
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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IOWA COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK — COVID-19 RESPONSE

Internal Operations. The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) has implemented a staffing plan that emphasizes the use of teleworking capabilities for an average 85.0% of staff while ensuring minimum on-site staffing requirements. Network field services throughout the State continue to be provided by 18 field technicians through an ICN maintenance vendor. The ICN's staffing plan is consistent with federal guidance provided by the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's [Advisory Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response](#) (March 19, 2020).

External Services. The ICN has offered the following enhancements to the Managed Voice System. These enhancements are being utilized by a growing number of State agencies, with an increasing number of employees using the enhancements to aid employees working offsite:

- Business Communicator application, which enables location flexibility in support of teleworking State employees by forwarding calls incoming to the employee's business line to a number of the employee's choice.
- Automatic Call Distribution and Interactive Voice Response functionality to enhance ability of call centers and staff to work remotely.

As of April, 16, 2020, at least 16 government agencies have requested increased communications bandwidth. The ICN has increased State ethernet and Internet bandwidth by 41.7 Gb to support additional remote operational services utilized by government teleworkers working for State offices and agencies, the Judicial Branch, the National Guard, federal offices within Iowa, and health care services. Of the total increase, 935 Mb of the bandwidth increases have been for 13 health care sites. The ICN has also provided bandwidth support for telehealth and teleworking health care employees at no cost, subject to no necessary costs related to equipment upgrades being incurred.

Network Security. The ICN is maintaining heightened network monitoring to ensure network security. The ICN's Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) protection and mitigation platform provides primary visibility into network attacks. DDoS attacks aimed at schools declined during the two weeks following the Governor's State of Disaster Emergency Proclamation, but attacks are beginning to return to normal levels. The ICN is working with its managed firewall partner to help educational institutions set up and administer virtual private network capabilities on the ICN firewall service to enable remote working and learning opportunities.

Consultations. The ICN is providing free-of-charge consultative services for authorized and certified users. These consultations include security information and best practices for enabling remote work, telehealth, and tele-education, as well as wireless Internet solutions for education entities in support of remote learning.

County Services. The ICN is providing connectivity services to county emergency management agencies pursuant to the Governor's State of Public Health Disaster Emergency Proclamation and Iowa Code section [8D.9](#).

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