



Dear County Extension Council Members,

Each of you should have received an email from Vice President John Lawrence yesterday about the results of an investigation into misuse of funds by an extension employee in Jones County. If you read the [report](#) and it brings up questions of your own county's fiscal policy or how procedures are handled, I encourage you to reach out to your regional director or director of field operations (north = [Bryan Whaley](#), south = [Gene Mohling](#)). Similarly, if you hear questions or concerns from other council members in your region, encourage them to contact your regional director, Bryan, or Gene.

This is a good reminder for us all that extension council members have fiduciary responsibility to provide oversight of the extension district's operations and financial transactions. The Iowa Extension Council Association will continue to support County Services in implementing the investigative audit recommendations and to develop additional training and education for councils who provide that fiduciary oversight.

These resources are currently available to councils and staff members:

- [Extension Council Reference Manual](#) – see category titled “Extension Finances and Procedures”
- Fiscal Policy and Procedures – each county has their own policy manual approved by your council; [here](#) is the general policy that has been reviewed by Whitfield & Eddy and the Auditor of State for reference
- County Credit Card Guidelines – refer to Section 3.2 and 3.3 of the fiscal policy
- [Employee Assistance Program](#) – continue to share EAP resources with your county staff. Our EAP vendor provides financial and legal consultation, counseling, and life coaching to name a few. The EAP

renewals are happening now.

- [Iowa 4-H Foundation](#) – local 4-H foundation accounts can be transferred to the Iowa 4-H Foundation for management.

Additionally, there are several breakout sessions at the upcoming [Extension Council Conference](#) on March 5 in Ames that will provide training related to the findings highlighted in the audit report:

- *Lessons Learned: County Audits and Financial Controls*
- *Hiring, Firing, and Managing Staff*
- *Insurance and Risk...What's a County to Do?*
- *Creating a Positive Work Environment*

It's great professional development for council members and staff. You can't afford not to attend – it's only \$90 and reimbursable by your council (upon their approval).

If you have any questions or requests, don't hesitate to reach out to me. And I encourage you to keep up your connection between your extension council and employees. Visit with staff. Call or stop by to check in with them occasionally. Ask the questions.

Thank you for all you do. We know you are invested council members who wish the best for your communities. Please know we appreciate your role as an elected official and want to help serve you in meaningful ways. And I hope to see you in Ames on March 5th.

Jennifer

[Jennifer Vit](#)

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