



# More Options for Maternal Support (MOMS) Program

September 2026

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## Introduction

Iowa Code § 217.41C, requires the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Agency), to annually submit to the General Assembly the following information for the More Options for Maternal Support (MOMS) Program relative to the prior fiscal year: (a) the total number of providers of pregnancy support services by geographical region and the total number of unduplicated clients served by each provider by gender and age; (b) a description of outreach efforts by an administrator, providers of pregnancy support services, and the department; (c) total program expenditures; (d) amounts attributable to any program administrator contract and to each contract with a provider of pregnancy support services; and (e) outcomes based on outcome measures included in the contracts with each provider of pregnancy support services.

## Overview

MOMS funding supports a network of local, community-based nonprofit organizations who provide a continuum of services that are complementary to community health care services.

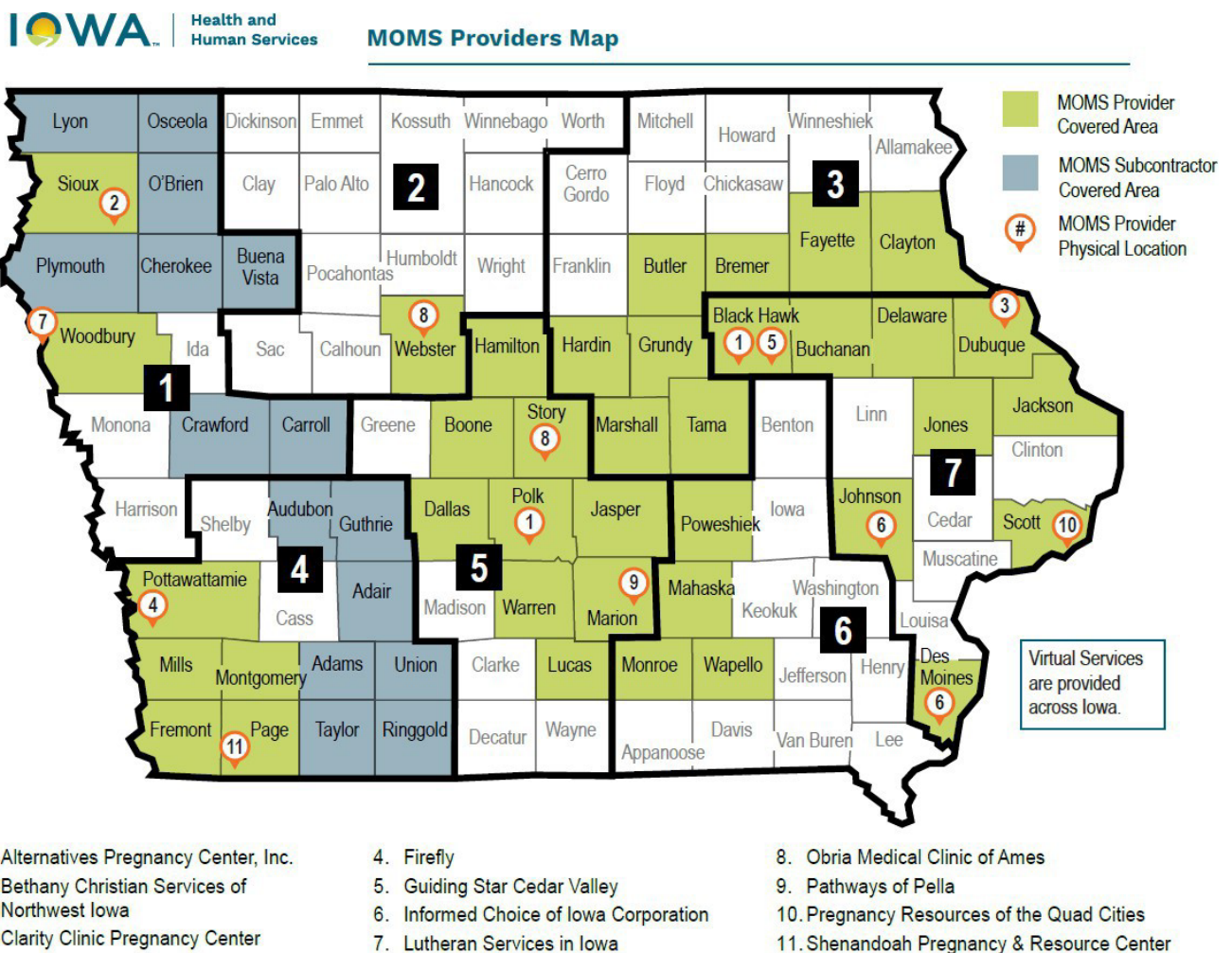
In FY2026 eleven MOMS providers promoted healthy pregnancies and healthy families by:

