

# Iowa Communications Network FY 2025 - FY 2027 Strategic Plan



Iowa Communications Network

**Mission**

Provide a statewide, innovative, secure, reliable network, and technology solutions for education, healthcare, public safety, and government.

**Vision**

Provide a future ready network by championing technologies, maximizing efficiencies, and collaborating with partners to connect and protect all of Iowa.

**Agency Customers**

- Accredited K-12 school districts and private schools
- Accredited public and private colleges and technical educational institutions
- State government agencies
- Public Safety (NG911/Public Safety Answering Points [PSAPs], Land Mobile Radio (LMR), State Patrol offices, National Guard Armories)
- State Judicial branch
- Federal government agencies
- Hospitals and clinics
- Public libraries

**Governor’s Priorities 2024**

1. Elevating Education for Every Student
2. Preparing the Next-Gen Workforce
3. Cutting Taxes
4. Supporting Health and Well-Being
5. Holding Government Accountable
6. Protecting Iowa’s Farmland

## Assessment

The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) is an independent state agency that administers Iowa's statewide fiber optic telecommunications network and is a service provider providing critical telecommunications and broadband services to our customers. Services offered to our customers include:

- Secure high-speed broadband Internet service
- Data services (ethernet)
- Voice (phone) service
- Colocation service
- Security services including Consultations, DDoS Mitigation, and Firewall
- Consulting related to telecommunications, broadband and network connectivity needs.

Services are provided either directly by the ICN or through public/private partnerships established between the ICN and our private sector partners. The ICN maintains its own procurement authority.

The ICN is under the sole authority of the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission (ITTC) that appoints an Executive Director to administer network operations. The ICN is comprised of 3 Divisions including the following:

### Agency Division managed by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

- The CFO provides direction and serves leadership to all financial strategies and fiscal practices for the ICN.
- The Division is responsible for payables, receivables/account receivables, financials, billing /work orders, contracting, and warehouse operations.

### Network Services Division managed by the Chief Technical Officer

- The CTO provides direction to all technology and infrastructure strategies.
- The Division is responsible for engineering, outside plant, telecommunications technology, cyber security, network operations, systems administration, security, sales and USAC / E-rate program management.

### Administration and Facilities Division managed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- The CAO provides direction for network facilities management/operation, communications, and government relations.
- The Division is responsible for facilities, network operations center, facilities maintenance, vendor management, technical assistance center (TAC), project management, legislation, executive support, and communications/marketing.

**SWOT Analysis**

| Strengths   | Weaknesses   | Opportunities   | Threats  |
|---|--|---|--|
| 3,400 miles of state-owned fiber optic cable providing a service delivery point in all 99 counties. | Lack of understanding of the differences between services offered by ICN vs. the private sector ISP providers. | Implementation of new services (colocation, zoom, Voice).                       | Resource and equipment availability.               |
| Closed, secure network infrastructure.  | Last-mile leased broadband connections.  | Redundant failover services protecting operations.                              | Customers use of disparate technology and systems. |
| Local Iowa-based Network Operations Center located at Joint Forces Headquarters.                    | Lack of flexibility in standard pricing.   | Expanded access to and availability of colocation/disaster recovery facilities. | Misinformation about the ICN and Network.          |
| Committed Iowa-based network maintenance provider.  | Unable to provide County and Local Government Access.  | Structured cabling.   | Customer attrition.                                |
| High service level restoral requirements.   |  | Virtual firewalls.  |  |
| Redundant service connections to diverse national internet hubs.                                    |  | Partnering with stakeholders of agencies.                                       |  |
| Key network hub locations for diverse electric utility service.                                     |  | Support broadband growth & strengthening connections to rural Iowa.             |  |
| Security services, individualized firewall service, DDoS Mitigation.                                |  |   |  |
| Common Carrier Designation.   |  |   |  |
| Reinvestment back to Iowa's private sector telecoms.  |  |   |  |
| Customers choose the ICN because they want our service, not because they have to.                   |  |   |  |

**Personnel**

**Goal 1: Develop and Maintain Qualified Staff.**

- **KPI :** Retain at least 92% of current staff during the fiscal year (excluding retirements and reduction in force (RIFs).
  - *(Supports priorities 2 & 5)*

| Strategies  | Actions  | Who is Involved               | Timeline                                  |
|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Identify staffing needs, vacancies, and future business for division / bureaus. | Review staffing levels based on business needs and time frame.   | Leadership Team               | Annually by the end of Fiscal Year        |
| Review and update job classifications.  | Identify, review, and update job classifications.<br><br>Develop desktop procedures (responsibilities processes, systems, and technology). | Leadership Team and Employees | Annually by end of fiscal year, Quarter 3 |
| Utilize and leverage industry’s best practices.                                 | Repurpose to train current employees or hire new employees.  | Leadership Team and Employees | Ongoing                                   |

## Technology and Services

### Goal 2: Develop and Diversify Emerging Technologies.

- **KPI:** To maintain Core Network uptime of 99.999% in FY25.
  - *(Supports priorities 1, 4, 5)*
- **KPI:** To maintain Core Network Latency below the industry average of 50 millisecond to less than 20 milliseconds in FY25.
  - *(Supports priorities 1, 4, 5)*

| Strategies                                       | Actions   | Who is Involved                          | Timeline                   |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| Complete existing technology-based projects.     | Installation of aggregation equipment and connections.                          | Leadership Team, Operations, Engineering | End of fiscal year 2027    |
| Establish plan for new customer driven projects. | Fund, plan, and procure SIP technology.<br><br>Deploy infrastructure equipment. | Leadership Team, Operations, Engineering | End of fiscal year 2027    |
| Strengthen the integrity of the Network.         | Complete decentralization of State Firewall.                                    | Leadership Team, Operations, Engineering | End of calendar year 2025. |

**Accountability**

**Goal 3:** Create a Positive Culture that Ensures Compliance with Policies, Rules, and Regulations.

- KPI: Improve employee engagement survey favorable responses from 69% to 72%.
  - *(Supports priorities 2 & 5)*

| Strategies   | Actions  | Who is Involved   | Timeline                |
|--|--|---|-------------------------|
| Define policies, rules and regulations to ensure compliance. | Document policies and responsibilities.<br>Create reports.   | Leadership Team and Employees   | Ongoing or as required. |
| Communicate to responsible parties.                          | Assign to internal teams.<br>Collaborate with stakeholders.<br>Data gathering.   | Leadership team, all internal bureaus, and stakeholders.                | Ongoing or as required. |
| Review, share, audit, and final disposition.                 | Responsible parties review, amend, approve, and file.<br>Distribute to stakeholders.<br>External assistance and review.                                      | Leadership Team and Employees   | Ongoing or as required. |
| Drive behaviors and policies that are fiscally responsible.  | Expense control.<br>Negotiate contracts for best pricing.<br>SLA Audit: Vendor services to ensure accuracy.<br>Fiscal stability to ensure Network integrity. | Leadership team, finance, contracting, business services, and employees | Ongoing or as required. |