
- In addition to CMS Medicare data, IDPH has engaged with the Governor's Office, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, Department of Human Services, and managed care organizations (MCOs) to share data and information to ensure similar outreach to Medicaid

beneficiaries. Holding daily briefings to ensure MCOs have up to date information on health care system impacts.

- IDPH has responded to a request for an emergency response trailer with shelter related assets. Trailer was deployed to Linn County Aug. 17, 2020.

## Department of Human Services

### Food Assistance Replacement

Households who currently receive Food Assistance may request replacement of food destroyed as a result of the recent storm damage, or spoilage as a result of a power outage. As a general rule, food will keep 4 hours if stored in a refrigerator, 24 to 48 hours if stored in a freezer.

Households have until September 17, 2020, to complete the form requesting replacement of food loss.

- Digital submission: Download and complete the [application form \(Español\)](#), then submit a clear image of the form to: [ImagingCenter5@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:ImagingCenter5@dhs.state.ia.us).
- Forms are available at local DHS offices and are also available by mail. Completed paper forms can be submitted to local offices in person, by mail or by fax. Use our [DHS Office Locator](#) to find the one nearest you.

### The Iowa Individual Disaster Assistance Grant Program (IIAGP)

IIAGP offers grants to families whose household's annual income is at 200% or less of the federal poverty level. Each qualifying household MAY receive up to \$5,000.00. The IIAGP is activated when the Governor issues a disaster proclamation turning on IIAGP for the affected counties. The federal program does not have an income restriction. Please note - if a presidential disaster declaration for Individual Assistance is issued for a county for the same event, the state program is automatically canceled for that county, as the federal program then goes into effect. The IIAGP is cancelled for Linn County, as they have now been declared under the Federal Individual Assistance Program.

The application may be downloaded by clicking on [Iowa Disaster Assistance Application \(Español\)](#). Applications can be turned in to a local Community Action Agency, go to [www.iowacomunityaction.org](http://www.iowacomunityaction.org) to find your local agency. For the Iowa Individual Disaster Assistance Grant program information call toll-free 1-877-347-5678.

### Disaster Proclamations

Governor Reynolds issued disaster proclamations activating the State of Iowa Individual Assistance Program for the following counties:

- Cass and Guthrie counties in response to severe storm August 10 and continuing. The application deadline is September 28, 2020.
- Audubon and Madison counties in response to severe storm August 10 and continuing. The application deadline is September 28, 2020.
- Grundy, Jackson, and Jones counties in response to severe storm August 10 and continuing. The application deadline is September 28, 2020.
- Benton, Boone, Cedar, Clarke, Clinton, Dallas, Greene, Hardin, Iowa, Jasper, Johnson, Linn, Marshall, Muscatine, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story, Tama, and Washington counties in response to severe storm August 10 and continuing. The application deadline is September 25, 2020.

### Iowa Disaster Case Management

Disaster Case Management is a time-limited resource and process that involves a partnership between a disaster case manager and a household impacted by a disaster to develop and carry out a Disaster Recovery Plan. This partnership provides the client with a single point of contact

to facilitate access to a broad range of resources, promoting sustainable assistance for individual's and a household's recovery. These services are client focused, and provided in a manner consistent with standards for trauma-informed practice in human services. Contact your local Community Action Agency at [www.iowacommunityaction.org](http://www.iowacommunityaction.org) to find your local agency.

### Behavioral Health

The Iowa Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) is a trained team of volunteers who will respond to the mental health needs of Iowa residents following disasters and critical incidents. The team provides services for community providers based on local area needs and may be delivered at a disaster site in an affected community or statewide. Services may include:

- Conduct behavioral health needs assessment following a disaster
- Provide Psychological First Aid
- Provide brief crisis counseling and intervention
- Provide community outreach
- Provide public information and education
- Provide critical incident stress debriefing
- Provide behavioral health consultation for providers, communities and individuals
- Provide screening and referral for those affected by a disaster or critical event

Local authorities may request DBHRT assistance in order to meet the behavioral health needs of communities in crisis by contacting the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Duty Officer. The duty officer is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 515-725-3231. For more information go to [www.iowadbhrt.org](http://www.iowadbhrt.org).

