



# GOVERNOR'S EMPOWER RURAL IOWA INITIATIVE

## IOWA UNITED FIRST AID

### BACKGROUND

The Iowa United First Aid (IUFA) program aims to leverage technology and volunteers to address challenges in rural emergency response. The program supports three pilot communities (Calhoun, Cass, and Van Buren Counties) to equip trained volunteers with GPS-location technology and first aid supplies to decrease the response time and stabilize emergencies, while coordinating with emergency assistance. Grant funding through Empower Rural Iowa supports volunteer training and equipment, as well as contributes to the annual fee for the deployment application.

### FAQs

#### **What is the goal of the program?**

The mission of IUFA is to train and equip community members to provide immediate medical intervention during the critical window between the onset of an emergency and the arrival of traditional ambulance assistance.

#### **What requirements must the volunteer meet?**

Each volunteer must complete training in basic first aid, CPR, AED use, and bleeding control. Once trained, the volunteer is equipped with a "go-bag" and downloads an app to their phone that allows notifications when they are in a defined range (ex: 15 miles) of a 911 emergency. The volunteer can choose to respond based on their availability.

#### **What equipment is provided?**

Each volunteer receives a "go-bag" containing an AED, Stop the Bleed kit, tourniquets, first aid supplies, CPR mask, shears, and razors. Pilot communities are allowed to supply naloxone (ex: Narcan) and training on administration. Program administrators and volunteers are prohibited from providing or using supplies or equipment not on this approved list. Volunteers receive a safety vest and patches that identify them as an IUFA volunteer.

#### **Are IUFA volunteers dispatched to all emergencies?**

No, volunteers are not dispatched to potentially dangerous situations, such as motor vehicle accidents, domestic violence, active shooter, or mental health emergencies. Volunteers are alerted to calls related to their training, including but not limited to chest pain, choking, falls, and lacerations.

#### **What liability does the volunteer or sponsoring organization have?**

The program worked closely with Iowa Health and Human Services - Bureau of Emergency Medical and Trauma Services to assure IUFA volunteers were provided legal protection under Iowa's Good Samaritan Law. The law protects individuals who, voluntarily and in good faith, provide emergency care or assistance. While the law does not prohibit legal action from being filed, it does provide protections if legal actions are brought. Responders shall not be liable for any civil damages for acts or omission occurring at an emergency or accident unless such acts or omissions constitute recklessness.

or willful and wanton misconduct. IUFA volunteers must obey all traffic laws, not add lights or insignia to a personal responding vehicle, ensure their safety at the scene, stay within the scope of the IUFA training, and only utilize the equipment provided by the IUFA program.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Sacha Wise, Iowa Economic Development Authority

Empower Rural Iowa Director

[sacha.wise@iowaeda.com](mailto:sacha.wise@iowaeda.com)