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Saturday, Feb. 5, 2022

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Final state emergency proclamation issued

On Thursday, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed the final extension of the state's public health disaster emergency proclamation, which will expire at 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15.

The full proclamation can be found [HERE](#).

Key provisions remaining in the proclamation under the Health Care System Regulatory Relief that will expire on Feb. 15 include:

- Certificate of need and exceeding bed capacity.
- Consistency between state law and federal waivers.
- Licensure for physicians and medical professionals licensed outside of Iowa.
- Requirements for hospitals to complete a criminal background check before employing someone, allowing individuals to still begin working at a hospital while the background check is being processed.
- Suspending the requirement for the repayment or reduction of a public employee's IPERS benefit if the employee is reemployed or returns to employment during the disaster emergency.
- Tuberculosis screenings.

Through the last 23 months, IHA advocated for the continuation of the emergency proclamation. IHA is assessing the impact of the proclamation expiring and is in regular communication with the governor's office and state regulatory agencies to ensure awareness of the hospital environment and will continue to advocate for their support.

Email [Erin Cubit](#) at IHA with questions.



Week four summary

The IHA Advocacy team was busy during the fourth week of the 2022 session as the team attended more than 20 committee meetings. The Iowa House also had their first floor debate of the year on a bill unrelated to health care.

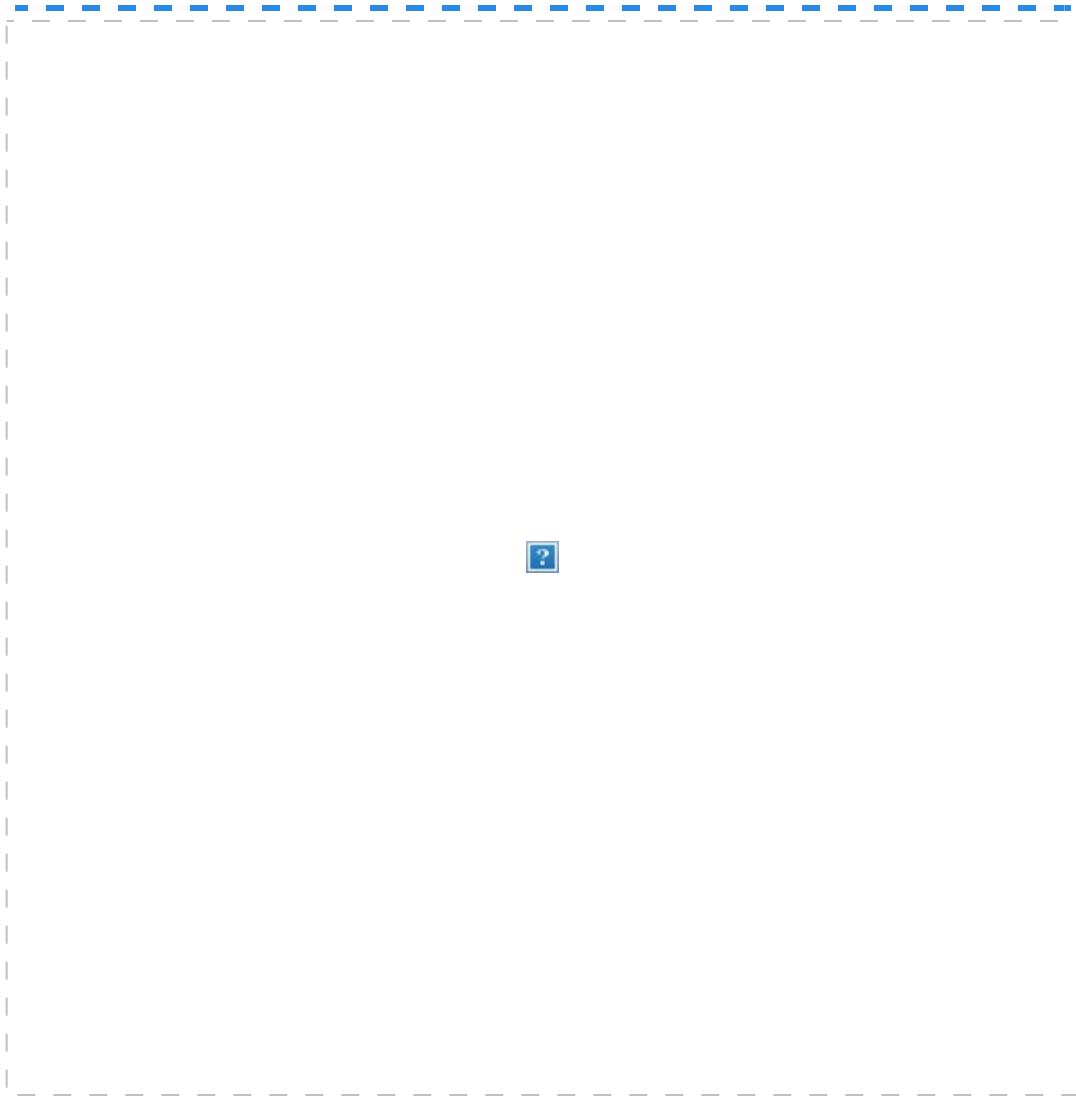
The much-anticipated tort reform bill, [House File 2279](#), was introduced this week. It passed through both the subcommittee and Labor Committee, making it funnel-proof. This bill includes sections about unemployment benefits and commercial vehicle (trucking) tort reform. The Senate version of the bill, [Senate Study Bill 3093](#), will have a subcommittee on Tuesday and the IHA advocacy team will continue to provide updates as this bill progresses. An [action alert for HF 2279](#) will be sent today, and IHA encourages our members to reach out to their legislators to keep tort reform moving forward. To sign up for IHA action alerts, click [HERE](#).

