

The Iowa County Magazine

An aerial photograph of the Iowa State Capitol building in Des Moines, Iowa, taken at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that illuminates the building's dome and the surrounding landscape. The Capitol's iconic dome is the central focus, with its four wings extending outwards. The foreground shows the large, open grounds in front of the building, and the background reveals a hazy view of the city and the Mississippi River. The overall atmosphere is serene and majestic.

January 2025
2025 ISAC Legislative Priorities

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The Iowa County

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Iowa State Association of Counties
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ISAC's Mission:

To promote effective and responsible county government
for the people of Iowa.

ISAC's Vision:

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation,
information and services for and about county government
in Iowa.

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**** The views and opinions expressed in articles authored by
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IOWA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1ST SESSION



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The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) is a private, nonprofit corporation that was incorporated on October 8, 1964. Senate File 37, which was adopted on June 30, 1971, allowed counties to pay member dues to the organization. ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. Counties pay voluntary dues to belong to ISAC in return for a number of services, such as education and training, benefit programs, technical assistance and government relations. ISAC members participate in one of 16 different statewide affiliated associations corresponding to each county office.

ISAC's mission is to promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa. To that end, ISAC's stated purpose is to secure and maintain cooperation among the counties and county officials, promote comprehensive study of local problems and find ways of solving them, provide methods of interchange of ideas among various county officials, and promote and work for the enactment of legislation that is most beneficial to the citizens of Iowa. These endeavors support our vision of being the principal, authoritative source of representation, information, and services for and about county government in Iowa.

IOWA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

2025 LEGISLATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

The 2025 ISAC Legislative Priorities were developed by the ISAC Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). This committee is composed of two representatives from each affiliate and is chaired by Linda Zuercher, Clayton County Treasurer and ISAC 2nd Vice President. The Committee has worked together to create a short and cohesive set of legislative objectives for ISAC to pursue in 2025.

In August and September the Committee convened to hear legislative policy proposals from each affiliate. The committee worked hard discussing implications of any changes. The legislative objectives were adopted and top priorities were recommended to the membership.

The 2025 ISAC Legislative Objectives, Policy Statements, and Top Priorities recommendations were presented and voted on by the membership. The Board ratified the legislative package and set ISAC's Top Priorities during its November meeting.

2024-2025 ISAC LPC Committee Members

Committee Chair: John Werden, Carroll County Attorney and ISAC 2nd Vice President

Assessors

Lindsey Thomas, Mahaska
Tom Van Buer, Johnson County

Auditors

Betty Ellis, Wright County
Jennifer Garms, Clayton County

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Matt Wilber, Pottawattamie County

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Environmental Health

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ISAC TOP PRIORITIES

PROPERTY TAX REFORM

PROBLEM: Legislation passed in 2023 aims to impose reasonable limits on county and city property tax growth and to improve accountability in the budgeting processes of local governments. Legislation passed in 2024 worked to address issues with implementation and unintended consequences. As counties adapt to these changes, more work is needed to address how statewide limitations affect 99 unique counties differently. Further, reductions to future county revenue are not harmonious with the increasing costs of providing local services, oftentimes outside of the control of county supervisors.

SOLUTION: Continue to work to improve previously enacted legislation, including consideration of unique circumstances affecting county revenue and/or expenditures. The Legislature should separate valuation growth due to new construction from market value increases for purposes of legislatively imposed limitations. ISAC supports the following steps that the Iowa Legislature could take in conjunction with property tax limitations to address the tax burden of local property owners:

1. Ensure funding or fees for services that the county is required to provide are equal to the cost of providing the services. The fees retained by counties for state services performed at the local level are not covering this cost and property taxpayers are subsidizing these state services.
2. Ensure equity and accountability in the cost sharing arrangements between the State and counties. Some examples include providing space for the judicial branch/courts and the Department of Health and Human Services, as well as the funding of juvenile detention services.
3. Consider revenue replacement or revenue sharing to protect local services in the face of property tax revenue reductions.

FUNDING OF STATE MANDATES

PROBLEM: County budgets are extremely burdened with the costs of current and new state mandates. Depending on how a mandate is defined, one-third to two-thirds of each county's budget is consumed by various state-mandated functions. This increases the reliance on a regressive form of taxation - the property tax. Current legislation prohibiting unfunded mandates (Iowa Code Chapter 25B) has been less than effective because of exceptions written into various new laws.

SOLUTION: Any service mandated by state legislation or administrative action should be fully funded by the state to cover all costs of the mandate.

