Date: _____

Dear _____

I am requesting approval to attend the APHSA IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM) Education Conference & Expo, taking place September 27–30, 2026, in Spokane, Washington.

This year's theme, Transforming Systems through Technology & Innovation, strongly aligns with our agency's priorities to modernize service delivery, strengthen program integrity, and responsibly leverage technology to improve outcomes for the families we serve. As federal expectations continue to rise around accountability, interoperability, customer experience, and data transparency, participation in ISM provides a timely opportunity to learn from peer states and national leaders navigating similar pressures.

The ISM Conference is uniquely designed for public-sector leaders working at the intersection of human services, technology, programs, and operations. The content reflects real implementation challenges and provides practical, peer-tested strategies that can be adapted to our state environment.

By participating in this conference, I will:

- **Gain insight into emerging technology and scalable innovation:** Sessions within the **Tech-Enabled Innovation** track highlight practical applications of artificial intelligence, machine learning, automation, cloud platforms, cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure in human services environments. The focus is on real-world implementation, sustainability, and workforce readiness rather than theoretical concepts. These insights directly support our ongoing modernization and automation efforts.
- **Strengthen human-centered service delivery:** The People-Powered & Human-Centered Design track emphasizes designing systems with communities, clients, and frontline staff at the center. Sessions will showcase participatory design, co-design practices, and inclusive approaches that improve accessibility, trust, and usability. These strategies support our continued shift toward customer-focused service models and improved user experience.
- **Advance cross-system alignment and interoperability:** The Cross-Systems & Policy-Informed Alignment track focuses on breaking down silos across programs and partners. Sessions will highlight how agencies align policy, technology, and operations to deliver coordinated services while navigating regulatory complexity. This is particularly relevant as we continue strengthening integration across our program and technology environments.
- **Leverage data to drive program integrity and performance:** The Data-Driven & Evidence-Informed Program Delivery track demonstrates how agencies are using analytics, performance management, and evaluation to improve accountability, reduce disparities, and strengthen operational decision-making. These practices directly support our focus on accuracy, performance monitoring, and continuous improvement.
- **Explore forward-looking innovation through the Possibility Lab**: The Possibility Lab provides a unique forum to examine emerging ideas, conceptual models, and future-state approaches for human services IT. This space encourages public-sector leaders to challenge current constraints and explore next-generation solutions that may shape future modernization strategies.

Participation will support the agency by identifying peer-tested strategies to strengthen system modernization and automation, advancing our human-centered service delivery approach, enhancing

cross-program coordination and interoperability, and improving data-informed decision-making and program integrity. The conference will also inform future technology investments and procurement strategies while expanding national partnerships and collaboration opportunities. Upon return, I will share key takeaways with leadership and relevant teams to ensure knowledge transfer and practical application within our ongoing initiatives.

I am seeking approval for the registration fee and travel expenditures. The full conference registration is $815 for APHSA members / $900 for non-members per person. Early registration ends on August 26, 2025. The conference hotel block closes on August 26, 2025. The government room rate is $126 per night plus applicable taxes and fees. The standard room rate ranges from $224 to $244 per night plus applicable taxes and fees.

Below is a complete breakdown of the estimated conference costs:

Conference Registration	$
Hotel for 3 nights	$
Airfare/Mileage	$
Per Diem	$
Total	$

Conference registration includes two meals and two light networking receptions.

APHSA continues to implement appropriate health and safety guidance for conference participants. I am confident that attending ISM 2026 will provide meaningful, actionable value that supports our agency's modernization roadmap and strengthens our ability to deliver efficient, accountable, and customer-focused services.

This is a strategic opportunity to bring back proven practices, strengthen internal capability, and support responsible innovation with strong public accountability. I welcome the opportunity to discuss anticipated outcomes in more detail.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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