IHA extends a special thank you to IHA board members Kevin Kincaid, chief executive officer of [Knoxville Hospital and Clinics](#), and David Stark, chief executive officer of [UnityPoint Health-Des Moines](#), for speaking about the essential benefits tort reform would have for Iowa hospitals.

A bill about experimental treatments for terminally ill patients also advanced this week. [House File 2203](#) passed the Human Resources Committee last week, and the companion bill, [Senate File 2117](#), passed subcommittee this week. The bill would allow experimental treatments and the prescription of off-label drugs, such as ivermectin, for both terminally ill patients and patients on ventilators. The IHA

advocacy team registered against this bill because of concerns about the liability this may create for hospitals and health care providers. IHA also is working with the Iowa Medical Society and legislators to add an amendment that would protect hospitals.

Lastly, a bill increasing the reimbursement for substance use disorder treatment for critical access hospitals, [House File 2101](#), also held a subcommittee this week. Legislators decided to hold making decisions about this legislation until a fiscal note from the Department of Human Services is submitted, at which time, they will revisit the issue. IHA thanks Linn Block and Taya Vonnahme from [Manning Regional Healthcare Center](#) and Sandra Christensen from [MercyOne](#) for coming to the Capitol to share the impact of this bill.



Legislation on the move

*Indicates a bill is funnel-proof

*[HF 2246](#)

What the bill does: Provisionally licenses interns enrolled in doctoral degree programs in psychology.

Sponsor: [Joel Fry](#) (R-Osceola) and [Ann Meyer](#) (R-Fort Dodge).

Committee: House Human Resources.

Status: Passed out of full committee.

IHA position: IHA supports efforts to expand the health care workforce and initiatives that will increase access to behavioral health care.

[*HF 2245](#)

What the bill does: Prohibits certain health carriers from excluding certain out-of-state health care professionals from participating as providers, by telehealth, under the carriers' policies, plans and contracts, and includes effective date and applicability provisions.

Sponsor: [Joel Fry](#) (R-Osceola).

Committee: House Human Resources.

Status: Passed out of full committee.

IHA position: IHA is monitoring the status of this bill to learn about the potential impact for hospitals.

[*HSB 123](#)

What the bill does: Provides fees for midwife licensure and makes penalties applicable.

Sponsor: [Bobby Kaufmann](#) (R-Wilton).

Committee: House State Government.

Status: Passed out of full committee.

IHA position: IHA has concerns about this bill and is continuing to speak with legislators about the quality and safety of this licensure.

[*SSB 2195](#)

What the bill does: Establishes the mental health professional loan repayment program within the college student aid commission.

Sponsor: [Amy Sinclair](#) (R-Allerton).

Committee: Senate Education.

Status: Passed out of full committee.

IHA position: IHA supports efforts to expand the health care workforce and initiatives that will increase access to behavioral health care.

[*HF 2248](#)

What the bill does: Relates to the information given by a health care provider as part of a referral of a patient to an ambulatory surgical center and provides for license discipline.