ISAC TOP PRIORITIES

MEDICAID FUNDING

PROBLEM: Providing sufficient state funding to reimburse dental, emergency medical, hospitals, mental health and disability services, and nursing homes for Medicaid-covered services, especially in rural Iowa where it continues to be a major issue that has resulted in challenges to fund staff and keep these facilities open for our most vulnerable Iowans. In addition, the federal requirement that prisoners lose their Medicaid coverage once they are incarcerated, the financial burden for inmate medical expenses falls to the county taxpayers once an individual is placed in county jail. These medical expenses have significantly grown in recent years, especially for individuals who require medication for treatment of complex mental health needs.

SOLUTION: ISAC supports the State of Iowa funding an increase of the reimbursement rate for all Medicaid covered services that at a bare minimum covers the rate of inflation. In addition, the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services is strongly encouraged to apply for a state waiver for Iowa to the federal Department of Human Services that would maintain Medicaid coverage for those housed in county jails. We also support Medicaid expansion to meet the needs of adults incarcerated in our county jails and children being served in our juvenile court system.

IOWA'S NATURAL RESOURCES, OUTDOOR RECREATION, AND WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

PROBLEM: Iowa's natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities are significantly underfunded at the state level. The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund continues to remain empty since it was established in 2010. Legislators and the Governor have yet to raise the state sales tax – the funding mechanism in the Iowa Constitution. The funding formula in state law (Iowa Code Chapter 461) is favored by counties, but changes to the formula are expected. In the end, any changes to the Iowa Code funding distribution must meet the integrity of the language that was inserted into the Iowa Constitution in 2010. In addition, ISAC has tremendous concerns over the sunset of the Resources Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Program which is scheduled to expire in 2026.

SOLUTION: Raise the sales tax by a minimum of 3/8-cent and retain the integrity of the formula to meet the promises defined in the Iowa Constitution. Any change to the funding formula should be acceptable to county conservation boards and boards of supervisors. There have been proposals to fund the Trust in the past as part of broader tax plans. Any proposal that funds the Trust, retains the integrity of the funding formula, and is a large, net win for conservation is worthy of consideration.

Finally, ISAC supports full funding of REAP through the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. An increase in Iowa's sales tax automatically fully funds REAP, now and into the future. The fallback solution is to fully fund the Program through gaming receipts as originally intended and to extend the sunset for at least another 10 years (2036).

LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

PROBLEM: In the 2024 General Election, a considerable number of voters who requested an absentee ballot by mail showed up to vote on the same day the ballots were to be mailed or in the two to three days following the mailing of the absentee ballot. If the voter insisted on voting in person, the absentee ballot that was mailed had to be voided. This is a waste of resources and caused counties to order additional ballots to account for the waste. In addition, as we have seen an increase for those voting in-person absentee, there is a need to expedite the current application process to match the current voter ID requirements as those voting in-person at the polls.

SOLUTION: Modify Iowa Code §53.8(1)(a) to read as follows: Upon receipt of an application for an absentee ballot and immediately after the absentee ballots are printed but no more than twenty days before the election five business days prior to in-person absentee voting pursuant to §53.10, subsection 1, the commissioner shall mail an absentee ballot to the applicant within 24 hours, except as otherwise provided in subsection 3. Finally, to ease the application process for those voting in-person absentee, election officials should be allowed to auto-populate an Absentee Ballot Application as they do for those voting on Election Day.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

PROBLEM: Iowa law is more stringent than federal law for exchanging information covered by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA allows for the sharing of protected health information (PHI) and electronic PHI (ePHI) for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations. State law requires releases to do much of this which requires clients to fill out additional forms and slows down the referral and treatment process. This affects counties when working among themselves and with providers in the General Assistance, Substance Use, and Region offices. Public Health, Home Health, and Veterans Affairs agencies are also affected.

SOLUTION: ISAC supports changes in the appropriate sections of Iowa Code to align state confidentiality laws with federal protections but not more stringent.

COUNTY ACCESS TO THE IOWA COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

PROBLEM: Unless they were receiving communications services from the state prior to April 1, 1986, political subdivisions are not allowed access to or service from the Iowa Communications Network (ICN). Many counties have ICN fiber in their facilities to serve other entities but are not allowed to access the service. The ICN could be a higher quality, more cost-effective option than private service providers for many counties.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code §8D.11(4) to allow all political subdivisions to access and contract for ICN services.

