



Homeland Security and
Emergency Management



SFY 2025 Annual Performance Report

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Message from the Director

This report outlines the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's performance for State Fiscal Year 2025 and highlights our broad impact across state government.

Our core mission is service. This includes enhancing Iowans' quality of life by preparing the state for future challenges and building resilient communities. This past year, our department has significantly advanced this mission through key efforts. These included conducting vital disaster response exercises, ensuring local jurisdictions achieved compliant response plans, implementing critical process improvements, successfully completing a large number of public assistance and hazard mitigation projects, and executing comprehensive levee surveys.

As we move forward, our focus remains on service to Iowans, transparency, collaboration, and leadership in emergency management. We appreciate your continued partnership and support.



John R. Benson
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John R. Benson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

John R. Benson
Director
Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Executive Summary

This report covers performance of the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025. It outlines performance on key initiatives listed in the HSEM 2024-2028 Strategic Plan as well as performance items found in the HSEM Operational Plan.

Of the 16 total measures tracked, performance met or exceeded targets for 12 measures. The remaining targets where operational performance was not met have been reviewed. A full breakout of the performance measures is included in the report.

Our Mission

The mission of the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is enhancing the quality of life for Iowans by preparing our State and building resilient communities.

Our Vision

To serve government entities across Iowa to fulfill their missions with efficient, innovative, and strategic solutions.

Our Values

- **Mission Oriented:** We are resolute in our service to Iowans.
- **Integrity:** We conduct ourselves with honesty and are transparent in our actions.
- **Distinguished:** We are leaders in our field.
- **Collaboration:** We collaborate, connect, and share.

Organizational Structure

HSEM is the coordinating body for homeland security and emergency management activities across the state. The Department is comprised of two divisions and six bureaus that support the governor's priorities and our statutory obligations.

Response Division: The Response Division focuses on first-line agency response to disasters and emergencies. The Division consists of the Preparedness Bureau, the Communications & Technology Bureau, and the Non-Disaster Grants Bureau. The Preparedness Bureau houses the department's duty officer program, resource and volunteer management activities, radiological planning, capabilities assessment and strategic planning, individual and community disaster engagement programs, critical infrastructure protection and information sharing, and special teams. The Communications & Technology Bureau focuses on exercise coordination and support, communications, 911, mass notification and emergency messaging, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), strategic communication, and legislative and congressional relations. The Non-Disaster Grants Bureau focuses on the management and accounting services of HSEM's non-disaster grants. General planning efforts, such as local and State plan development, training support, administration of the State Emergency Response Commission, Capitol Complex planning, continuity planning and agricultural emergency planning, are also carried out within the Response Division.

Recovery Division: The Recovery Division focuses on short- and long-term recovery, the implementation of recovery and mitigation-related programs and the coordination of Recovery Support Functions. The Division consists of the Public Assistance Bureau, the Hazard Mitigation Bureau, and the Disaster Grants and Administration Bureau. The Public Assistance Bureau manages the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program. The Hazard Mitigation Bureau manages pre- and post-disaster hazard mitigation programs and ensures the maintenance of the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Disaster Grants and Administration Bureau provides for the coordination of Recovery Support Functions (RSF), manages the implementation of other disaster-related programs, coordinates State funding requirements with the State Executive Council, and provides disaster program-related grant monitoring, compliance, and accounting services.

Progress Made in SFY 2025 on Improvement Efforts

In SFY 2025, HSEM advanced the following key initiatives from our 2024-2028 Strategic Plan:

- Establish and maintain dynamic emergency response operations.
- Foster a holistic planning program that covers all aspects of emergency management.
- Sustain disaster recovery and hazard mitigation capabilities that are adaptable, integrated and effective.
- Develop a critical infrastructure information analysis program.
- Develop and implement technological solutions throughout the Department to improve processes and service delivery.
- Implement Whole Community principles across all aspects of the Department.

Strategic Initiative 1: Establish and maintain dynamic emergency response operations.

In SFY 2025, HSEM strengthened the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) by integrating physical and virtual capabilities to improve response, collaboration, and mission execution. The department trained employees to established standards, tracked training compliance, and conducted regular exercises to ensure operational readiness.

In SFY 2026, HSEM will continue transitioning these efforts into ongoing SEOC operations, expand training programs, and build dashboards to showcase preparedness and performance across statewide emergency functions.

Strategic Initiative 2: Foster a holistic planning program that covers all aspects of emergency management.

HSEM supports comprehensive planning that integrates response, recovery, and mitigation at the statewide level. The Department provided training and technical assistance to jurisdictions and tracked the percentage of jurisdictions with comprehensive, DMA 2000-compliant mitigation plans.

HSEM facilitated exercises and aligned planning with local government timelines, monitoring the percentage of local government exercises completed as required by rule or agreement. In SFY 2026, HSEM will expand training, exercises, and planning

support to help jurisdictions maintain coordinated and resilient emergency management programs.

Strategic Initiative 3: Sustain disaster recovery and hazard mitigation capabilities that are adaptable, integrated and effective.

To sustain disaster recovery and hazard mitigation capabilities, HSEM took significant actions in SFY 2025 to keep programs adaptable, integrated, and effective. Recovery program management and administration were strengthened, resulting in measurable progress toward completing obligated public assistance projects in open presidential disasters, as tracked by key performance metrics.

