

In The Know, November 2025



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Construction at the Roosevelt building is coming along pretty well. They expect to be finished this December.



Stacey Coppinger from food pantry very happy to get \$1,248 donated from 100 women of Humboldt county! She can buy so much food from the food bank !!!



In observance of Thanksgiving, UDMO will be closed on Thursday November 27th & Friday November 28th. Enjoy your time with family and friends!



Here is a great picture of Stacey on Facebook accepting this awesome donation!



Legislation & Advocacy

Government Shutdown & Reopening – The 43-day government shutdown created significant challenges for community action agencies nationwide. Despite this, UDMO continued providing high-quality services responsive to community needs.

Throughout the shutdown, UDMO's directors stayed informed through numerous webinars and adhered to funder directives to ensure uninterrupted service delivery. Our administrative team also developed contingency plans in case the shutdown extended beyond December. Regardless of government status, UDMO remains committed to operating in a fiscally responsible manner and providing services as funding allows. We are prepared for future funding delays or potential shutdowns. Directors will continue communicating with staff as needed to ensure continuity of operations.

UDMO Highlights

Head Start – With the government reopened, our primary focus is the Head Start Change of Scope Enrollment Reduction request, originally submitted on May 16, 2025, and revised on June 11, 2025. This submission is still awaiting final review and approval. Due to limited staffing during the shutdown—only one representative per Regional Office—the Office of Head Start prioritized submissions and grant reviews, resulting in delays. OHS has indicated that submissions will now be processed chronologically.

Housing – UDMO was awarded **\$140,251** through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program. ESG funding assists individuals in quickly regaining stable, permanent housing after experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis.

Fort Dodge Facility Search – Continued growth in programming and staffing has prompted the search for a larger facility to support staff serving Webster and surrounding counties.

Estherville Outreach – Construction at the Roosevelt Building in Estherville remains on schedule, with completion anticipated in December 2025.

FEMA – The reimbursement request for damages to UDMO's Spencer Outreach office remains under final review and is awaiting approval.

UDMO Year-End – The Fiscal Department is finalizing the year-end closeout and preparing for the agency audit scheduled for November.

CSBG – The program is completing closeout activities and preparing reports for upcoming county presentations and UDMO's Annual Report.

Employee Visits – Julie is visiting staff across locations to deliver holiday cheer—a small token of appreciation for their dedication to providing the highest quality services.

Facility Walk-Throughs – UDMO's insurance broker is conducting safety walk-throughs of agency facilities to identify and correct potential hazards. The Storm Lake Head Start site was completed in October, and the Spencer Head Start and Outreach locations are scheduled for November.

County Supervisor Visits – Preparations for presenting UDMO's Annual Report to each county are underway. We are slightly behind schedule compared to last year due to the transition to two new data systems. Reports look different from prior years, making year-to-year comparisons more challenging. A positive outcome of the new systems is the ability to begin gathering unduplicated household numbers.

UKG – Behind the scenes, the HR and Fiscal Departments have been working diligently to transition from Paylocity to UKG. This is an extremely demanding process, and we extend sincere thanks to Ashley, Tiffany, and Tyler! This team will also provide staff training on the new system.

LIHEAP – UDMO is actively taking and processing applications to help eligible lowans avoid utility shutoffs through March.

MIECHV – The program has successfully selected three new staff members who are currently onboarding.

1st Five – The program recently had a successful state visit.

Outreach Food Pantries – Demand has increased due to the delay in November SNAP benefits and the government shutdown. As supplies run low, we have been seeking donations and educating communities about the benefits of purchasing through the Food Bank of Iowa. UDMO can purchase food in bulk at significantly reduced prices, making donations stretch further.

UDMO Giving Tuesday – December 2 – Join the worldwide day of giving to support nonprofits, including our Outreach offices. Donations may be delivered to local Outreach Offices or mailed to:

UDMO
101 East Robins
PO Box 519
Graettinger, IA 51342

Upcoming Meetings

Finance Committee Meeting: Tuesday, November 18 at 1:00 PM

Board of Directors Meeting: Tuesday, November 25 at 5:00 PM

HR MONTHLY NEWS

Tiffany Harris-Director

UKG Access is now available for all staff as we begin our testing phase to work through any final tweaks needed. Information has been sent out via e-mail. Support sessions are being scheduled.