DRIVER'S LICENSE TESTING FEE

PROBLEM: County driver's license stations are not currently authorized to charge a fee for driving tests except for commercial driver's license testing. In the absence of a fee for service, staff time and compensation are subsidized by property taxes. Furthermore, treasurers often see individuals not show up for scheduled tests, wasting the time of staff that could have been helping other customers.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code §321M.9(1)(a) by authorizing a nonrefundable \$10 fee collected for each drive test taken at a county driver's license station with the exception of line drives, recall examinations, re-examinations, and commercial driver's license driving skills testing.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE

PROBLEM: Differing interpretations of Iowa Code have created isolated conflict between county government and emergency management commissions related to funding authority and overall programmatic decision authority. Although these conflicts have not been widespread, they have been chronic, which has led to lawsuits at taxpayer expense.

SOLUTION: To address these disagreements, ISAC supports that our affiliate organizations, the Iowa State Association of County Supervisors and the Iowa Emergency Management Association, partner to find compromise legislation to apply the appropriate existing Iowa Code references that will provide a more clear path of understanding of how the emergency management system is designed, under the law, related to emergency management funding.

LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) LEVY IN TIF DISTRICTS

PROBLEM: Counties are authorized to declare emergency medical services (EMS) an essential county service and to impose a voter-approved property tax not to exceed \$0.75 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. Under current law this additional levy and the resulting revenue are considered part of the divided revenue for property subject to tax increment financing (TIF). The increased revenue going to TIF is not incremental growth and should remain dedicated to the voter-approved purpose of funding EMS.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code to provide an exemption from division and reallocation for property tax revenue in a TIF district resulting from a voter-approved EMS property tax levy in a way similar to debt service for local taxing districts and physical plant and equipment levies (PPEL) for school districts.

EMINENT DOMAIN

PROBLEM: Multiple hazardous material underground pipelines are being proposed for construction in Iowa, and the use of eminent domain to secure land rights will continue to be contemplated. Aside from submitting concerns to the Iowa Utilities Commission (IUC), landowners and county supervisors have little local control in ensuring property rights. The proposed pipelines are not a public utility and arguably, do not provide a public use or public purpose that would trigger eminent domain authority.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code Chapter 479B to prohibit the use of eminent domain by a carbon sequestration or other hazardous material pipeline company that is not a public utility and that is not serving a public use and/or purpose.

PAYMENTS DURING ROAD CONSTRUCTION

PROBLEM: Iowa Code §310.18 allows for the board of supervisors or county engineer to approve claims for partial payments during construction but is unclear if the engineer can sign off on final payments. Explicit authorization is preferred.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code §310.18 to state “The board of supervisors, the county engineer, or the department may approve partial and final claims.”

RECORDING FEE MODERNIZATION

PROBLEM: Fees for recording documents are intended to cover the cost of providing the service, including real estate transaction recording, record management, and technological needs. While the cost of providing these services continues to rise, the recording fees have not been adjusted since 1985, leaving property taxpayers to subsidize the service.

SOLUTION: Amend and update relevant Code sections to implement a flat, per page recording fee. This fee modernization will create a simpler, more stable, and more predictable fee structure, that will also generate additional revenue aimed at covering the cost of providing the service.

RETENTION OF MEDICAID FOR EMPLOYED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

PROBLEM: There are currently several programs for individuals with disabilities that assist persons to obtain employment, such as Individual Placement and Supports (IPS) and Supported Employment. Frequently, individuals with disabilities who are working risk losing their Medicaid/benefits due to income and benefit limitations under Medicaid. The current income/resource guidelines under the general Medicaid program and Medicaid for Employed Persons with Disabilities (MEPD) discourage work and encourage more reliance on the public benefit system for support. Without changes, individuals will continue to be disincentivized to work.

SOLUTION: HHS should revise its current MEPD income/resource guidelines by increasing them to allow for more individuals to maintain employment without fear of losing their benefits. In addition, legislation was proposed in the 2024 session (HF 2589) to implement a “work without worry” program in Iowa; however, this legislation did not have enough traction to pass. This program would allow individuals to work at up to 450% of federal poverty level and would disregard resources/assets with a few exceptions.

LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

SECONDARY ROADS TAX REFORM CLEANUP

PROBLEM: Property tax reform legislation enacted in 2023 and 2024 may have and has had unintended consequences for county secondary roads departments. Changes to budget deadlines and potential reductions to property tax levy rates affect secondary roads processes and requirements. Several areas were unintentionally affected:

1. The move to May 15 to adopt a secondary road construction program leaves insufficient time for review by the Iowa Department of Transportation prior to forwarding to planning agencies responsible for awarding federal aid funding.
2. Transfers to the Secondary Road Fund are capped at a rate per \$1,000 of valuation like property tax levies, but Road Use Tax Fund allocations and use of Farm-to-Market funds is contingent on transferring at least 75% of the maximum allowed. Levy rate ratchets based on valuation growth may make this 75% threshold impossible or impractical.

