



# DAS Delivers: *HRExpress*

Department of Administrative Services ~ Empowering People · Collaboration · Customer Service

April 2021

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### Iowa WorkSmart Project

#### **Take the Statewide Change Survey**

State employees are encouraged to take the Statewide Change Survey regarding the Iowa WorkSmart Project and Workday. The survey link was sent out by email on Monday, April 19. Responses are confidential and will help the WorkSmart Team develop effective change management activities to prepare employees for the Workday transition. Please complete the survey by Friday, April 30. Thank you!

#### **Preview Workday**

The WorkSmart Training Team has created a short demo to provide a preview of the Workday system, highlighting basic navigation, homepage applications, viewing payment elections, and more. Check out the [Workday Homepage Navigation](#) demo, and stay tuned for more information, demos, and training announcements to come.

#### **Coming Soon: Future State Discussions**

The WorkSmart Readiness Team is gearing up for Future State Discussions with statewide Managers and Supervisors in May. These sessions will focus on Manager and Employee Self-Service capabilities, any changes affecting the Manager/Supervisor role, and Workday information to share with staff. A detailed demo of the Workday system will also be provided. Reach out to [WorkSmartReadiness@iowa.gov](mailto:WorkSmartReadiness@iowa.gov) with any questions.

For more information about the Iowa WorkSmart Project, please visit [WorkSmart.iowa.gov](http://WorkSmart.iowa.gov) or contact the WorkSmart Team at [WorkSmart@iowa.gov](mailto:WorkSmart@iowa.gov). For questions specific to your organization, reach out to your designated [WorkSmart Change Agent](#).

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### State of Iowa Benefits

#### **Flexible Spending Accounts - Increased Dependent Care Limits**

In addition to the 2021 flexible spending account (FSA) changes announced in the [January edition](#) of HRExpress, DAS is pleased to announce an additional enhancement to the dependent care FSA plan.

For 2021 only, the dependent care maximum contribution limit will increase from \$5,000 to \$10,500. For married persons filing separate tax returns, the limit increases from \$2,500 to \$5,250. The limit will revert back to \$5,000 and \$2,500, respectively, for 2022.

If you wish to take advantage of the higher limit, you may enroll or increase your current election by logging into [IowaBenefits](#) and using “day care change” as your event. Enrollments and changes are effective the month after they are submitted in IowaBenefits. Changes must be made in IowaBenefits before May 1 to be effective in May. Changes made in May will be effective for June, and so on.

For more information, refer to the [DAS Flexible Spending Accounts](#) webpage, contact your [Human Resources Associate](#), or email [Jennifer.sandusky@iowa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.sandusky@iowa.gov).

### **Personal Protective Equipment Now an Eligible Expense in Medical FSA**

Good news! The IRS just released Announcement 2021-7 stating personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing wipes are now eligible medical expenses if used for the primary purpose of preventing the spread of COVID-19. As a result, these expenses may now be reimbursed through your State of Iowa health care flexible spending account (FSA).

Merchants will need some time to update their inventory systems to reflect this change, so please check for coverage when making purchases with your ASIFlex Card. In the meantime, participants may [submit a claim online](#) or via the mobile app, along with a copy of the itemized merchant receipt. The receipt must include the merchant name, date of purchase, an itemized listing of each PPE item purchased, and the dollar amount for each item.

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## **Health and Wellness**

### **What's YOUR Financial Game Plan?**

Financial fitness is part of overall wellness. Whether you're just starting to think about your financial future, almost ready to retire, or somewhere in between, the Iowa Insurance Division's Save4Later program provides unbiased insight, tools and resources to improve your financial picture — now and into the future.

Visit the [State of Iowa employee portal](#) and get started today!

### **Seven Tips for an Ergonomic Desktop**

If you work in an office inside or outside the home, you can make sure your desktop is ergonomically correct, with your desktop accessories arranged to help you be more comfortable and efficient at work.

Here are seven useful tips to improve your office set-up to avoid discomfort, or even injury, over time:

1. Move pens, pencils, paperclips, note pads, or other items you use often within a comfortable reach, close to your monitor and keyboard.
2. Consider using a document holder if your work requires you to look at a document and then look up to our computer when entering data. A newer style of document holder fits between the keyboard and monitor, so you are able to move just your eyes instead of your head and neck.
3. If you use your phone often throughout the day, move it closer to avoid an awkward reach. Keep your head upright, not bent. In addition, your shoulders should be relaxed and not elevated.