OPEN POSITIONS:

Assistant Teacher, Spencer

Teacher (3yr old), Storm Lake

P-T Admin Assistant – CACFP, Central

Home Visitor – Milford, Sheldon, Sibley & Hartley (Western Sites)

FY 25 Employment Data Review (10/1/24-9/30/25):

Employees: 184

Hired: 45

Termed: 49

Turnover Rate: 26.3%





1st Five

HEALTHY MENTAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1ST FIVE YEARS!

Thankful & Blessed for...

1st Five is proud to work alongside our incredible community agency partners.

Your ongoing support and collaboration help us connect families with the resources they need to thrive.

1st Five is grateful for the primary care providers who play a vital role in administering developmental screenings to help identify potential milestone delays in young children at 9, 18, & 30 months.

Your referrals to 1st Five ensure families receive trusted support, resource connections, and full-circle communication.
Helping every child thrive with 1st Five!

1st Five is honored to be trusted by families as we support them in advocating for their needs and connecting them to resources to enhance their growth & well-being.



Celebrating our 1st Five: Referring Clinics & Providers (from July 1, 2025 - October 31, 2025)

CSA 1 Served By:
Teresa Ball, 1st Five Site Coordinator
Kristi Radtke
1st Five Developmental Support Specialist

CSA4 Served By:
Meredith Mickelson, 1st Five Site Coordinator
Karhyn Alcantara & Lori Price,
1st Five Developmental Support Specialists

Clay County:

- **Avera Medical Group (Spencer)**
 - Dr. Luke DeJong, MD
 - Dr. Amy Jochims, DO
 - Dr. Teresa Studer, MD
 - Dr. Yelena Thomas, DO
 - Sarah Walker-Loring, ARNP
 - Briana Wetrich, PA-C
 - Dr. Travis Witt, MD

Dickinson County:

- **Hicks Family Healthcare**
 - Jamie Hicks, ARNP

Emmet County:

- **Avera Medical Group (Estherville)**
 - Denver Splinter, ARNP
 - Dr. Lorraine Tangen, MD
 - Angie Yates-Wycoff, DNP

O'Brien County:

- **Sanford Medical Center (Sheldon)**
 - Courtney Stiens, PA-C
 - Samantha Walters, APRN, CNP
 - Dr. Amy Wingert, MD
- **MercyOne (Primghar)**
 - Bridget Doeden, ARNP

Osceola County:

- **Avera Medical Group (Sibley)**
 - Nathan Peters, NP

Palo Alto County:

- **Palo Alto County Health System (Emmetsburg)**
 - Dr. Daunyle Sporra, DO

Hamilton County:

- **Iowa Specialty Clinic (Webster City)**
 - Kari Patten, ARNP
 - Fawn Roberts, ARNP
 - Dr. Alice Meng, MD
- **Van Diest Family Medicine (Webster City)**
 - Giselle Allred, ARNP

Hardin County:

- **McFarland Clinic (Iowa Falls)**
 - Dr. Laura Brunsen, MD
 - Andrea Bartling, PA-C
 - Dr. Aaron Heiar, DO
- **UnityPoint Family Medicine (Eldora)**
 - Sophie Calonkey, PA-C

Humboldt County:

- **UnityPoint Family Medicine (Humboldt)**
 - Brittney Peters, ARNP

Webster County:

- **Community Health Center (Fort Dodge)**
 - Lisa Chase, NP
 - Tayler Rasch, ARNP
 - Jessica Doolittle, ARNP
- **UnityPoint Pediatrics (Fort Dodge)**
 - Molly Schilling, ARNP
 - Dr. Jennifer Jensen, MD
- **UnityPoint Family Medicine-Kenyon (Fort Dodge)**
 - Ashley Ulsh, ARNP

Wright County:

- **Iowa Specialty Clinic (Clarion)**
 - Dr. Andrea McLoughlin, MD
 - Naarah Hauenstein, PA-C
- **UnityPoint Family Medicine (Eagle Grove)**
 - Charity Hayes, ARNP
 - Dr. Dustin Smith, MD