SOLUTION: Changes specific to the secondary roads processes and timelines can be achieved without affecting the intent of property tax legislation. Those changes should include:

1. Move the deadline for adoption of the secondary road construction program contained in Iowa Code §309.22(1) from May 15 to April 1.
2. To address transfer requirements, amend Iowa Code §309.10 by adding a subsection stating: 3. The restriction imposed in subsection 2 shall not be enforced if a county can prove its failure to transfer funds was a direct result of legislative action restricting the collection of property taxes.
3. Alternatively, transfer requirements could be addressed by separating the required transfer from General Basic and Rural Basic respectively, prior to levy rate ratchets due to valuation growth.

SECURITY INTEREST DISCHARGE

PROBLEM: Current requirements and practices for discharging a security interest in all-terrain vehicles (ATV), snowmobiles, and water vessels are antiquated, inefficient, and prone to error by the owners.

SOLUTION: Amend Iowa Code to authorize any county recorder to note the release of a lien on the title of the vehicle and enter the release into the statewide records system. The statewide system would notify the county of record, eliminate the need for in-county security interest discharge filings, and ensure records are up to date.

TREASURERS OMNIBUS

County treasurers in Iowa have identified several areas in Iowa Code that could be amended to improve operations, provide better customer service, and/or streamlines processes. These problem areas are identified below with proposed solutions.

- Delinquent property taxes for buildings on leased land (BLL) are not subject to property tax sale provisions under Iowa Code and must be addressed through the courts.
 - Amend Iowa Code Chapter 445 to allow delinquent property taxes for residential buildings on leased land to be collected at tax sale when the structure is valued at \$20,000 or more.
- Elderly and disabled property tax credits do not require proof of income to accompany the application to the county treasurer and there can be confusion on what qualifies as income and which property owners are eligible.
 - Amend Iowa Code to require proof of income accompany applications for property tax credits based on personal or household income.
- The caps on property tax credits for elderly and disabled property owners have remained fixed at \$1,000 despite valuation growth due to market conditions and inflation leading to property tax increases over time.
 - Amend Iowa Code §425.24 to increase from \$1,000 to \$2,000 the maximum amount of property taxes due or rent constituting property taxes paid that may be considered in calculating the elderly and disabled property tax credit or rent reimbursement.
- Owners of rural property with manufactured and mobile homes under separate ownership do not have the same tools as manufactured/mobile home park owners in cases of abandonment.
 - Amend Iowa Code Chapter 555B and Chapter 555C to give landowners with abandoned manufactured and mobile homes on their property the same authority as manufactured and mobile home park owners to remove or transfer title to the subject homes.

LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

- **Nonresidents must use a resident with an Iowa driver's license when registering and titling motor vehicles in the state. Many affected nonresidents own residential property in Iowa where the vehicle stays, but the owners are not Iowa residents.**
 - **Amend Iowa Code §321.20(1)(f) to allow nonresidents to register and title a motor vehicle in Iowa if they are a property owner in the state and if the vehicle will be primarily located at the property in Iowa.**
- **There is no requirement for property taxes and assessments to be paid in full prior to splitting or combining parcels. Issues arise when there are unpaid property taxes, unredeemed tax sale certificates, or outstanding drainage or special assessments because the financial liability is tied to a parcel that may no longer exist.**
 - **Amend Iowa Code to require property taxes and assessments to be paid, or payment plan implemented, prior to any splitting or combining of parcels.**

2025 ISAC President

Carroll is my home where my three children, Chase, Meredith, and Madison grew up. Our family is blessed with five grandchildren: Emmy, Ivy, Ruby, Indy, and Peter.

I am most pleased that my son and his wife Meghan and my oldest daughter and her husband Chris live and work in Carroll County. My youngest daughter Madison works in the medical field and lives in Des Moines. Perhaps we will see her back home someday.

I was born in Maquoketa, graduated from Albia High School, received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Grinnell College, and a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Drake University. Carroll has been home since graduation. I practice civil law in the areas of estate planning, probate and taxation, along with my greatest professional passion, being a prosecutor.