### Your Life Iowa

If you or a loved one are facing a problem with alcohol, drugs, gambling, mental health or suicidal thoughts, you're not alone. That is why the Iowa Department of Public Health has created YourLifeIowa.org so Iowans can chat live, text, or call and get reliable information and treatment options, and find nearby help. Due to a storm system that swept across Iowa causing significant damage and power outages, you may have trouble connecting your call with Your Life Iowa (855-581-8111) or 1-800-BETS OFF. The online chat and text options are still available, and may be more reliable until all services can be restored. (Text to 1-855-895-8398 and [click here to chat](#)).

If there is an immediate crisis, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or [click here to access the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline chat](#). The National Lifeline will make sure you are able to get in contact with someone who can help.

### Abbe Center Iowa Warm Line (Eastern Iowa)

The Iowa Warm Line is a peer-run, telephone based, non-crisis and confidential listening line for anyone struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues. The Warm Line is staffed by individuals who have been through a similar journey and are in recovery themselves. The phone number to call is 1-844-775-9276. Calls are answered seven days a week from 5 - 10 p.m.

## Iowa Insurance Division

The Iowa Insurance Division is available to field insurance complaints from consumers - <https://iid.iowa.gov/insurance-consumer-complaint> or 877-955-1212.

Storm-Related insurance tips:

- Many specifics asked about may be on a case-by-case basis and depend on the policy, deductible and other factors so they are tough for us to give bright line answers that will

be useful to all. Wind damage is generally covered under homeowners insurance policies so it is different than flood coverage.

- lowans should consult their policy to see what is or is not covered and contact their insurance agent to assist them in this process. The insurer and insurance agent can help guide the consumer about how different policies (homeowners, health, umbrella, auto, etc.) may work together to help get lowans back on their feet following the derecho.
- It's important for individuals to understand what their deductible amounts are (the amount they will pay before insurance pays) as that may influence whether they file an insurance claim or not depending on the amount of damage they have encountered.
- It can be very helpful in the claim process if there are pictures or video of the damage or during cleanup to accurately assess the damage.
- When working with contractors use local if possible and be sure to get estimates on paper and multiple estimates if possible. You want the contractor to be reputable. The AG's office put this out that may be helpful - <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/tree-storm-chaser-scams-derecho>.
- lowans that run into issues with their insurer are encouraged to contact the Iowa Insurance Division to file a complaint. From there we can assist with questions or concerns on their individual situation.
- Times like these are also a time to remind folks to do a home inventory in case of a disaster. It can be as simple as walking through your house with your cell phone video/camera or folks can utilize an app from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners ([https://www.insureuonline.org/insureu\\_type\\_home.htm](https://www.insureuonline.org/insureu_type_home.htm)).

## Department of Human Rights

- The Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) partners with a network of local community action agencies across the state. Many community action agencies offer assistance such as food banks, food delivery initiatives, clothing, diapers, and addressing other emergency/disaster needs. There is a network of 17 community action agencies that serves all of Iowa's 99 counties. To find a community action agency near you, visit the Iowa Department of Human Rights' website: <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/iowas-community-action-agencies>
- Hawkeye Community Action Agency <https://www.hacap.org/> (Linn County area)
- Multi-lingual Hotline available statewide for lowans looking for resources (this is the 211 Language Help Line), call 1-877-558-2609.
- Cedar Rapids Resource Information [http://www.cedar-rapids.org/news\\_detail\\_T6\\_R1344.php](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/news_detail_T6_R1344.php)
- Linn Area Partners Active in Disaster <https://www.linndisasterinfo.com/storm>

## Economic Development / Finance Authority

- IFA has mobilized the disaster intervention team that supports IowaHousingSearch.org This website currently has 56,000 rental units listed, statewide. The team will provide extensive outreach to landlords to ensure the portal provides accurate and safe housing options accessible to disaster victims in the 27 state declared disaster counties. Rental properties will be flagged as damaged, under repair or available and if available, landlords will be asked to indicate if they are accepting short-term leases and FEMA and other rent subsidies from disaster victims. A report with updated units in each category will be provided weekly. The IowaHousingSearch.org rental unit inventory is supported

by a nonprofit, bilingual call center. Phone relay services are available for deaf or hard-of-hearing users and non-English speakers can also use the IowaHousingSearch.org website in Spanish or quickly generate content translations in up to 50 languages. Additionally, the IowaHousingSearch.org website's functionality meets 508 and AAA compliance guidelines, for those using assistive technology devices.

