



6450 Corporate Drive
P.O. Box 6450
Johnston, IA 50131
800.532.1290 | iowapbs.org

Capital Requests for FY2026 = \$7,855,800
FY2027 = \$4,686,600

Overview: Iowa PBS has developed a strategic plan for the ongoing maintenance of and/or the replacement of equipment and systems at the network's studios and transmission facilities. The primary objective of this plan is to ensure that mission-critical systems are properly maintained and updated to prevent catastrophic failures and prolonged loss of service to Iowans. This includes the essential role Iowa PBS transmission equipment plays in public safety emergency alerting, including tornado, flash flooding or thunderstorm warnings and amber alerts. The secondary objective is to assure that Iowa PBS's broadcast infrastructure evolves with new technology advancement meeting industry standards to continue delivery of the high quality and reliable broadcast service valued by Iowans. These new standards will further enable not only next generation video broadcasts but a next generation warning system prioritized by FEMA for public safety alerting. Currently, Iowa PBS broadcast towers transmit all FEMA IPAWS emergency alerts to cellular towers and later mobile devices including tornado warnings, thunderstorm warnings, flash flood warnings, Amber alerts, and even local boil orders for Iowa communities.

Current Equipment Priorities: Iowa PBS seeks approximately \$7.85 million in FY26 to replace its 53 year-old broadcast transmission tower and aging equipment at KDIN in Polk County. This request represents the first of a 2-year plan to replace the transmitter and transmission lines, antenna, and the broadcast tower for KDIN. KDIN is the broadcast signal serving all of central Iowa.

While Iowa PBS urgently needs to replace seven broadcast transmitters across Iowa in the next five years, KDIN is the current priority because it serves the largest geographic area and the largest number of households in the state, as well as provides the broadcast feed that serves the remaining transmitters in the statewide network. Existing equipment for KDIN has long passed its life expectancy and is no longer supported by the manufacturer or the manufacturer has gone out of business. Replacement parts for the existing equipment are no longer manufactured or sold. Transmitter replacement requires specialized equipment and personnel and long lead times for procurement of materials, emphasizing the need for immediate action to avoid prolonged loss of service when a failure occurs.

FCC Timeline: The Federal Communications Commission has set a permit deadline of November 2026 for Iowa PBS to move to a new UHF signal at KDIN. This change will enable enhanced signal penetration for Iowa PBS services on mobile devices as we transition to next generation broadcasting. But, meeting this FCC deadline requires infrastructure investment.

First step in a larger plan: As Iowa's only statewide broadcast network, Iowa PBS is uniquely positioned to protect and enhance its services beyond populated cities to existing infrastructure in Iowa's rural regions. The FY26 request would fund a 2,000 foot tower replacement and is the largest single infrastructure expense in the 5-year Iowa PBS transmitter replacement plan. The current tower cannot support any additional weight necessary to transition to updated technologies. In addition to multiple broadcast antennas, this tower also supports public safety communications equipment vital to emergency alerting and to county and state public safety employees.



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Public safety alerting and utility savings: A replacement transmitter will be capable of operating the current ATSC .1 broadcast standard and switching to the new ATSC .3 (NextGen) standard in the future. The Next Generation standard is a priority for FEMA due to enhanced public safety alerting of ongoing natural disasters. Iowa PBS' statewide broadcast towers currently transmit all FEMA IPAWS alerts to cellular towers and later mobile devices including tornado warnings, thunderstorm warnings, flash flood warnings, Amber alerts, and even local boil orders for Iowa communities. These alerts are embedded within the Iowa PBS statewide broadcast signal that reaches all 99 counties of Iowa. ATSC 3.0 technology will enable further enhancement of public safety alerting as prioritized by FEMA.

New transmitter equipment will perform more efficiently with less electricity, and require less cooling, reducing utility costs for the entire transmitter facility. Initial findings from the recently replaced transmitters in Council Bluffs and Davenport observe utility savings of nearly half the electricity used in prior summer months.

Year 2 of the replacement plan includes a request for approximately \$4.68 million to purchase a replacement transmitter, antenna and transmission line plus installation at the KDIN site.

Therefore, Iowa PBS respectfully requests \$7,855,800 in FY 2026 for the replacement of the broadcast tower at KDIN.