To learn more about 1st Five's free resource care coordination

Teresa Ball, 1st Five Coordinator CSA1

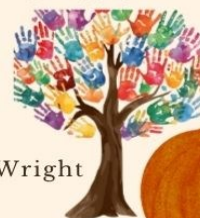
Ph: (712) 298-6751 | tball@udmo.com

Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, O'Brien, Osceola & Palo Alto

Meredith Mickelson, 1st Five Coordinator CSA4

Ph: (712) 298-6292 | mmickelson@udmo.com

Calhoun, Hamilton, Hardin, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster & Wright



Kyle Dietrich– Weatherization Director



“Weatherization Report for October 2025”

Number of Families Served in October 2025: 10

Number of Families Served in FY 2025: 100

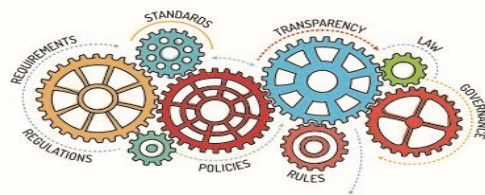
Goal for 2025: 110 Homes

Weatherization Update:

The Weatherization Department successfully met our October goal with the completion of 10 homes. Despite the ongoing changes happening at the federal level, our program remains in a strong position moving forward. Financially, we are well-funded, and our outlook continues to improve. We recently received our DOE 25 Contract totaling \$502,343, which strengthens our operating budget and allows us to better plan for the months ahead. At this time, there are no major program changes to report. We will continue to stay the course, advocate for our program, and support the clients we serve. Our team remains committed to delivering results and addressing the energy needs of households across our 17-county service area.



- Liheap (Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program) starts Oct. 1st for a household with an elderly (60 years of age or older) and/or a disabled household member. Also, any household in a crisis related situation may apply for Liheap in October. Everyone else can apply Nov. 1st thru April 30th.
- **LIHEAP APPLICATIONS:** For October, Outreach took and processed 2,194 Liheap applications. This report from State includes denied applications in it.
- **ECIP/CRISIS:** For October, 200 households received ECIP-Crisis funds in the amount of \$54,796.71. We have stopped all ECIP/Crisis as of Oct. 27th. We needed to see where our budget was at and if we needed to move funds around. We may start up ECIP/CRISIS again after this gets figured out.
- **Talked to different radio stations regarding what Liheap is about, what is needed to apply and how to apply.**



Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. Giving Tuesday Philanthropy Campaign

Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.



UDMO has launched our second annual ***Giving Tuesday Campaign***. We started sharing about it in late October and will have social media posts and fliers going out through Giving Tuesday on December 2, 2025. Giving Tuesday contributions will help sustain the work of UDMO Outreach across our 12 County Region. This looks different from county to county.

Additionally, UDMO will be submitting a number of local community foundation and Trust Fund grants over the next 60-90 days.

Lastly, the CSBG Report for FY25 is ready for submission. This report encompasses data from all UDMO programs and demonstrates to the State the work our agency is doing.

Helping People. Changing Lives.

UDMO Funding Requests Update:

Recent Foundation/Organizational/Trust Grants Submitted & Status: September 2025	County	Program	Sub- mitted/ Pending	Amount Awarded	Not Funded
Homeland Security – EM FEMA Grant	CL	Repairs – App in Process	X		
Fort Dodge United Way	WE	Water Assistance	X		
Barkema Trust	WR	Client Services	X		
Valero Benefit for Children (Invite Only)	WE	Food Assistance	X		
Hoepfner Trust	CL	Client Services for Children	X		
Awards Announced in Winter/Spring 2026					
Sheldon United	OB	Client Services – Sheldon	X		
United Way	BV, CL, OB	Client Services	X		
Dickinson County Good Neighbor Fund	DI	Client Services	X		
Belmond Area Community Trust	WR	Client Services Belmond	X		

Program Grants Submitted and Status: August 2025	County	Program	Sub- mitted/ Pending	Funded	Not Funded
Emergency Solutions Grant – ESG IFA	All	Housing		\$140,251.00	
Iowa Family Support Credential	Statewide	Certification Support			X
Head Start 1303	Emmet	Roosevelt HVAC	X		
Head Start/Early Head Start – Continuation	BV, CL, DI, EM, OB, OS, PA	Annual Submission	X		

Housing Report– Tanya Petersen Housing Director



60 households received rental assistance in the month of October.