HSEM also strengthened hazard mitigation programs by fostering competitive solutions and overseeing the completion of obligated mitigation projects, better protecting communities from future disasters. Recovery operations and coordinated support functions, including special projects, were managed to streamline processes, optimize resources, and improve outcomes.

These efforts improved the state's resilience, ensured efficient disaster recovery, and supported the goal of maintaining effective and integrated recovery and mitigation capabilities.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a critical infrastructure information analysis program.

To develop a critical infrastructure information analysis program, HSEM undertook several key actions in SFY 2025 aimed at enhancing engagement, information sharing, and protection across the state. Stakeholder relationships were established and strengthened with federal, state, local, and private sector partners, laying the foundation for ongoing collaboration and coordinated information sharing. Policies and procedures were developed to guide these interactions, ensuring consistency and security in communications. By the end of SFY 2025, a measurable portion of critical infrastructure sectors were actively engaged with the Threat Information and Infrastructure Protection Program (TIIPP), tracked as a key performance metric.

HSEM also assessed informational gaps and stakeholder needs, identifying priority data requirements and timely intelligence to improve situational awareness and decision-making. These efforts enhanced the state's ability to analyze, share, and protect critical infrastructure information while supporting ongoing engagement with critical infrastructure sectors. Collectively, these initiatives strengthened statewide infrastructure resilience, improved partner coordination, and advanced the goal of an effective critical infrastructure information analysis program.

Strategic Initiative 5: Develop and implement technological solutions throughout the department to improve processes and service delivery.

In SFY 2025, the Department identified opportunities to enhance efficiency and service delivery through technology. Staff assessed key processes for improvement using artificial intelligence solutions and mapped critical workflows to lay the groundwork for future automation.

At the same time, development of a department-wide budget dashboard progressed toward full implementation to provide real-time visibility into program expenditures and resource allocation.

The Department also invested in staff professional development, encouraging participation in leadership programs to ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to leverage technology effectively now and in the future.

Strategic Initiative 6: Implement Whole Community principles across all aspects of the Department.

In SFY 2025, the Department integrated Whole Community principles into its plans, programs, and procedures to ensure the needs of vulnerable populations are addressed.

Staff provided training and guidance to department personnel and emergency managers, and supported local partners responsible for planning, response, and recovery.

The Department also improved public communications to meet Whole Community accessibility standards, using feedback from focus groups, interviews, and partnerships with private and nonprofit organizations.

Major Accomplishments in SFY 2025

In addition to the overall improvements related to strategic initiatives, HSEM also did significant work on the following items:

- Implemented the State of Iowa Disaster Recovery Temporary Housing Program (DRTHP), established for Iowans affected by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding in April, May, and June 2024.
 - The program was established in July 2024 to provide eligible disaster survivors with temporary shelter in their communities. Over the course of the program 222 households were provided assistance. The DRTHP provided temporary housing and a secure place to stay while households repaired their homes or explored other housing solutions.
- HSEM worked closely with cities and counties in the development of applications for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. In total, these applications are anticipated to exceed \$60 million in value, and account for damage to more than 350 properties from the 2024 disasters.
 - These property acquisitions will provide communities with long-term value beyond the initial investment. By removing at-risk properties from hazard-prone areas and converting them to open space, communities reduce future disaster losses, lower emergency response demands, and decrease reliance on public recovery funds. Property owners gain safety and stability, while communities benefit from improved environmental quality through parks, greenways, and natural flood storage. These acquisitions also support stronger local planning, reinforce safe land-use decisions, and help break cycles of repetitive loss, ultimately strengthening community resilience, fiscal stability, and quality of life.

All SFY 2025 Performance Indicators

During SFY 2025, HSEM tracked the following performance indicators, exceeding its goals in most key areas:

Measure	Target	Actual	Comments & Analysis
Number of Department Processes Mapped	3	2	Reduced internal resource capacity due to 2024 Presidential Disaster Declarations
Percentage of Staff in Leadership Development	20%	15%	Staff availability due to 2024 Presidential Disaster Declarations
Percentage of Public Materials that are Accessible	70%	75%	
Percentage of Obligated PA Large Projects Completed	65%	94%	
Percentage of Obligated Mitigation Projects Completed	80%	84%	
Miles of Levees Surveyed	100	165	
Number of Schools That Complete the Assessment Process	1,500	1,500	
Number of Schools That Make Capital Security Improvements	1,500	1,426	Not all schools had made improvements by end of SFY 2025
Percentage of Completed Applications Submitted to the Executive Council	100%	100%	
Percentage of Plans, Programs, and Procedures with Integrated Provisions	5%	3%	Reduced internal and external resource capacity due to 2024 Presidential Disaster Declarations
Number of Whole Community-Focused Trainings	5	6	
Percentage of State Exercises Completed	100%	100%	
Percentage of Local Exercises Completed	100%	100%	
Percentage of Jurisdictions with Compliant Plans	100%	100%	
Percentage of Services Completed to Client's Satisfaction	75%	89%	
Percentage of Potential Applicants in Contact with FEMA Program Manager	100%	100%	