My first election as county attorney was in 1998, and I have been re-elected since. My past professional activities include President of the Iowa County Attorneys Association, being a member of the Board of Governors of the Iowa State Bar Association, and most importantly, working for the public safety of Carroll County.



John Werden

ISAC President

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My attraction to become more active in ISAC activities was inspired by Bill Peterson. It was my hope, to little avail, that some of his talent would rub off on me. I have only begun to learn about all aspects of county government and the importance of what we do every day to make the lives of Iowans better. It was my great pleasure to participate in the search for a new Executive Director, and I think the ISAC Board made a wise choice. Andrea Woodard will manage the future very well with the support of the terrific staff recruited by Bill over the years.

My goal is to continue the tradition of nonpartisan, grass roots governance. While counties collaborate with state and federal programs, counties are the most responsive and directly accountable to the people.

Compensation Boards

For years, a growing number of county supervisors expressed frustration with some components of the county compensation board system. The compensation board, made up of community members appointed to represent the county elected officials and the board of supervisors, made a recommendation that the supervisors could accept or reduce. Some of the areas of dissatisfaction experienced by supervisors were receiving recommendations that were not feasible for budget circumstances and having to adjust all compensation recommendations by the same percentage for all elected officials besides supervisors. It was a system in need of improvement.

Legislators took note and listened. Over the last several legislative sessions we have seen proposals and engaged in conversations that ranged from simply eliminating the compensation board to changing the composition of the members to changing how recommendations were established. Through this process, ISAC maintained that the legislature should work with county officials to improve the system rather than scrap it. Legislation passed at the end of the 2024 legislative session did that.

While all county compensation boards were technically dissolved, SF 2442 also put in place procedures for boards of supervisors to re-establish the compensation board if they wish to utilize it or proceed to perform the duties themselves. In cases of re-establishing the compensation board, supervisors can now set compensation higher or lower than the recommendations they receive, and they can treat each elected office individually for purposes of these adjustments. These changes provide more flexibility and control to county supervisors tasked with balancing what elected officials are paid and what is asked of the property taxpayer.

The frustration with the compensation board we most often heard from county supervisors was the recommendations were not realistic given budget constraints and seemingly had no reasoning, so supervisors went lower than the recommendations year after year. Frankly, compensation boards providing recommendations that didn't really serve a purpose to the supervisors were not delivering value to the county or public. This is why ISAC advocated for a so called "show your work" provision, so compensation boards were compelled to document their research and justify their recommendations. We were pleased that this proposal was included in the final legislation.

For the boards of supervisors that choose not to re-establish the compensation board, the responsibilities fall to them. Notably, the "show your work" requirements would also apply to the supervisors performing the duties and the Back the Blue provisions related to the sheriff's salary would also be required. One can reasonably predict that county budgets will not always be able to support what the research and comparisons show, but it's important for supervisors to follow the process (and the law) in preparing a recommended compensation schedule, even if they're not able to provide that level of compensation.

Why was this such a good piece of legislation? First, it gives supervisors the local control to decide what works for their county. This decision can be made and changed at any time in the future. ISAC will track what counties decide to do on an annual basis. Second, it addressed several issues identified by supervisors and other county officials. "Show your work" will improve the quality of the recommendations, because they will be documented and justified. The authority to accept or adjust recommendations for elected offices individually, while possible to misuse, gives supervisors the ability to evaluate the duties (including extras) of each elected position in addition to the evaluation the compensation board conducts. This authority also allows the supervisors to take reasonable steps toward increasing the sheriff's salary to comply with Back the Blue without suppressing the wage adjustments for the other elected officials.

In recent informal polling at supervisor district meetings, a plurality of counties indicated they would re-establish the compensation board. Many have decided to take on the responsibilities themselves, with various reasons given. A good number of counties haven't formally decided, with some indicating they would let the new board of supervisors decide when they are seated in January. This is a reflection of the thoughts supervisors had prior to the legislation: it works in our county, it could use improvement, and/or the supervisors should just do it themselves. This is why letting each county decide what works for them was the best approach the Legislature could take. Kudos to them.



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ISAC Endorsed Elite Preferred Vendor of the Month

ISAC Group Benefits Plan Update

Just before Thanksgiving, the ISAC Board of Directors approved ISAC Group Health Program rates for July 1, 2025. This timing allows participating and prospective counties to enter their budget season with final health insurance rates for next fiscal year's budget. In the world of health insurance, it is very unique to know renewal rates seven months before the effective date. Counties that place their insurance with Wellmark, or other carriers outside of multi-employer arrangements, typically receive their July renewal rates in early April. These counties are then required to guess what their fiscal year health insurance costs will be as they create next year's budget. Counties benefit when they can properly budget – something that the ISAC Group Benefits Program makes possible. This is one of the many reasons ISAC's Group Health Program has seen significant growth over the past five years.