Sponsor: [Bobby Kaufmann](#) (R-Wilton).

Committee: House State Government.

Status: Passed out of full committee.

IHA position: IHA is monitoring the status of this bill.



Legislative forums scheduled

Meeting with legislators while they're in their home districts is a great way to advocate for issues hospital advocates care about. Check the list below of legislative events for the next two weeks. Some are in person, and those that are virtual include the event link.

Saturday, Feb. 12

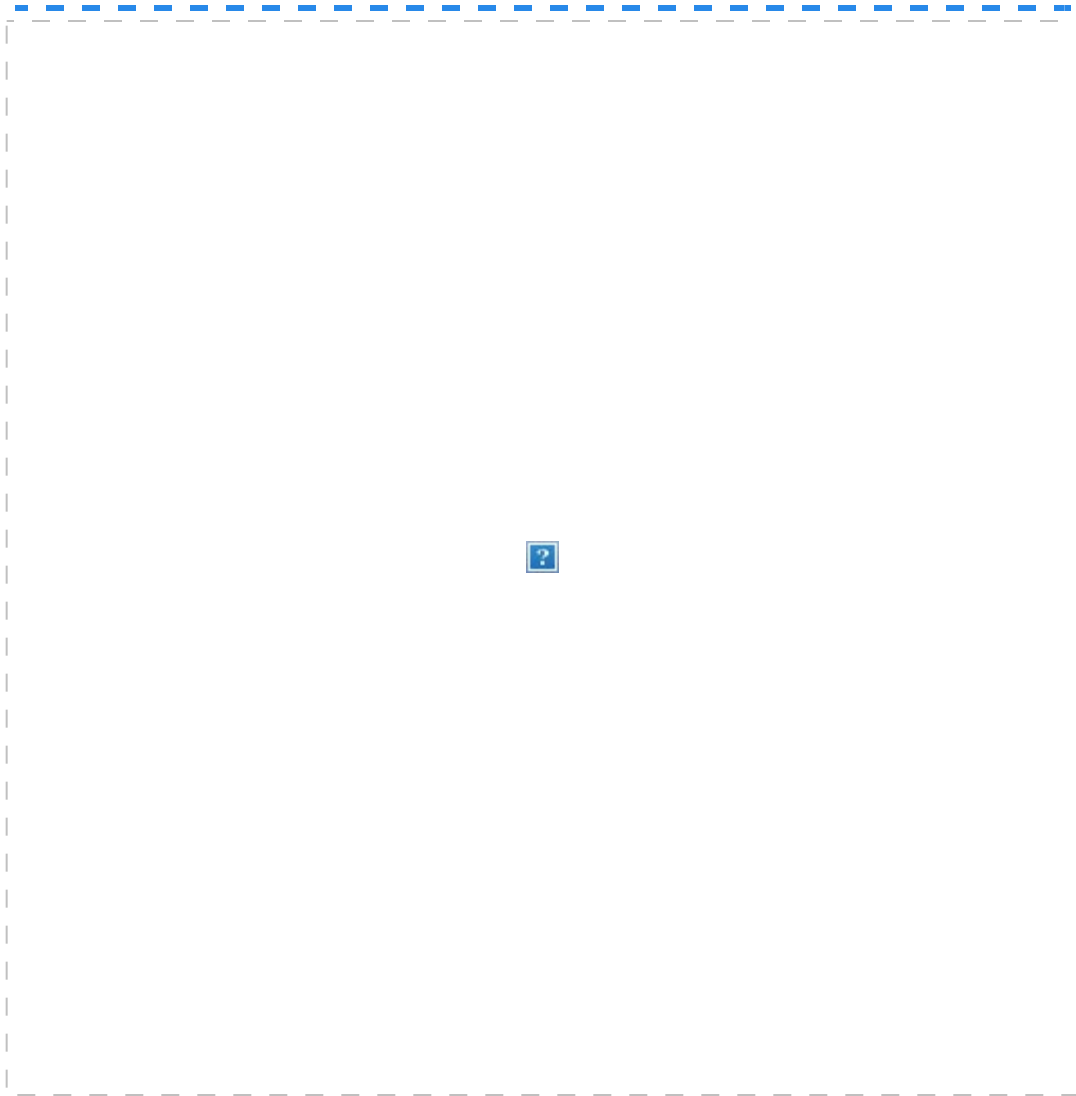
- 8-9 a.m. | Creston Legislative Forum, Creston City Hall.
- 8:30-9:30 a.m. | Oskaloosa Eggs and Issues Forum, Smokey Row Coffee.
- 9-10:30 a.m. | Virtual Des Moines Legislative Coffee, [virtual link](#).
- 9-10 a.m. | Plainfield Legislative Town Hall, Plainfield Public Library Community Room.
- 10-11 a.m. | Corning Legislative Forum, Corning Public Library.
- 10-11 a.m. | Denison Legislative Forum, Bake Shop and Hollywood Café.
- 11 a.m.-noon | Frederika Legislative Town Hall, Frederika Community Center Community Room.

