

Homeland Security and Emergency Management 2020 Technology Reinvestment Fund

Description of Project	Total Estimated Project Cost	State Share	Other Revenue Sources	State Funds Used	State Funds Obligated	Remaining Funds	Status of Project	Estimated Completion Date
Statewide Mass Notification and Emergency Messaging	\$ 400,000	\$400,000.00	None	\$ 490,242.87	\$ 650,826.99	\$160,584.12	Deployed	

HSEMD administers the state's emergency notification system, Alert Iowa. Launched in 2014, the system is available for use by all counties and provides those that choose to participate with access to a single statewide notification system that gives local control of how and when to disseminate emergency and public safety information to residents. Since the implementation of the Alert Iowa program, the field of mass notification has significantly evolved, with new technology being adopted and offered by vendors to help facilitate communication with residents during times of emergency. The Alert Iowa program had been under one contract with a vendor since its implementation. That contract was set to expire at the end of SFY 2021. To ensure that the program was utilizing the best software and services available to the State, HSEMD decided to open the contract back up with a request for proposals process (RFP).

After receiving several proposals and conducting a thorough review, HSEMD selected Rave Mobile Safety to be the new State mass notification vendor, with a total system switchover slated for July 2021. Rave was chosen based on several factors, including their easy-to-use system for sending messages to residents through multiple message types and modes (voice, email, text, social media, Smart911 App), and the system's ability for messaging to be translated into several languages. These features will enhance the ability to communicate with all residents across the state.

To give the program and its user a smooth transition both systems were run congruent to each other, with the switchover implementation for the new system starting in April 2021, with two scheduled kick-off calls hosted by Rave and HSEMD. These calls introduced county and State agency system administrators to the new system and provided a timeline for the total implementation over the next three months. During the three months, multiple training sessions were held virtually and in-person across the state, and counties and State agencies were provided support from Rave and HSEMD to transfer their mass notification capabilities to the new system. With the switch to a new vendor, the program also went through a rebranding with a new logo and updated website that offers community resources, videos, and FAQs about the program. The program will continue to grow with increased marketing and initiatives in SFY2022. At the close of SFY 2021, 87 counties were using the system to provide emergency notifications to residents and 29 State of Iowa departments and boards were using Alert Iowa to notify employees of emergencies. There are plans to on-board additional counties and agencies in SFY 2022.

