

March 6, 2025

To: All Potential Respondents  
From: Katelyn Howells, Purchasing Agent  
Subject: 005-RFP-1551-2025 Iowa Disaster Case Advocacy Program

### Addendum Two

**Please amend the subject RFP to include answers to the following timely received questions:**

- Q1. Will the Iowa Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management accept subcontractor experience in addition to the proposer's experience?
- A1. HSEM will accept subcontractor experience.
- Q2. If there are changes to the Iowa Code or Iowa Admin Code during the contract period, how will these be communicated to ensure compliance?
- A2. HSEM will communicate the details of any legislation that is introduced to the Iowa General Assembly directly with the selected contractor point of contact. HSEM will communicate the disposition of such legislation.
- Q3. Can you provide more details on the prescribed data tracking system? What platform or software will be used?
- A3. HSEM is currently working with DOM for the purpose of obtaining a more robust data management system. HSEM will make notification to the selected contractor when such a purchase is made. HSEM currently uses Google-based tools for program tracking between contractors. This will continue until a more robust system is obtained.
- Q4. Are there specific benchmarks or performance metrics that would trigger the need for an extension beyond 180 days?
- A4. Per Administrative Rules 605-11.23(1)c, "The program may be extended in intervals up to 90 days when adequate justification is presented to the department, but not to exceed 730 days from the date of the proclamation." Contractors are expected to provide updates to the department throughout the disaster period and be in frequent dialogue as a possible extension approaches. The contractor and the department will discuss the extension together. Metrics to consider in requesting an extension may include, but are not limited to, number of open cases, complexity and estimated length of recovery plans, deadlines for existing resources, ability to locate resources, and more.
- Q5. Can the state share the name(s) of any incumbent?
- A5. The current contract holder for State Fiscal Year 2025 is the Iowa Community Action Association.
- Q6. Will the selected vendor begin working on any cases from previous years as part of the transition from the incumbent? If so, how many? Is there a time limit on how far back the contractor will go to serve survivors of past disasters with remaining unmet needs? How do we determine the service areas for 2025 and any applicable prior included years?
- A6. At the end of the current contract on June 30, 2025 the current contractor will transition any open cases to the new contractor(s). The transition process will be discussed with the current contractor, the new contractor(s), and HSEM to make the transition as smooth as possible and to ensure services to clients are

not interrupted. Service area coverage alignment will be included in the transition process. Contractors should identify their service area in the RFP.

- Q7. "The Contractor shall Disburse funds as authorized by the Agency" (page 19, section 4.1.6). What funds does the agency have available for assistance and what is the extent of financial management by the selected contractor?
- A7. Contractor(s) shall disburse funds for the entity's actual direct costs to perform the services outlined in the RFP. DCA is funded in Iowa Code § 22.20B(1)b.
- Q8. As a substitute for letters of reference, would the State consider alternatives such as client survey results, publicly available vendor performance reports from state-managed systems of record, and/or federal vendor performance reports via Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS)? (Exhibit 3)
- A8. HSEM will accept substitute information that is verifiable that demonstrates the performance and capability of the respondent.
- Q9. The Program's Claims History Chart: What are the outstanding numbers of survivors to be served under this RFP? (Section 1.4)
- A9. Due to the unknown number of disaster events and impacted residents between now and the end of SFY 25 on June 30, 2025, we cannot predict the outstanding number of clients who will transition to the new contract holder(s) on July 1, 2025.
- Q10. Under section 3.1.3, you mentioned requesting extensions. What specific criteria or documentation will be required to justify the need for a 90-day extension?
- A10. Contractors are expected to provide updates to the department throughout the disaster period and be in frequent dialogue as a possible extension approaches. The contractor and the department will discuss the extension together. Metrics to consider in requesting an extension may include, but are not limited to, number of open cases, complexity and estimated length of recovery plans, deadlines for existing resources, ability to locate resources, and more.
- Q11. How has DCMP participation affected the numbers for each year? For example, in 2024 the number was relatively lower than other years. Was the overall need previously higher but cases transferred to DCMP? (Section 1.4)
- A11. Client participation in DCA varies by disaster scale, location, and severity of needs. Participation is also influenced by the extent of program outreach, access, and client access to insurance. The 2024 figures account for State Fiscal Year 24 (SFY 24) from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024. Residents impacted by severe weather from April to June of 2024 may be reflected in SFY 24 figures but may also have signed up for the program after July 1, 2024 and will show in SFY 25 figures. DCMP was awarded in October 2024 in SFY 25 and serves as a funding source for the DCA program. DCA figures for SFY 25 will include all DCA activity regardless of the funding source.
- Q12. For consistency of pricing assumptions across respondents, can the state provide a rate sheet and/or pricing scenario so respondents can respond uniformly? (3.3 Cost Proposal)
- A12. A rate sheet will not be provided for this RFP.
- Q13. What happens if the emergency disaster is declared outside the State of Iowa? Would this affect our obligations under the contract?
- A13. Per the Iowa Code, DCA is only authorized to operate within the borders of Iowa.