With consideration of the **SNAP program being disrupted/reduced**, should you or someone you know face a situation of having to make a choice to buy food or pay rent and end up more than 30 days behind on rent with a notice please call the Statewide Crisis Line listed below. **UDMO Housing maybe able to help.**

Iowa Finance Authority announced awards for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ESG) program. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. has been awarded \$140,251.00 for 2026.

Client Success Stories by Staff

I was able to help a woman who had been involved in a DV situation for over 20 years get out of the home and into an apartment of her own. She has since began cleaning for respected community members and had an interview at pizza ranch. I have no doubt she is on the road to success. I was also able to help a young couple experiencing homelessness, while actively trying to avoid a previous cycle of addiction in which they have been able to overcome. They were able to get an apartment near family and will welcome a baby next year. They were so grateful for a program to help them stand on their feet.

Statewide Crisis Line Update: Clients in need of rental assistance should call the Statewide Crisis Line at **1-833-739-0065** to complete the intake process. Normal business hours are 7am – 8pm. Clients calling outside of these hours will need to leave a message and wait for a call back. Call backs are being made usually within 1-3 business days.

Did you Know?

A fun fact about fall is that the bright colors of autumn leaves are actually hidden in the leaves all summer, only to be revealed when the trees produce less chlorophyll as the days get shorter. The yellow and orange colors are always present in the leaves' pigmentation, while the red and purple colors are a result of sugars in the leaves' sap that get trapped. -Google

"Fall" vs. "Autumn": Both terms originated in Britain. "Fall" is a shortened version of the phrase "fall of the leaf," while "autumn" comes from the Latin word *autumnus*. While Americans and Canadians commonly use both, "autumn" is the standard British term today.-Google





FaDSS:

Enrolled Families: 77

Target # of families per month: 76

Families in Recruitment: 1

Families on Waiting list: 37

Outreach:



All things Holiday

Outreach offices have started accepting applications for all of their holiday programs!!

Santa for Senior applications are being accepted in: BV, Clay, Hamilton, Humboldt, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Webster and Wright.

Adopt a Family applications are being accepted in: BV, Clay, Dickinson, Hamilton, Humboldt, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright.

Bikes for Tikes applications are being accepted in: Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster and Wright.



DJ Bingo

Clay County will be hosting their annual DJ Bingo again this year. The dates for the events are November 20th and November 21st. To reserve your table please call Teri at 712-262-7409



NEW HIRES

Please help us welcome 3 new Outreach Specialists to our team:

Jacquelyn Origer is our new Outreach Specialist for Palo Alto County

Annie Pearson and **Erika Vargas** are our new Outreach Specialists for Webster County

We are so happy to have all of you as part of our team!



Enrollment:

Early Head Start with 183 children and Head Start Preschool with 254 children.

Disabilities:

Early Head Start students served on IFSP's: 10

Head Start Preschool students served on IEP's: 18

Total served: 28 Target: 47

TEACH – CDA, 2 year or 4-year Degree:

CDA certification completion: 1

Associates degree in progress: 3

Bachelor degree in progress: 1

Coaching:

Teachers – 4 and Home Base Teachers – 5



It Takes a Community:

- I-Smiles visited all of our sites in October...we were happy to show them our smiles!
- Two members of the Estherville Ambulance Crew brought the ambulance for Kerry Bennett and Sara West's classroom to tour, celebrating the end of their Human Body Study.
- Spencer Head Start received generous donations of pumpkins and produce from Gary Holck. Jennifer Steuben also donated 80 pumpkins.
- Mr. Goodfellow contributed \$1,117 to the Storm Lake Gingerbread House and has made another donation this year.
- We have applied for the BVCS Early Childhood Iowa Area Professional Development Mini-Grant for our nurses to attend the Head Start Health and Safety Institute 2026.

KIDS/MIECHV

Jessie Hansen

Jessie has hired two new staff members! They are Ashley Doss and Christina Chavez. Welcome to them! There will be one more staff member, but she has not completed her Orientation yet.



