



Initiative: Enhancing Sustainable Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Overview

South Dakota's EMS system faces critical challenges in staffing, response times, equipment, and long-term sustainability—especially in rural, tribal, and frontier communities. This initiative builds a modern, coordinated, and connected statewide EMS network by developing EMS Regions, expanding workforce training, and integrating advanced technology.

Key Activities

- Establish EMS Hubs/Regions to coordinate coverage and reduce response times.
- Expand EMS workforce training, recruitment, and retention.
- Implement near real-time data systems, telemedicine, and hospital interfaces.
- Improve operational efficiency through shared resources and dispatch integration.
- Provide technical assistance and statewide EMS performance oversight.

Partners & Stakeholders

EMS agencies, local governments, rural and tribal communities, hospitals, telemedicine partners, first responders, law enforcement, technical colleges, and EMS associations.

Amount Requested

- \$64,000,000 (five-year total)
- Begin statewide planning early 2026; staffing and kickoff by mid-2026; full implementation 2026–2030.

Expected Outcomes

- Define purpose/functions of EMS Hubs/Regions and establish at least one Hub per Region by 2027, with full statewide coverage by 2030.
- Achieve 100% EMS agency integration with State HIE within 12 months.
- Reduce long response times (>15 minutes) from 20% to under 10% in 36 months.
- Increase certified EMS personnel by 15% statewide within 24 months.
- Improve coordinated coverage through telemedicine and shared resources.

Why This Matters

This initiative strengthens rural emergency response by ensuring reliable, timely care statewide and creating a sustainable, technology-enabled EMS system.