
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2027

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2026



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

Empower Rural Iowa Program

Purpose and History

In 2018, Governor Reynolds created the [Empower Rural Iowa](#) (ERI) initiative through [Executive Order 3](#), organizing three task forces (Investing in Rural Iowa, Growing Rural Iowa, and Connecting Rural Iowa) to study issues affecting Iowa's rural economies and to make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly. 2019 Iowa Acts, chapter [159](#) (Empower Rural Iowa Act), created incentives for the ERI initiative within the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) to support Iowa's rural economies. The Center for Rural Revitalization, housed within the IEDA, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the ERI Program.

Funding

The ERI has received an annual \$700,000 Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund (SWJCF) appropriation since funding began in 2021 Iowa Acts, chapter [171](#) (FY 2022 Economic Development Appropriations Act).

Prior to the creation of the ERI appropriation, a \$300,000 appropriation was made for FY 2020 from the SWJCF for the [Rural Innovation Grant Program](#) to support innovative rural projects in 2019 Iowa Acts, chapter [154](#) (FY 2020 Economic Development Appropriations Act). A \$100,000 SWJCF appropriation was also made in the Act for the [Rural Housing Assessment Grant Program](#) to provide small communities with data and housing-related information specific to the community being analyzed.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code sections [8.57J](#), [8.91](#), [15.354](#), and [15.355](#)
Iowa Administrative Code [261—28](#), [261—29](#), and [261—30](#)

Budget Unit Number

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More Information

Empower Rural Iowa: opportunityiowa.gov/community/revitalization/center-rural-revitalization
Iowa Economic Development Authority: opportunityiowa.gov
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