

Central Iowa Shelter & Services and Iowa Total Care Ottumwa Empowerment Command Center Ribbon Cutting - Oct 8, 2025

OTTUMWA, Iowa, Oct. 8, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- [Central Iowa Shelter & Services](#) (CISS) and [Iowa Total Care](#) will host a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Empowerment Command Center and Affordable Housing Project on Tuesday, October 14 at 11:00 a.m. at 609 E. Pennsylvania St., Ottumwa.

The Empowerment Command Center is a portion of a 2-year \$2.55 million commitment to CISS by Iowa Total Care and the [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation.

This project represents CISS' commitment to addressing the urgent needs of rural Iowans facing homelessness and housing instability. The Empowerment Command Center provides essential services, including job training, veterans' resources, case management, health and wellness support, and pathways to permanent housing. CISS aims to eliminate the obstacles that residents of Wapello County currently face when needing to travel to urban centers for these vital services.

"Our research identified Ottumwa and Wapello County as a place in need of services and support for individuals experiencing housing challenges," said Melissa O'Neil, CISS CEO. "While we have been serving Wapello County for several years, the opening of our newest Empowerment Command Center in Ottumwa reflects our dedication to extending efficient and effective solutions to homelessness into rural communities while fostering stability and empowerment."

"Iowa Total Care and the Centene Foundation are committed to addressing the social factors that influence health, such as housing and access to services. Through strategic partnerships, we aim to implement sustainable, community-based solutions to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations. We are proud to support CISS and the Ottumwa Empowerment Command Center in delivering innovative resources to rural Iowans," said Bryan Sanders, Plan President & CEO of Iowa Total Care.

Modeled after the successful Empowerment Command Center in Des Moines, this initiative will bring critical resources closer to the community and facilitate a more supportive environment for individuals seeking assistance and utilizing existing resources. A dedicated team of case workers and advocates will ensure that residents receive tailored support and comprehensive care.

Additionally, the project will introduce affordable housing units in Ottumwa, addressing the significant gaps in housing availability. Funded through grant allocations, local support, and private financial contributions, these units will serve as a lifeline for those who may not qualify for traditional housing options.

CISS invites community members, stakeholders, and advocates to join in this pivotal occasion. Your presence can help amplify the message of support and commitment to those in need.

About Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS)

[Central Iowa Shelter & Services](#) is the largest low-barrier shelter in Iowa. Its mission is to provide shelter, meals and support services to adults experiencing homelessness and to facilitate their move toward self-sufficiency. CISS also provides housing services to a 15-county region through its Rolling Hills Coalition.

About Iowa Total Care (ITC)

[Iowa Total Care](#) provides Medicaid healthcare coverage to eligible individuals in Iowa. Established in 2019, Iowa Total Care exists to improve the health of its members through focused, compassionate, and coordinated care. Iowa Total Care is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading healthcare enterprise that is committed to helping people live healthier lives.

About the Centene Foundation

[The Centene Foundation](#) (the "Foundation"), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's mission-driven culture and enhances the work Centene is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing social determinants of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare access, social services, and education. To learn more, visit the Centene Foundation's website.

SOURCE Iowa Total Care

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