

LEEVE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FACT SHEET

Iowa Code Chapter 418A as created and signed by Governor Reynolds on June 1, 2023 established the Office of Levee Safety within the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. This office was established as part of a larger levee improvement program designed to reduce and manage risks associated with a hazardous event caused by a levee's inadequate design, structural performance, or operational control.

Chapter 418A.3 specifically tasked the Office of Levee Safety to work with the Flood Mitigation Board and the Iowa Geological Survey to achieve the purpose of the Levee Improvement Program. They also will cooperate with other state and federal agencies, including the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), administering the National Levee Safety Program, as provided in 33 U.S.C. Chapter 46. The office in cooperation with the Flood Mitigation Board, shall assist communities benefiting from a levee, including levee districts.

The Office of Levee Safety, in cooperation with the Iowa Geological Survey, shall conduct a statewide analysis of the condition of the state's levees. As part of the analysis, they will identify each levee requiring repair or reconstruction based on a scale adopted by the office which assigns a number based on the levee's level of critical need. The office shall consider all of the following:

- deficiencies in construction, maintenance, and operation of each levee in a levee district,
- the amount of capital expenditures required for the repair or reconstruction for each levee in a levee district,
- payment obligations creating legal indebtedness incurred by the levee district, including those evidenced by bonds, warrants, certificates, contracts, or judgments, and
- the current total revenue collected by the levee district, and the budgeted revenue ceiling of the levee district based on a maximum assessment rate for classified lands used to maintain the levee as apportioned to each owner of such land.

The Office of Levee Safety, in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, shall provide for the publication and submission of applications for an award of cost-share moneys under the program. The Flood Mitigation Board, in cooperation with the Office of Levee Safety, shall approve or disapprove the applications based on criteria established by the board.

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, in cooperation with the Office of Levee Safety, shall prepare and submit a statewide assessment report to the governor and general assembly not later than January 5 of each year. The assessment report shall include a summary of the condition of levees in each levee district. The report must include the results of efforts to repair or reconstruct levees using cost-share moneys awarded to the governing bodies of levee districts under the levee improvement program as well as a summary of future plans to administer the program.