Friday, Feb 18

- 2-3:15 p.m. | Iowa City Legislative Forum, North Liberty Police Department.
- 7:30-9 a.m. | Burlington Eggs and Issues Forum, Greater Burlington Partnership.

Saturday, Feb 19

- 9-10:30 a.m. | Spencer Legislative Forum, Spencer City Hall, Council Chambers.
- 9-10 a.m. | Janesville Town Hall, Janesville City Hall.
- 10-11 a.m. | Carroll Legislative Forum, location TBD.
- 10 a.m.-noon | Washington Legislative Briefing, Washington County Courthouse.
- 10:30 a.m.-noon | Bettendorf Legislative Forum, Lulac Club or [virtual link](#).
- 11 a.m.-noon | Tripoli Town Hall, Tripoli Library.

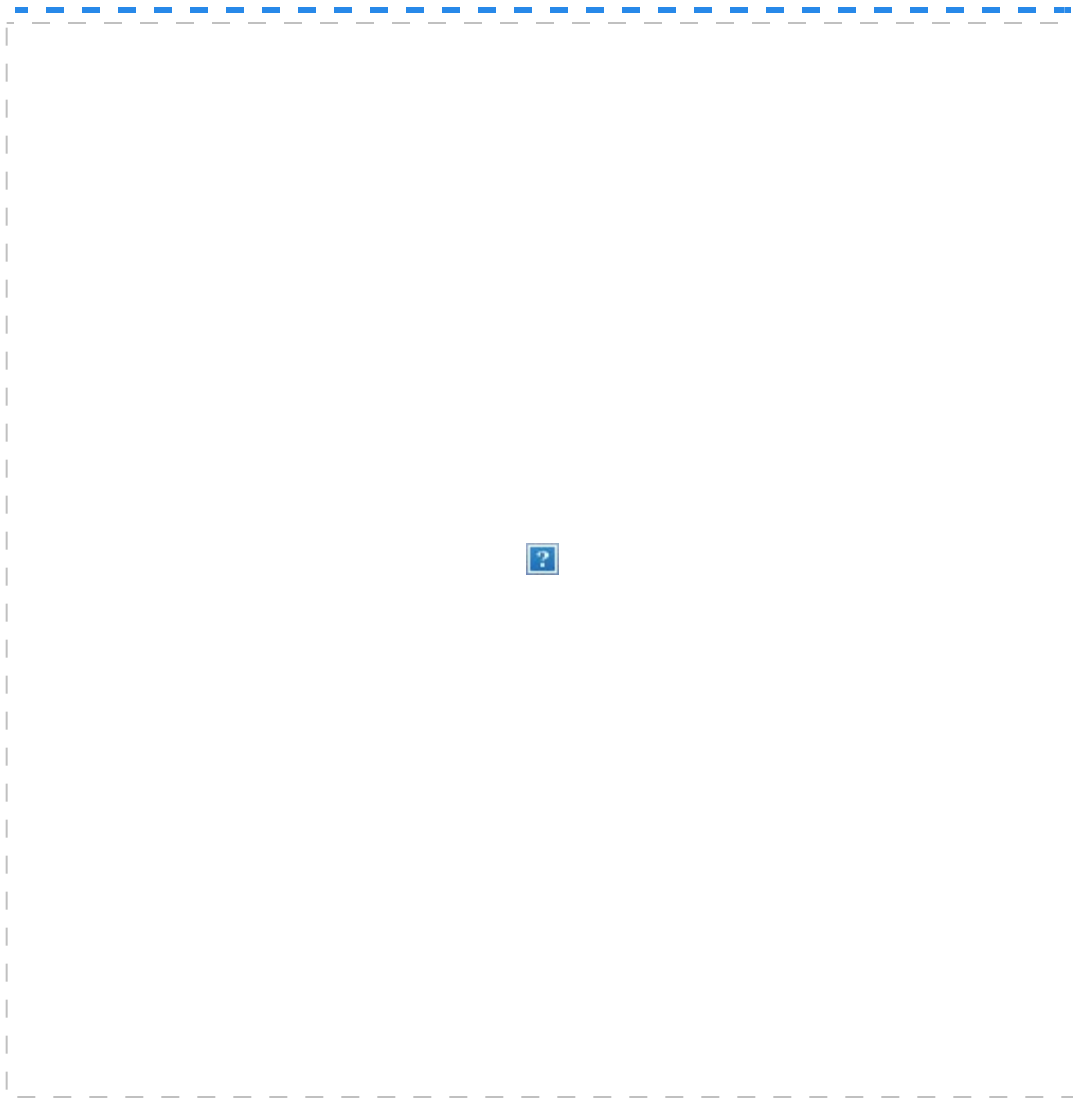


How to stay in the know

Through the 2022 legislative session, IHA has different ways to keep you informed. Stay tuned through the weekly editions of Legislative Bulletin, biweekly Capitol Update, IHA's Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn account. IHA also will mobilize