4. If you find yourself cradling the receiver between your shoulder and your head, consider a headset. A headset will help protect your neutral head and neck position and keep your hands free when you need to write or type.
5. If noise is a distraction, try using earbuds or noise cancelling headphones.
6. If the overhead light is in a position that casts shadows on your work, use a more directed task lamp.
7. Secure cabling and mats - and practice good housekeeping - to prevent trip hazards.

### **Life Can Be a Challenge and the Employee Assistance Program Can Help**

It's more important than ever for you and your family members to deal with the challenges life sends your way. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers services designed to help before problems begin to interfere with your daily functioning at home or at work.

EAP services are provided by KEPRO, a nationwide health care management company. You can reach KEPRO at 800-833-3031 or [www.EAPHelplink.com](http://www.EAPHelplink.com) (Company Code: IOWA). KEPRO counseling services are confidential within strict legal limits.

KEPRO can help you or your family members with:

- Alcohol or other drug abuse
- Career struggles/job burnout
- Death/dying issues
- Financial consultation (budgeting/investing)
- Health or stress concerns
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Marriage or family problems
- Legal concerns (personal, non-employment related)
- Workplace conflicts

There is no charge for services provided by KEPRO.

Counseling services are limited to three sessions with a KEPRO counselor per incident. If you require longer-term services, you may be referred elsewhere. If so, KEPRO counselors will work with you to identify affordable resources that may be partially covered by your health insurance.

### **Capitol Complex Food Trucks Coming Soon!**

The mobile food trucks are coming soon to the Capitol Complex. Stroll out to [Visitor Lot 15](#), north of the Lucas Building, on **Monday, May 3**, for the official beginning of food truck season!

### **Free Health and Wellness Seminars Offered Online**

On-demand online seminars covering various health and well-being topics are available from the State's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at [www.EAPHelplink.com](http://www.EAPHelplink.com). Use Company Code: **IOWA** and click on e-learning for a list of available online seminars.

Online seminars may be viewed from your computer or any other internet-enabled device during work time if scheduling permits and your supervisor approves. Seminars are free of charge, with the most recent offerings accessible on the dates listed below.

- Available May 18: ***Addressing Anxiety in an Uncertain World*** - Learn how to recognize and manage anxiety to actively combat the physical and mental effects in a practical way.

EAP also offers confidential resources to help employees and eligible family members address challenges which may impact job performance, affect well-being, and take a toll on overall health. EAP services are provided at no cost to employees and eligible family members. For more information on EAP resources, visit the DAS [Employee Assistance Program](#) web page.

### **COVID-19 Resource Webpage**

As a reminder, DAS Human Resources provides information on its COVID-19 Resource [webpage](#). Bookmark this page to keep it handy for future reference.

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## **Retirement Savings**

### **Creating a Secure Retirement: The 3-Part Solution**

IPERS and Iowa State Extension Services team up to present a free workshop for all State employees planning to retire in the next three to five years. *Creating a Secure Retirement: The 3-Part Solution* is a full-day workshop to bring together everything you need in order to plan a financially secure retirement. Workshop content will be customized with your personal information, so you'll be able to figure out exactly where you are in the pre-retirement process. [Learn more and pre-register for one of the upcoming sessions today!](#)

### **IPERS Ready, Set, Retire Workshops Offered Via Zoom**

If you are thinking about retiring in the next three to five years, IPERS' *Ready, Set, Retire* is designed to provide you with a broad range of retirement-related information. *Ready, Set, Retire* is a free all-day (9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) Zoom webinar, and you may view/attend sessions during work time if scheduling permits and your supervisor approves. Spouses are welcome to attend.

Upcoming *Ready, Set, Retire* workshop dates include:

[Thursday, May 6](#)

[Thursday, June 10](#)

[Thursday, July 8](#)

Seating is limited, so reserve your spot by [registering today!](#)

### **Retirement Investors' Club (RIC) Webcasts**

Make the best use of your retirement savings by taking advantage of education opportunities offered by RIC. These webcasts may be viewed online from your computer or other internet-enabled device during work time if scheduling permits and your supervisor approves. Click on the links below to register.

- Tuesday, May 11, 9:00 a.m. [RIC Introduction & Enrollment](#)
- Tuesday, May 18, 1:00 p.m. [RIC Ready to Retire & Take Income](#)

### **Retirement Benefit Presentations Now Offered On Demand**

DAS Human Resources has recently added new information to the website for employees seeking information about State of Iowa retirement benefits. The presentations, previously offered live online, are

now available on demand any time day or night. *Retirement Benefits Before Medicare Eligibility* and *Retirement Benefits After Medicare* may be found on the [DAS Benefit Series Highlight](#) page.

### **News from State Retirement Investors' Club (RIC) Providers**

Please see the latest information from various RIC providers below.