- Providing personalized, confidential support to expectant parents to make informed decisions for themselves and their babies throughout pregnancy and after delivery.
- Providing doula services by offering continuous emotional, physical and informational support to expectant parents before, during and after childbirth to help ensure a safe, confident and empowering birth experience.
- Improving child health and development through education and referrals.
- Connecting expectant parents to support services to promote the provision of loving, responsible and competent care.
- Directly providing economic and concrete supports to families.

These investments increase the scale and effectiveness of pregnancy support services for women and their families and promote standards of care.

# MOMS Providers and Geographical Regions Served

In FY2026, Iowa HHS provided oversight to the eleven nonprofit organizations, (MOMS Providers). Four of these agencies started contracting with Iowa HHS in January 2026, expanding the program's statewide service capacity. Additionally, two MOMS Providers partnered through subcontracting arrangements with MOMS mission-oriented agencies to extend their reach into additional counties and ensure more Iowa mothers have access to needed supports.



All MOMS Providers are required to:

- Offer **non-therapeutic peer support for pregnancy decisions**;
- Use only **Agency-approved, medically accurate educational tools**;

- Make appropriate referrals to licensed medical professionals for any medical services needed, as MOMS Providers are prohibited from providing medical care
- Maintain **confidential and secure client records**; and
- Ensure that families without a safe place for an infant to sleep are provided with a **crib or other safe sleeping environment** in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) safe sleep recommendations.

Beyond these core requirements, each provider tailors social support services to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve.

## Program Expenditures

The MOMS Program entered FY2026 with a balance of \$1,632,657 with no additional State appropriation. MOMS program expenditures for FY2026 totaled \$1,026,246. Of this, \$906,640 was expended by the eleven MOMS providers and \$139,546 used to support program administration and oversight. The remaining balance of \$586,120 will carry forward into FY2027.

### Direct Services Expenditures

In FY2026, the eleven MOMS Providers invested more than **\$580,000** directly into services and supports for families. These expenditures reflect a balanced approach that addresses both immediate material needs and longer-term family stability. By funding these vital social services, Iowa is investing in stabilizing families before they require intensive, high-cost state intervention. Importantly, these amounts include the professional staff time required to deliver services such as counseling, parenting education, and classes — ensuring families receive consistent, high-quality support.

The MOMS Program is designed as an upstream, prevention-focused initiative. By connecting families to stable housing, safe sleep equipment, parenting education, and non-therapeutic support during pregnancy and postpartum, the program helps reduce the likelihood that families will require more intensive and costly state interventions later.

### Education and Parenting Support (\$309,751)

The largest area of investment, providing parents with nonjudgmental support while also providing the skills and resources to raise healthy children and strengthen family relationships. Expenditures include staff time for program delivery and the purchase of evidence-based curricula. Individual and group settings offered relational support during pregnancy and postpartum, with costs including the professional staff time required to

provide these services. MOMS providers held both individual and group sessions on topics such as healthy pregnancy, childbirth preparation, safe sleep, and infant care.

Research consistently shows that evidence-informed parenting programs help reduce risks associated with child maltreatment and improve long-term family functioning. MOMS Providers delivered these services to over **3,200 parents statewide**, helping families build the skills needed to safely care for their children.

### Doula services (\$32,151)

A new programmatic addition to the MOMS framework this fiscal year, deployed via two pilot providers. This funding supports comprehensive, non-medical birth and postpartum doula services to stabilize high-risk pregnancies and improve maternal adjustment. Vetted doulas provide essential emotional stability, non-clinical pain-management coaching, and labor navigation, while serving as a collaborative bridge between the mother and her licensed healthcare team. Postpartum home visits focus on newborn care training, non-medical home stabilization, lactation support, and targeted health and safety screenings. This targeted pilot provided intensive, dual-phase (birth and postpartum) support to **20 unique Iowa families**. This establishes a programmatic baseline of **\$1,607.55 per mother**.