hospital advocates through VoterVoice Action Alerts when legislators need to hear from you about hospital issues. Advocates can sign up for email or text message VoterVoice Action Alerts [HERE](#).

Remember to bookmark these links:

- [Facebook page](#)
- [IHA's bill tracker](#)
- [Legislator contact information](#)
- [LinkedIn account](#)
- [Twitter account](#)



2021 IHA PAC annual report available

As the 2022 legislative session heats up, it's important to look back on the 2021 legislative session. IHA members helped advance multiple legislative priorities for Iowa hospitals including:

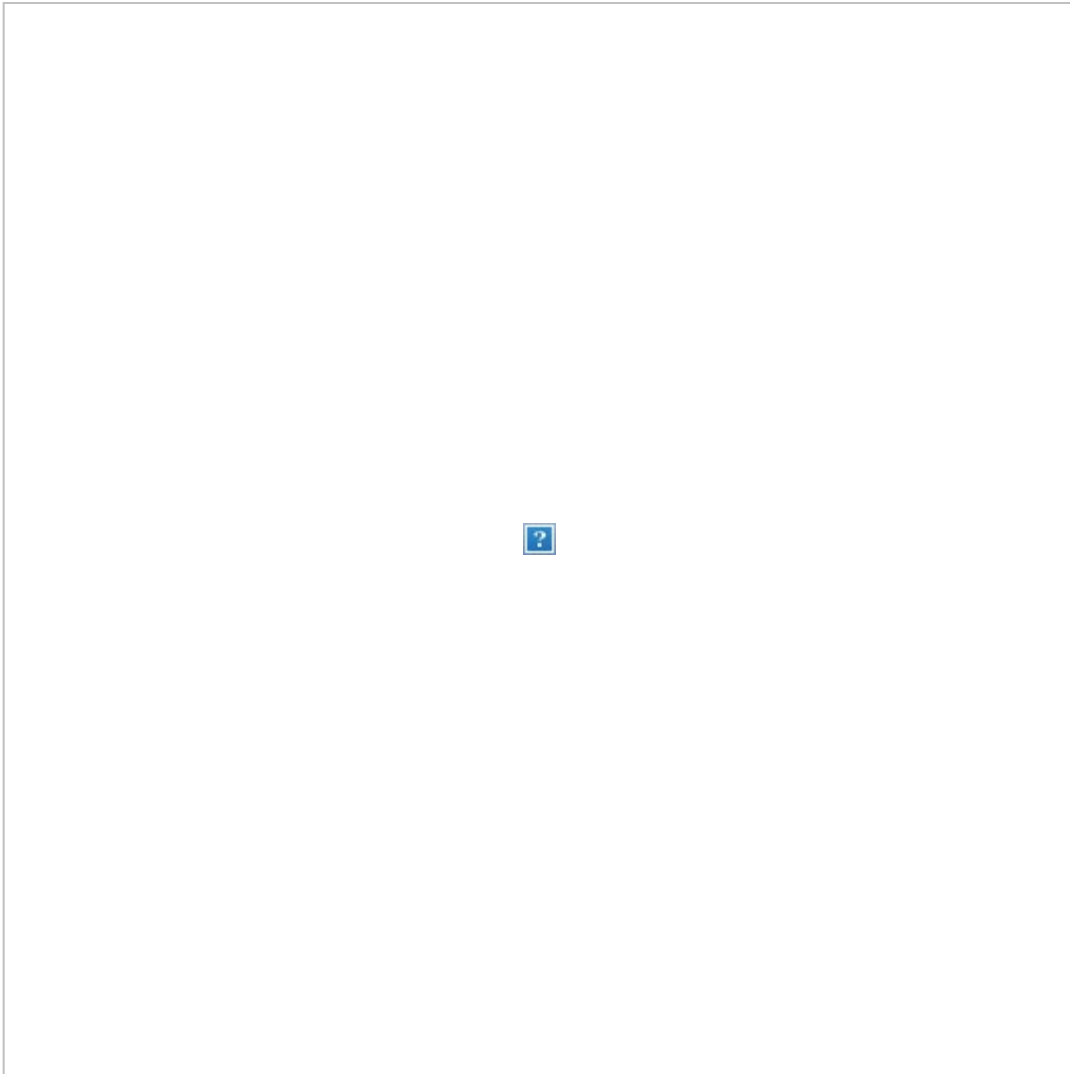
- Workforce recruitment and retention funding.
- Emergency medical services funding.
- Funding for behavioral health services.
- Payment parity for mental health services delivered by telehealth.
- Permanent changes to hospital trustee elections.
- Preserving Iowa's certificate-of-need program.