- Q14. Can the agency clarify whether applicant files are exclusively digital or a combination of paper and digital? (Section 4.2.3)
- A14. HSEM is currently working with DOM for the purpose of obtaining a more robust data management system that will serve as the location for all client files in a digital format. HSEM will make notification to the selected contractor when such a purchase is made. Until the data management system is in place, the preference is for client files to be maintained by the contractor in a digital format. A combination of paper and digital will also be accepted.
- Q15. What is the agency's prescribed data tracking system? (Section 4.2.3)
- A15. HSEM is currently working with DOM for the purpose of obtaining a more robust data management system. HSEM will make notification to the selected contractor when such a purchase is made. HSEM currently uses Google-based tools for program tracking between providers. This will continue until a more robust system is obtained.
- Q16. Can you confirm that the IDCA services are only applicable to the counties named in the disaster proclamation, or is there flexibility in certain circumstances?
- A16. Per Iowa Code § 29C.20B, DCA is only active in those counties specifically named by the Governor in an emergency proclamation of disaster emergency.
- Q17. Are workers expected to be full-time or can workers be contractors that are hired or activated when a disaster occurs?
- A17. Either option is acceptable.
- Q18. The amount of disasters and # of people served vary greatly from year to year. Is the funded amount fixed regardless of the amount of disasters and people served?
- A18. HSEM will reimburse direct costs for services rendered. Per Iowa Code § 29C.20B(1)b, Compensation shall not exceed contract maximum of \$1,000,000.00 per year. In accordance with Iowa Code § 29C.20B(1)(b), this limit may be exceeded upon authorization from the State Executive Council.
- Q19. Is indirect cost allowed?
- A19. No indirect costs are allowed. HSEM will only reimburse direct costs.
- Q20. Can we combine local hires with out of state permanent staff to capitalize on experience?
- A20. Prospective bidders should submit proposals of the model they intend to utilize to meet the criteria outlined in the RFP. HSEM will consider all proposed models. Models must be able to meet all RFP requirements including General Obligations for All Services in Section 5.
- Q21. Can a staffing agency be used?
- A21. Prospective bidders should submit proposals of the model they intend to utilize to meet the criteria outlined in the RFP. HSEM will consider all proposed models. Models must be able to meet all RFP requirements including General Obligations for All Services in Section 5.
- Q22. How many miles are estimated to be driven from a central office in Iowa?
- A22. DCA services are to be provided in the counties specifically named by the Governor in an emergency proclamation of disaster emergency. Distance from a contractor's central office will depend on the location of the disaster. Vendors must meet the definition of a local administrative entity as defined in Iowa Code § 29C.2(6) as "a countywide provider, or a provider of a statewide program with local offices

throughout the state, contracted for the administration of the disaster aid individual assistance grant program and the disaster case advocacy program.” Prospective bidders should indicate in the RFP how they will meet all RFP requirements including General Obligations for All Services in Section 5 to provide successful services in any county designated in their service area.

Q23. Is a physical location in Iowa required?

A23. Contractors must meet the definition of a local administrative entity as defined in Iowa Code § 29C.2(6) as “a countywide provider, or a provider of a statewide program with local offices throughout the state, contracted for the administration of the disaster aid individual assistance grant program and the disaster case advocacy program.” Prospective bidders should indicate in the RFP how they will meet all RFP requirements including General Obligations for All Services in Section 5 to provide successful services in any county designated in their service area.

Q24. Can the workers be remote and travel when there is a disaster?

A24. Contractors must meet the definition of a local administrative entity as defined in Iowa Code § 29C.2(6) as “a countywide provider, or a provider of a statewide program with local offices throughout the state, contracted for the administration of the disaster aid individual assistance grant program and the disaster case advocacy program.” Prospective bidders should indicate in the RFP how they will meet all RFP requirements including General Obligations for All Services in Section 5 to provide successful services in any county designated in their service area.

Q25. Exhibit 7 - Personnel, when providing a "brief resume of experience for all team members proposed to be assigned to the project," does this refer to the contractor, subcontractor, or both?

A25. Both

Q26. I would like to understand whether the contractor is expected to disburse funds through their own payment system or if there is an option to utilize the Iowa HSMED system for making payments after applications and other items are approved. For example, if the contractor were to use the Iowa HSMED system/I3, the process might involve the following steps: The contractor receives and processes applications for financial assistance. The contractor reviews and advances the applications based on the eligibility criteria. HSEMD provides final approval of the application and related payment. Once approved, the contractor inputs the payment details into the Iowa HSMED system. The Iowa HSMED system/I3 then disburses the funds directly to the eligible individuals or entities. Could you please confirm if such a process is feasible, or if the contractor is required to handle all disbursements through their own payment system?

A26. The contractor is expected to disburse funds through their own payment system. HSEM will reimburse via check or EFT to the contractor's bank account. The preferred method of payment (check or EFT) is up to the contractor. EFT paperwork must be submitted to DAS.

**Please acknowledge receipt of this addendum by signing in the space provided below, and return this letter with your proposal (do not send back separately).**

I hereby acknowledge receipt of this addendum.

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Signature

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Date

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Typed or Printed Name