### 24/7 Nurse Chat (\$52,344)

Around-the-clock virtual counseling and referral support, ensuring families across Iowa have immediate access to non-therapeutic options counseling and guidance when concerns arise. This service helps parents avoid unnecessary emergency department visits for non-urgent questions, improving access to timely, appropriate information.

### Economic and concrete supports (\$111,018)

Targeted assistance for families in need, including safe sleep equipment, clothing, diapers, and other essential items. Providing these essential items allows MOMS Providers to stabilize families quickly. **Over 3,000 families** received material assistance in FY2026, helping reduce financial stress and promote infant safety. Ensuring that infants have a safe sleep environment directly supports public health goals and reduces risks associated with unsafe sleep conditions. This results in a **per-family cost of \$37.01**.

### Child care (\$12,123)

Provided during classes and appointments, ensuring parents could participate without interruption. Low-income and single parents frequently cite lack of child care as the **primary reason for missing appointments or dropping out of educational programs**. Multiple MOMS agencies address this barrier by providing on-site, short-term childcare. The **\$12,123** spent on short-term child care protects the state's larger

investments in counseling and education (\$309,751). Providing on-site supervision ensures high class-completion rates, maximizing the impact of every other dollar spent by the state.

### Housing support (\$9,847)

Immediate crisis assistance for low-income families facing unsafe, unstable, or immediate eviction situations. Short-term housing stabilization prevents families from entering into homelessness during pregnancy and early parenting, a period of heightened vulnerability. By assisting families with urgent housing needs, MOMS Providers help prevent crises that could otherwise escalate into costly child welfare involvement or negative maternal and infant health outcomes.

### Outreach (\$53,642)

Activities to help families learn about and access MOMS services across Iowa. The **\$53,642** invested in outreach ensures that at-risk expectant mothers are identified and connected to support systems early in their pregnancies. Across the entire program footprint, this line item engaged and connected a total of **7,292 participants** (5,697 women and 1,595 men) to vital stabilization and education resources. This yields a programmatic routing cost of **\$7.36 per participant connection**.

## Program Infrastructure, Subcontracts, and Indirect Delivery

This allocation funds the foundational network infrastructure, regional subcontracts, and indirect operating costs required to maintain service compliance and delivery capacity across Iowa's eleven prime providers.

### Expanding Direct Service Footprint via Subcontracts

A significant portion of these funds directly flows to local subcontractors who provide specialized, frontline family supports. Utilizing established community subcontracts allows the MOMS program to instantly scale up its service footprint, reaching specialized or underserved populations without requiring the state to build duplicative local centers from scratch.

### Maximizing Operational and Audit Compliance

Managing a state-wide social service program requires strict adherence to Iowa HHS guidelines, data tracking, and fiscal accountability. This funding secures the necessary administrative personnel, secure data logging systems, and operational oversight at the

provider level, ensuring that public funds are verified, audited, and spent in strict accordance with the program's non-medical mandate.

## Stretching Local Service Capacity

By funding the core operational overhead (such as intake staff, volunteer management systems, and facility costs), this budget line provides the stability necessary for local providers to open their doors. This secure infrastructure acts as the platform that allows centers to focus entirely on executing high-volume counseling, material distribution, and parenting education classes.

## Agency Administrative Costs

Agency costs associated with administering the MOMS Program totaled **\$139,546**, broken down as follows:

- **\$139,387** for salary and fringe of the program administrator;
- **\$159** for travel, communications, printing, and postage.

## Clients Served

In FY2026, the MOMS Program served 5,697 women and 1,595 men statewide through local offices, in-home visits, and virtual education services. There were an additional 966 women served through the 24/7 Nurse Chat. This multi-access model ensured that families in both urban and rural communities were able to participate in services.

## Demographics

- **Age:** The majority of clients were **20–34 years old**, with additional participation from both younger teens and parents over 40. This reflects the program's ability to support families at many stages of life.
- **Fathers Engaged:** The number of fathers who accessed services this fiscal year more than doubled from last year. This demonstrates meaningful involvement of fathers in parenting and family support.
- **Nurse Chat Users:** Demographic data is not collected for the 966 women who accessed the 24/7 Nurse Chat.