The success of IHA's advocacy is thanks in part to the IHA PAC. A robust PAC ensures Iowa hospitals have a voice at the statehouse. Even in the second year of

the COVID-19 pandemic, the IHA PAC was strong with:

- \$115,649 in total contributions.
- 409 individual contributions representing 93 hospitals.
- 19 hospitals meeting or exceeding their hospital goals.

Check out 2021 campaign highlights and contributions by clicking [HERE](#).



Tune in for part 2 of IHA's first episode of Keeping Connected

Chris Mitchell, president and CEO of the Iowa Hospital Association, gave an update of IHA's 2022 legislative priorities in the first part of the inaugural Keeping Connected With IHA podcast last week.

In the second part, Mitchell talks about new and upcoming experiences, including his first Condition of the State address and IHA's virtual Hospital Day on the Hill later this month.

Podcast episodes will be released monthly featuring updates from Mitchell and other IHA staff.

Click [HERE](#) to listen to part 2.

Click [HERE](#) to catch up on part 1.

DMU offers virtual mini medical school

[Des Moines University](#) is offering an annual Mini Medical School series. Billed as a way for anyone to expand their medical knowledge without taking the MCAT, the web series offers five sessions exploring interesting and relevant topics for all audiences aged middle school and up.

Mini Medical School began Feb. 1 and will run through March 1. Upcoming sessions will cover:

- Mental Health Part 1: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Psychosocial Health – Feb. 8.
- Mental Health Part 2: Lifestyle Habits to Combat Depression – Feb. 15.
- Sweets and Your Feet: How Diabetes Affects the Lower Extremities – Feb. 22.
- Everyone's an Athlete, We All Play Differently: Let's Keep You in the Game of Life With Physical Therapy and Sports Performance – March 1.

Classes begin at 7 p.m. and can be livestreamed [HERE](#) or on [DMU's Facebook page](#).

As Iowa faces workforce shortages, the webinar series is a useful resource to introduce students to a career in health care. Members are encouraged to share the Mini Medical School series with their local middle schools and high schools.

There is no cost to attend. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Email [Hanna de Geest](#) at DMU with questions.



COVID-19 reporting webinar slides available

The Iowa Department of Public Health hosted a webinar Wednesday, Feb. 3, to discuss COVID-19 reporting changes after the state public health disaster emergency proclamation expires. IDPH will make the following changes to published data:

- Coronavirus.iowa.gov and Vaccinatelowa.gov websites will be decommissioned.
- COVID-19 prevalence reporting will be available on the IDPH website.
- IDPH will not require long-term care facilities to notify the department when there are three or more infections in residents.
- The vaccine finder tool will no longer be available.
- Weekly reports including positive cases, public health work, resources and vaccine data will be published on the IDPH website starting Feb. 16.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Click [HERE](#) for the webinar slides.

