

CHAPTER 222
EMPOWER RURAL IOWA PROGRAM

261—222.1(89GA,HF871) Purpose. The empower rural Iowa initiative was created by Executive Order Number 3 dated July 18, 2018, which directs the authority to provide staffing and administrative assistance for the initiative and its associated task forces. Pursuant to 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871, the authority is directed to adopt rules to establish criteria for the distribution of funds appropriated in section 3, subsection 11, of the legislation to the empower rural Iowa program.

[ARC 5963C, IAB 10/6/21, effective 9/17/21]

261—222.2(89GA,HF871) Definitions. As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Authority*” means the economic development authority created in Iowa Code section 15.105.

“*Director*” means the director of the authority.

“*Empower rural Iowa initiative*” or “*initiative*” means the initiative created by Executive Order Number 3 dated July 18, 2018.

“*Rural community*” means either an Iowa city with a population of 20,000 or less and that is not contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or greater, or an Iowa county that is one of the 88 least populous counties in the state.

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261—222.3(89GA,HF871) Eligible uses of funds.

222.3(1) Funds appropriated to the authority for the empower rural Iowa program shall be used to address the challenges and opportunities of rural communities. Uses of funds shall be approved by the director.

222.3(2) Eligible uses of funds include the following:

- a. The rural housing needs assessment grant program administered pursuant to 261—Chapter 220;
- b. The rural innovation grant program administered pursuant to 261—Chapter 221;
- c. Support for entrepreneurship and cooperative business models for businesses in rural communities;
- d. Leadership development training for representatives of rural communities;
- e. Education and training opportunities relating to succession planning for businesses in rural communities;
- f. Promotion of e-commerce opportunities for businesses in rural communities; and
- g. Implementation of additional recommendations published by the investing in rural Iowa task force, the growing rural Iowa task force, and the connecting rural Iowa task force created by the empower rural Iowa initiative and administered by the authority.

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These rules are intended to implement 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871.

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