## Outcomes

MOMS providers delivered a comprehensive array of services designed to support healthy pregnancies, strong families, and long-term stability. Through individualized education, concrete resources, and relational support, MOMS agencies helped expectant and new parents build knowledge, confidence, and the stability needed to thrive.

## Services Delivered

MOMS agencies provided holistic, evidence-informed services that addressed both immediate needs and long-term wellbeing. Core services included:

- **Comprehensive pregnancy and parenting education** provided to over **3,200 Iowa parents**.
- **Concrete supports** such as infant clothing, safe sleep equipment, housing assistance, and transportation resources provided to over **3,000 families**;
- Family stability services including **budgeting, life skills, and employment support**;
- Emotional and relational support for stress management, family dynamics, and for families experiencing miscarriage or infant loss.

## Education Topics

MOMS Providers delivered parenting education via multiple different formats. From in person education classes, live virtual classes, to self-paced online learning platforms, MOMS agencies provided education services to over 3,000 Iowans.

Education topics:

- Nutrition Education (prenatal, during breastfeeding, postpartum and on)
- Safe Sleep
- Breastfeeding Education
- Healthy Pregnancy, Childbirth, Comfort in Labor
- Newborn Care
- Car seat Safety
- Stress Management
- Conflict: Mastering Communication

- Early Brain Development
- Stable Parent, Stable Home
- Child and Infant CPR
- Financial Literacy

## Referrals Made

MOMS providers are required to refer clients to medical services when necessary. MOMS providers also refer clients to other beneficial social services if they are not provided in-house. In SFY26, MOMS providers connected clients to health and community resources, including:

- **751** to receive pregnancy testing
- **544** to ultrasound services
- **508** to prenatal care
- **418** to receive additional material items
- **375** to testing for sexually transmitted infections
- **184** to adoption education and planning services
- **161** to clinical mental health services
- **157** to housing assistance
- **127** to substance use disorder services
- **75** to employment support

## Building for the Future

FY2026 outcomes highlight the program's reach and accessibility across Iowa counties. The Agency's long-term goal is to establish multiple MOMS Providers in each of the Iowa HHS districts, creating more access to services statewide and ensuring that families in rural and underserved areas are reached.

## Testimonials

"A client came to use our services because she was told she was pregnant in the Emergency Room while being treated for a domestic violence incident. This client was homeless, hungry, but connected with the Domestic Violence shelter when she arrived. We were able to give her snacks and other referrals to help in the moment, in addition

to fetal development education, and encouragement to pursue healthy relationships. Client said that she was in treatment for a substance abuse disorder and this pregnancy gave her hope to continue the positive changes she is making. Client has since attended session 1 of our Healthy Pregnancy Class series and is scheduled to continue. We look forward to continuing the support that she needs in her pregnancy and recovery.” - **Pregnancy Resources**

**Program Impact:** This story highlights how MOMS providers connect pregnant clients experiencing violence, homelessness, or substance use with immediate resources and ongoing education to support safer, healthier pregnancies.

“A non-traditional client came in because her daughter is incarcerated and she has been given custody of her grandchild to keep the baby out of the foster care system. This woman found our Active Parenting class series and has completed 6 of the 8 sessions in the last two months. She is learning to earn a size appropriate car seat for her grandchild. She has also utilized Bella's Boutique and had access to much needed infant/toddler clothing as she adjusts to life with this little one. Being in community seems to have given this client encouragement.” - **Pregnancy Resources**

**Program Impact:** This story demonstrates how MOMS funding empowers caregivers—traditional or not—with education, resources, and community support to ensure children remain safe, supported, and out of foster care.

“A returning birth mother returned to our agency seeking support and adoption planning services. She shared she and the birth father were interested in making an adoption plan for their child and were hopeful the child could be placed with their biological sibling who was placed two years prior. Due to the openness the birth family and adoptive family had with one another the two already agreed to placement of the child. After the baby was born, the adoptive family and birth family, along with many extended family members were there to welcome the new baby. It was beautiful to see the trust the birth family has in the adoptive family and the love and acceptance the adoptive family has for the birth family.” - **Bethany Christian Services**

**Program Impact:** This story highlights how MOMS funding helps ensure birth families receive respectful, informed support during adoption planning, promoting stability, trust, and healthy relationships for everyone involved.