IDPH issues reminder about Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine expiration

information

The Iowa Department of Public Health sent a reminder to health care providers to check shelf life extensions for all Pfizer COVID-19 products:

- Grey and orange vials should not be used after nine months from the date of manufacture printed on the vials and cartons.
- Purple cap vials with an expiration date from September 2021-February 2022 may remain in use for three months beyond the printed date if vials are maintained in approved storage conditions.
- Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5-11 with an orange cap initially distributed is nearing or has met the 10-week beyond-use date.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Medicare to cover over-the-counter COVID-19 tests

The Biden-Harris Administration is expanding its efforts to give Americans access to free COVID-19 tests. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services said people in either original Medicare or Medicare Advantage and all Medicare beneficiaries with Part B can get over-the-counter COVID-19 tests at no cost starting in early spring.

Medicare beneficiaries can access eight over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month through eligible pharmacies and other participating entities. The initiative applies to COVID-19 over-the-counter tests approved or authorized by the Food and Drug Administration.

The new initiative will enable payment from Medicare directly to participating pharmacies and other participating entities to allow Medicare beneficiaries to pick up tests at no cost.

Until the program starts, people with Medicare can access free tests through:

- [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov) for four free over-the-counter tests for home delivery.
- Health care providers at free testing sites. Click [HERE](#) for a list of community-based testing sites.
- Lab-based PCR tests and antigen tests performed by a laboratory when the test is ordered by a physician, non-physician practitioner, pharmacist or other authorized health care professional at no cost.

People with Medicare also can already access one lab-performed test without an order during the public health emergency.

Beneficiaries of Medicare Advantage plans may receive coverage and payment for over-the-counter COVID-19 tests as a supplemental benefit in addition to covering Medicare Part A and Part B. Beneficiaries covered by Medicare Advantage are encouraged to check with their plan to see if the benefit is included.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.

Medicare Advantage COVID-19 vaccine and monoclonal antibody claims reminder

Medicare providers who give COVID-19 vaccines or administer monoclonal antibody treatment to patients enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans on or before Jan. 1, must submit claims to the Medicare Advantage Plan. Original Medicare will not pay these claims.

Click [HERE](#) for information about COVID-19 vaccine billing.

Click [HERE](#) for information about monoclonal antibody infusions.

NewsStand

Iowa news

- [Downtown hospital property sold to developer](#)
- [All-volunteer salon in Des Moines works to empower cancer patients](#)
- [Fighting COVID-19 information fatigue in Iowa](#)

National news

- [COVID-19 deaths are surging in low-vaccination states](#)
- [U.S. may see up to 76,000 more COVID-19 deaths through February](#)
- [Medicare will cover 8 free COVID-19 home tests per month](#)