Ryan Berven

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Another reason is the incentives the Program provides to member counties. The ISAC Wellness Program will continue to allow for up to a 5% discount on total premium for each county and offer other significant employee incentives. Also, ISAC provides a supplemental Accident and Critical Illness plan to all county employees enrolled in health insurance. ISAC absorbs the cost of these ancillary products, which allows the county, as an employer, to offer additional benefits at no cost to the county. These policies not only provide employees with added benefits (and peace of mind) if they suffer an accident or critical illness, but they provide a cash wellness benefit for all enrolled members. If your county is interested in deploying strategic, no-cost wellness benefits that are designed to reward employees for seeking annual preventive care services and activity-based challenges, you will be excited to learn about the ISAC Wellness Program.

Administration of ISAC's group benefits is simplified with our comprehensive service-model approach. With dedicated account managers and compliance experts, county auditors, human resource directors, and supervisors know that they are providing employees with excellent benefits while keeping the county in compliance. In addition, ISAC pays for external COBRA administration through a qualified third-party administrator. This saves the county time, money, and the burden of interpreting the many complex rules. Other administrative conveniences provided by the ISAC Group Benefits Program are online enrollments through Employee Navigator and consolidated billing for all ISAC sponsored products.

Continues on page 15.



ISAC February Leadership Seminar

Embrace the Power of Followership: Transform Your Leadership Skills at Our Upcoming Seminar

Discover the New Paradigm of Effective Leadership

February 25, 2025 | Renaissance Savery Des Moines Hotel

In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving business landscape, the term 'leadership' often takes center stage. Countless seminars, workshops, and books focus on honing one's leadership skills, often overlooking a crucial aspect of organizational success – followership. At our upcoming seminar, "Focus on Followership: A Key to a High Performing Organizational System," we aim to redefine the traditional concept of leadership by illuminating the indispensable role of effective followership.

The Underrated Value of Followership

Followership is not merely about passive compliance or blind obedience; it is about active engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative support that drive an organization towards its goals. Without dedicated and skilled followers, even the most visionary leaders would struggle to implement their strategies and achieve lasting success. This seminar will delve into the intricacies of followership, imparting valuable insights and practical tools to enhance this often-overlooked aspect of professional development.

Why Attend?

Our seminar is designed for professionals across all sectors who aspire to elevate their understanding of both leadership and followership dynamics. Whether you are an elected official, a mid-level manager, or an emerging leader, this seminar offers a unique opportunity to:

- **Enhance Collaboration:** Learn how effective followership fosters a collaborative environment, encouraging open communication and mutual respect.
- **Boost Organizational Performance:** Discover how strong followership skills contribute to higher productivity, innovation, and overall organizational success.
- **Develop Critical Thinking:** Gain insights into how followers can critically analyze situations, offer constructive feedback, and contribute to strategic decision-making.
- **Balance Leadership and Followership:** Understand the symbiotic relationship between leaders and followers, and how mastering both roles can propel your career forward.

What to Expect

The "Focus on Followership: A Key to a High Performing Organizational System" seminar is structured to provide a comprehensive and engaging learning experience. Participants will benefit from:

- **Keynote Address:** Hear from a renowned expert in leadership and followership who will share their knowledge, experiences, and research findings.
- **Interactive Workshops:** Participate in contemplative illustrations, exercises, and table activities.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with like-minded professionals, and expand your network within a community dedicated to fostering leadership excellence.

Featured Speakers

We are proud to present a distinguished speaker who is a trailblazer in the field of leadership and followership. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Mark A. Rennaker, is a renowned author and Chair of the Division of Leadership and Followership Studies at the Devoe School of Business, Technology, and Leadership at Indiana Wesleyan University. His groundbreaking research has reshaped our understanding of followership.

ISAC February Leadership Seminar

Transform Your Leadership Journey

The “Focus on Followership: A Key to a High Performing Organizational System” seminar is more than just an event; it is a transformative experience that will help leaders gain insights into the responsibilities for encouraging and supporting effective followers, and followers will learn what they must do to be exemplary and effective. Together, leaders and followers will learn how a focus on followership and follower development may be more important to high levels of organizational performance than leadership development.

Register Today

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to advance your professional development and to embrace the true power of followership. Register today to secure your spot at the seminar, and take the first step towards transforming your leadership journey.