- Volunteer Iowa is working to deploy additional teams of AmeriCorps members in Cedar Rapids and to extend the service of summer AmeriCorps members who had been working in east/central Iowa's United Way Volunteer Center.
- IFA/IEDA has connected Iowa Legal Aid with tenants in Cedar Rapids to let them know their legal rights amid reports that some landlords are giving tenants 48 hours to leave their apartments regardless of whether they have arrangements for shelter.
- Volunteer Iowa's executive committee authorized the use of funding for additional refugee navigators in Cedar Rapids to help refugee communities with communication, identification of housing and other needs.

## Iowa Utilities Board

IUB provides daily updates related to the storm and utility restoration on its web page at [iub.iowa.gov](http://iub.iowa.gov)

## Department of Transportation

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has completed debris clearance in 25 communities, and is currently working on continuing debris removal missions in 9 communities. The DOT has deployed staff, truck, end loads and excavation equipment to assist with debris missions, and have cleared over 3500 loads of debris. There are 25 traffic management cameras out of service. Current Iowa road conditions can be found at <https://www.511ia.org/>

## Workforce Development

The Cedar Rapids and Marshalltown Field Offices (which fall under the Iowa Workforce Development - IWD umbrella) are functioning. The IWD website can be found at <https://www.iowaworks.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>

## Department of Revenue

The Iowa Department of Revenue (IDR) will review and accommodate tax issues caused by the derecho on a case by case basis.

## Department of Administrative Services

The Department of Administrative Services provides ongoing assistance to state agencies to address infrastructure repairs.

## Alcoholic Beverage Division

ABD has provided flexibility in the delivery of alcohol orders to accommodate businesses impacted by the derecho. For example, delivering on a different day than their normal delivery day to accommodate power outages or cleanup efforts. ABD is also able to work with businesses that may need to temporarily store their alcoholic beverage inventory in a location off of their licensed premises.

## Department of Natural Resources

The DNR has a disaster webpage that is always available during and after any natural disaster, which includes many resources, links and guidance on clean-up, among other things. The website can be found [here](#).

## Department on Aging

- Most Nutrition Programs are back up and operating.
- LifeLong Links staff continues to make additional courtesy calls via cell and email to check in on individuals to see how they're doing.
- Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are focusing on smaller communities as they seem to be a little more off the radar-they are considering "tours" to drop off information to these more remote areas, and to see about clean up, again, as these areas seem to be more unattended too.
- Coordination continues with community partners especially in the Cedar Rapids area to check more on senior housing complexes where nonperishable food was dropped off and individuals were checked for immediate needs and referred to resources.
- Similar efforts continue for those individuals at highest risk living in their own homes to determine if immediate needs are being met. Safety checks are requested through law enforcement as needed and volunteers are mobilized and checking on those in high risk or living in poverty.
- Cedar Rapids staff is providing information on scams and other predatory practices, working with disaster resource centers to get information out to our consumers.
- The Iowa Department of Aging is working with AAA's to determine the need for an Administration for Community Living (ACL) grant that would fill more of a longer term need.

## Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs

While IDVA does not have specific 'disaster' assistance programs, many benefits may aid Iowa veterans in their broader recovery. Iowa veterans seeking disaster and other assistance are encouraged to first contact their county veterans service officers for state and federal benefits at <https://va.iowa.gov/counties>. Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs and Iowa Veterans Cemetery have continued to operate normally within COVID-19 guidelines. Public access to the IDVA offices at Camp Dodge and the administration building at Iowa Veterans Cemetery is currently restricted. All business can be conducted through local county veteran service officers, virtually at <https://va.iowa.gov> or by calling IDVA at 515-252-4698 or IVC at 515-996-9048.