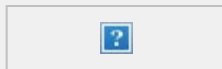
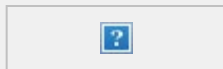
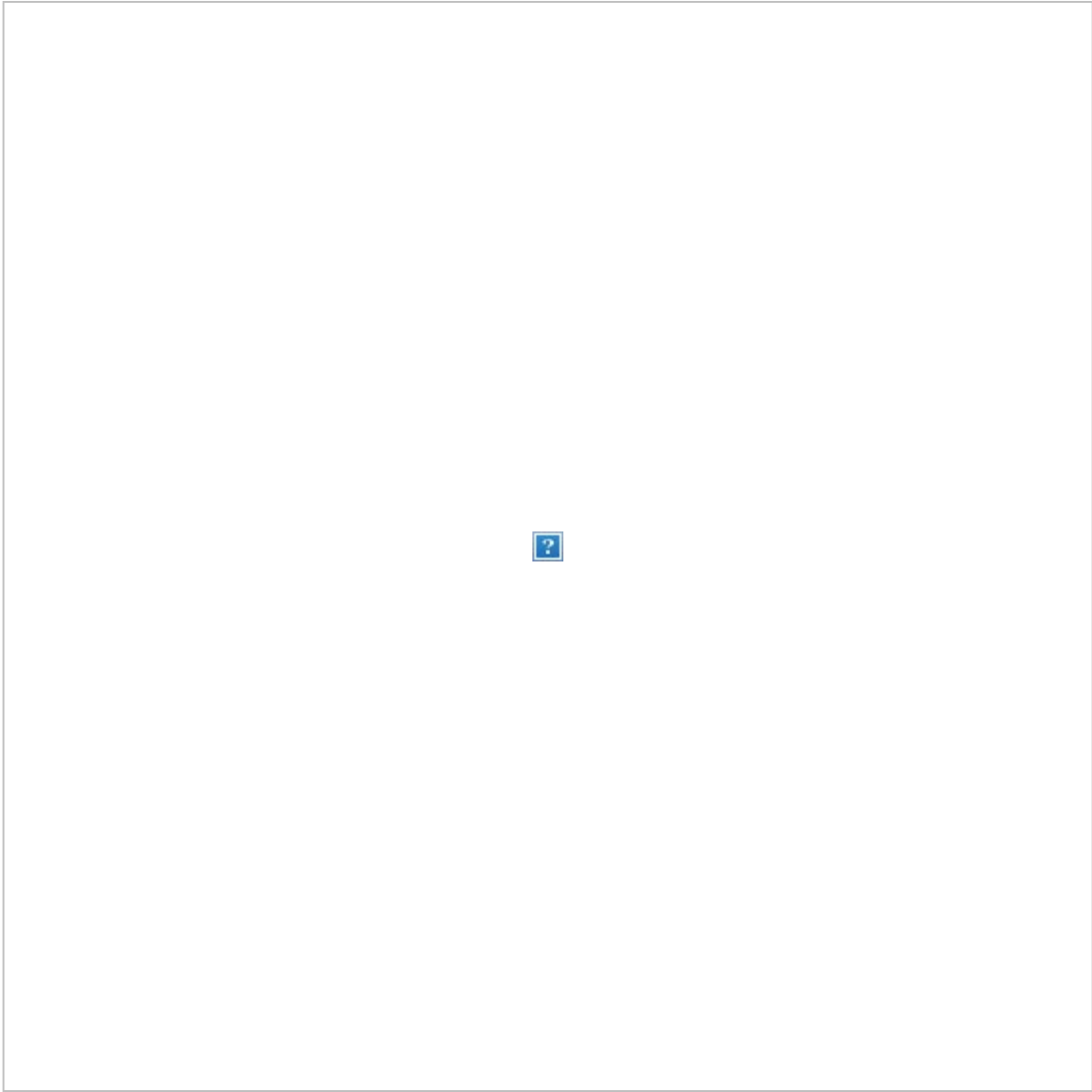
Click [HERE](#) to read daily NewsStand postings.

Upcoming events

- [Critical Access Hospitals' Commonly Cited Deficiencies](#): Tuesday, Feb. 8
 - [National Health Care Safety Network Basic Training](#): Thursday, Feb. 10
 - [Update on Ligature Risks and Suicide Prevention](#): Thursday, Feb. 17
 - [Physician Business Leadership Certification Program](#): Tuesday, Feb. 22 - Tuesday, Aug. 9
 - [Housing as Health Care: Addressing Social Determinants of Health Through Real Estate](#): Tuesday, Feb. 22
 - [The Intersection of DEA, Opioids and Hospital Risk](#): Tuesday, Feb. 22
 - [2022 Virtual Hospital Day on the Hill](#): Wednesday, Feb. 23
 - [Advanced Leadership Academy](#): Wednesday, March 2 - Tuesday, Sept. 20
 - [Iowa Rehab Managers Spring Conference](#): Thursday, March 3
 - [The Art of the Interview](#): Tuesday, March 8
 - [Iowa Hospital Auxilian and Volunteer Conference](#): Wednesday, March 9
 - [Critical Access and Rural Hospital Forum](#): Wednesday, March 23
 - [Understanding Hospital Board and Medical Staff Responsibilities Under Medicare COPs](#): Tuesday, April 12
 - [Iowa Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration Spring Conference](#): Thursday, April 14
 - [IHA Governance Forum](#): Friday, April 22 - Saturday, April 23
 - [Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act \(EMTALA\) Series](#): Wednesday, May 11 - Wednesday, May 25
 - [Workplace Violence Program Workshop](#): Thursday, June 30 - Thursday, Aug. 18
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Hospital jobs site connects hospitals with qualified candidates

Are you looking for qualified health care professionals for your Iowa hospital? [HospitalCareers.com](https://www.hospitalcareers.com) can help. This website connects thousands of nurses, providers and other hospital jobseekers with Iowa hospitals each year and is a main resource for jobseekers looking for work in health care.



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