Join us starting at 8:00 am on February 25, 2025, at the Renaissance Des Moines Savery Hotel (401 Locust St, Des Moines, IA 50309) and be part of a movement that is reshaping the future of leadership. The cost of the Seminar is \$100, and a room block at the hotel has been set up if you decide to come the night before at a cost of \$149.00/night. For more information and to register, visit the ISAC website at www.iowacounties.org.

ISAC Endorsed Elite Preferred Vendor of the Month

Likely the most significant reason for the Program’s success and growth is because of the year-to-year rate stability. ISAC’s health plan finished the most recent plan year with a significant surplus, which has allowed the Board to **reduce** rates for their July 1, 2025, renewal. Overall base rates will reduce 3% for next year, and the most recent five-year renewal average is 1.25%. Many employers continue to face challenging renewals increases that average 6-8% each year. The ISAC health insurance pool is uniquely underwritten to provide advantages to all participating counties – both those with a “healthier” experience rating as well as those who have a higher utilization. As mentioned earlier, each county has an opportunity to earn a 5% discount by completing the annual wellness requirements. Then, ISAC applies either a discount or a surcharge based on the prior three years’ claims. This rewards the member counties who have fewer claims, and while some counties may face a surcharge due to higher utilization, the underwriting methodology applies a cap on the surcharge. For this renewal cycle (July 2025 – June 2026), the ISAC Board of Directors voted to limit any surcharge adjustments to 5%. This ensures for year-to-year rate stability for counties with higher utilization.

If your county currently participates in a non-ISAC Wellmark pooled program but feel you may be healthier than the overall pool, contact us to learn more about the advantages of the ISAC group health plan structure that incentivizes high performing groups, while continually providing long-term stability for all participating counties. We would be happy to facilitate a discussion with your county leadership to discuss whether this unique program would be a good fit for you.

Iowa Precinct Atlas Consortium Update

General Election

The auditors and election staff successfully hosted the General Election on November 5, 2024. They put in extremely long hours and did an amazing job. Though voter turnout did not match the state's record, which was set in 2020 at 75.8%, we came close with a turnout of 74.2%. The Iowa Precinct Atlas Consortium (IPAC) Program supported 70 counties during the general election process. We had several counties online, while the majority opted to use the poll books offline. The Election threw almost every possible voter scenario at the software; however, overall the day went well. Challenges and enhancements that were reported have been compiled and will be presented to the IPAC Futures Committee in February 2025.

Future

We will closely follow the upcoming legislative session to see if any law changes impact poll books. We will also continue working with the Secretary of State's Office to ensure the software is compliant with Iowa election laws. We plan to release the 2025 city and school election software update this summer and will incorporate any legislative changes, if applicable.

IPAC Help Desk

IPAC uses a help desk system in which members can submit a ticket for assistance, and an IPAC Team member will reach out to assist them. For the November General Election, we released a help desk phone line, which will be answered by support staff. If no one is available to answer, a ticket will be generated and submitted to the IPAC Help Desk Ticketing System.

The IPAC team includes the following staff: Tammy Norman, IPAC Project Manager; Dylan Young, IT Manager; Brock Ridders, Software Support Specialist; Jake Brunkhorst, Software Developer; Ashley Clark, IT Project Coordinator; Molly Steffen, IPAC Support Coordinator; Brandi Kanselaar, IT Program Coordinator; and Brad Holtan, Finance and Program Services Manager. We are very excited about the future of the IPAC Program and will continue to provide updates on the IPAC Member Basecamp website. If you have any questions regarding the IPAC Program, please do not hesitate to contact Carla Becker, the IPAC Board President at cbecker@co.delaware.ia.us, or Tammy Norman, the IPAC Program Manager at tnorman@iowacounties.org.



Dylan Young
IT Manager



Brock Ridders
Software Support Specialist



Jake Brunkhorst
Software Support Specialist



Ashley Clark
IT Project Coordinator



Molly Steffen
IPAC Support Coordinator



Brandi Kanselaar
IT Program Coordinator



Tammy Norman
Program Manager



Brad Holtan
Finance/Program Services Manager

The IPAC Team

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- Labor Negotiations
- Litigation
- Special Assessments
- Utility Issues



Greene County Career Academy
Photo Courtesy of Alex Michl, OPN Architects

2025 Calendar

January 2025

- 14 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(The Meadows Event and Conference Center)
- 15-16 New County Officer's School
(The Meadows Event and Conference Center)
- 30 Statewide Supervisors Meeting
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)

February 2025

- 18-21 ISSDA Spring Jail School
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)
- 19 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)
- 25 ISAC Leadership Seminar
(Renaissance Des Moines Savery Hotel)

See full listing on our website. If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC calendar, please contact Kelsey Sebern at ksebern@iowacounties.org.