#### **AIG Retirement Services Now Offers Mobile Enrollment**

Tap "Start" to begin saving. It's that easy with mobile enrollment. Enrolling in the State of Iowa Retirement Investors' Club (RIC) retirement plan has never been easier or more beneficial.

- Benefit from tax-deferred savings
- Receive an employer match contribution
- See savings increase over time, thanks to compound interest
- Have peace of mind, knowing that you are preparing for a secure financial future

AIG Retirement Services' guided mobile experience makes it easy for you to get started. [Watch the video to learn more.](#)

If you are ready, simply [download the app](#) to start saving today! Great things come to those who don't wait. Visit [iowa.aigrs.com](http://iowa.aigrs.com) or call 800-426-3753 for more information.



#### **Navigate Bumpy Markets with Tips from Empower Retirement** (formerly MassMutual Retirement)

The history of the financial markets can tell us one thing for certain: Volatility is a normal part of investing.

**Empower Retirement** is here to help you understand what that means for you and what you can do to stay on track for retirement. [Learn why a long-term strategy is so important.](#)

A few things to remember:

- It may be wise to stay invested instead of timing the market.
- Keeping your portfolio diversified may soften negative impacts.
- Before making investment changes, consider the long-term effects.

[Contact an Empower representative](#) to learn more about your financial choices, including help with saving in the Iowa RIC plan.



#### **It's Tax Time: Put Your Money to Work for You**

You've worked hard. Put any extra money such as a tax refund to work for you. If you haven't reached the contribution limit in your Iowa Retirement Investors' Club (RIC) Retirement Plan, putting your tax refund

into your Iowa RIC Retirement Plan and your future can be a really smart move. You'll build up your savings and possibly compound them with future earnings.

Your employer gives you the option of contributing to your Iowa RIC Retirement Plan in two ways:

- **Pretax** - When you elect to make pre-tax contributions, those contributions are made before taxes, meaning income taxes are deferred until distributions are made in retirement. Therefore, the contributions you make reduces your taxable income for the current tax year.
- **After-tax Roth** - If you make after-tax Roth contributions, the amount you contribute doesn't reduce your current taxable income or income tax bill. However, distributions in retirement are generally tax-free, subject to certain restrictions and considerations.

Age, income and your expectations for your future tax bracket can all play into whether pre-tax or Roth contributions are right for you. Contact a Voya representative at 800-555-1970 to discuss options to meet your savings and retirement income needs.

Log in to [iowa.beready2retire.com](http://iowa.beready2retire.com) to save and put your money to work for you today!

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## Education Opportunities

### **FEATURED Course Spotlights:**

- ***Managing Effective Meetings - April 27***  
*Provides participants with a practical, hands-on approach to the development and facilitation of an effective meeting, both in-person and virtual. Learn or refresh yourself on methods to keep on task, follow-up on topics addressed, and facilitate a productive and successful meeting. This virtual class is part of the Leadership Capacity Building Development Certificate (LCBDC).*
- ***Project Management Fundamentals - April 27***  
*Designed specifically for those who are actively managing projects. This class is an in-depth look into the processes, knowledge areas, inputs, and outputs you need to know to manage projects effectively and successfully. Walk away from this virtual course with critical essentials for getting a project done regardless of size or complexity, as well as techniques, concepts, and tools that will save you time and energy in the future. This class is part of the Talent Development Certificate (TDC).*

**Sign up today - it's easy!** Enroll online through the [LMS](#) today to reserve your seat. If you have any questions, reach out to your Training Liaison or the [PDS inbox](#).

### **Performance & Development Solutions (PDS) Training**

- **Virtual PDS Instructor-Led Courses**  
Many classroom courses have been updated to an online live format. Courses will run as scheduled, and a 14-day cancellation policy applies. PDS limits class size to 18-20 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. For classes with more people enrolled, new dates will be added and participants will be rescheduled as needed. Check out [current course listings](#).

- **PDS On-Demand Courses**

On-demand courses can be completed at any time. Many are policy related and may be required training. See these class listings at [On-Demand Course Options](#).

- **New Horizons Virtual and On-Demand Computer Courses**

Computer training courses are offered by [New Horizons](#). Please contact [PDS@iowa.gov](mailto:PDS@iowa.gov) for information on availability and State pricing for New Horizons classes.

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*HRExpress* is a publication for State of Iowa employees.

Please [print a copy](#) to post or share with co-workers who may not have access to a computer.

For prior editions, visit the [HRExpress webpage](#). If you have questions or suggestions for future content, please contact us at [hrexpress@iowa.gov](mailto:hrexpress@iowa.gov). Thank you!