March 2025

- 1-4 NACo Legislative Conference
(Washington, D.C.)
- 12 ISAC Legislative Reception
(Hilton Des Moines Downtown)
- 13-14 ISAC Spring Conference
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice
Credit Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

April 2025

- 1-2 Public Health Conference of Iowa
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)

May 2025

- 7 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(Virtual)
- 21-23 Western Interstate Region (WIR) Conference
(Pennington County, South Dakota)
- 24-27 ISACA Summer Conference
(Hilton Garden Inn West Des Moines)

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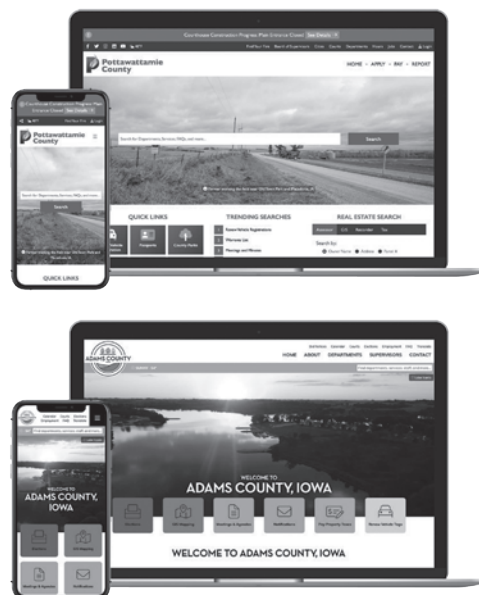
“Neapolitan Labs truly understands county government and how it works. They implemented features that have made my job easier and more efficient.



Rebecca Bissell
Auditor, Adams County

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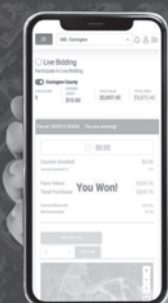
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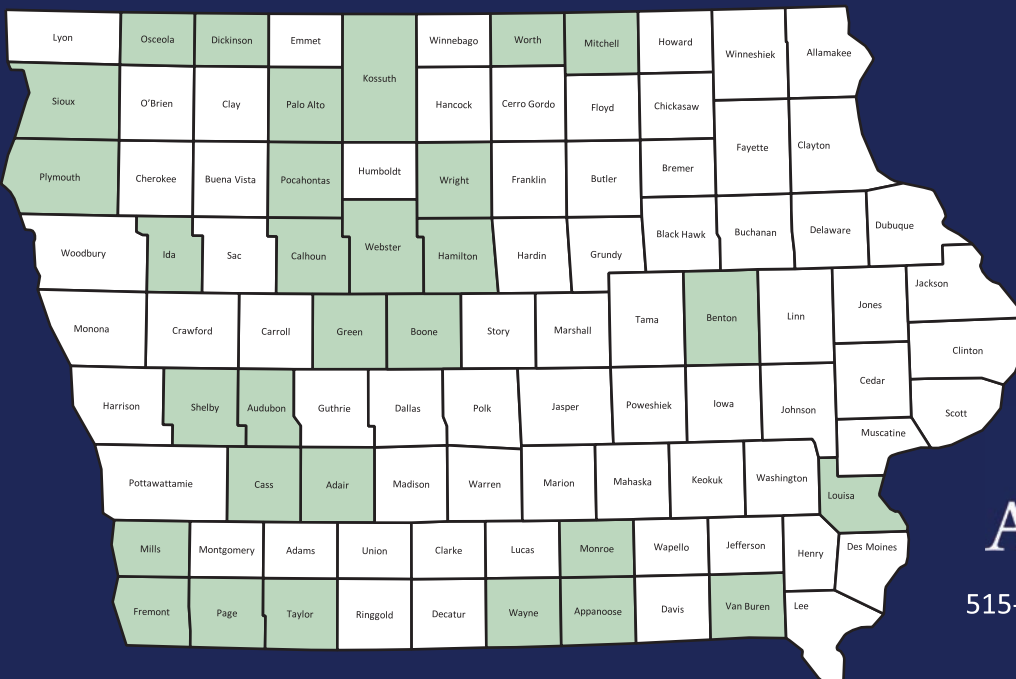
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