

# Civil and Human Rights Agencies in Iowa

A description of civil and human rights agencies in the State of Iowa

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission and local commissions work in partnership to enforce civil rights laws. Complaints are either processed locally or forwarded to ICRC depending upon the local commission's size/staff and jurisdiction. The Iowa Civil Rights Commission contracts with almost half of local commissions to assist in resolving non-housing complaints. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Housing and Urban Development contract with the state and local commissions to investigate allegations of employment and housing discrimination.

## Enforcement Agencies –

- The Iowa Civil Rights Commission (ICRC)

The Iowa Civil Rights Commission is a state agency that enforces the “Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965”. The Commission's major duty is to enforce state and federal statutes that prohibit discrimination in employment, public accommodations, housing, education and credit by investigating and litigating civil rights complaints. ICRC works to increase public awareness of civil rights and offers training throughout the state. The Commission also provides conflict resolution services and mediation for civil rights cases. In addition to its role as an enforcer of civil rights laws, the Commission actively educates the public to promote appreciation of diverse and inclusive communities and to prevent discrimination, biased conduct and stereotypes.

For more information on the complaint process:

<http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/docs/ICRC%20process.htm>

- Local Civil Rights Commissions (see page two)

The State of Iowa has twenty-six local civil and human rights agencies. The “Iowa Civil Rights Acts of 1965” requires cities with a population of 29,000 or greater to maintain an independent local civil rights agency or commission. When a city establishes a civil rights agency, the ordinance must cover the protections named in the “Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965”, while local policy-makers have the discretion of adding additional protections. ICRC has a library of the twenty-six different municipal ordinances. The protected characteristics vary from city to city; local procedures vary as well.

## Advocacy Agencies –

- The League of Human Rights Agencies, Inc.

The League of Iowa Human Rights Agencies is a voluntary, non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and advancement of human rights. Founded in the late 1970's, the League is a coalition of local human rights commissions. While its member commissions are public agencies, the League is a private, non-governmental organization.

- The Iowa Department of Human Rights

Created in 1986, the Iowa Department of Human Rights' mission is to promote equal access to work, services, and opportunities to enhance the well-being of Iowa's diverse populations. The Human Rights Department is comprised of nine divisions:

- Division on the Status of African Americans
- Division on the Status of Asian & Pacific Islanders
- Division of Latino Affairs
- Division of Persons with Disabilities
- Division on the Status of Women
- Division of Deaf Services
- Division of Community Action Agencies
- Division of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning
- Division on the Status of Native Americans

Each division has a commission or council that is appointed by the Governor. They are responsible for policy and decision making, recommending legislation, adopting rules, reviewing progress of programs, and advocating for the populations that they serve. The members of the commissions or councils represent a cross section of citizens who are politically, geographically and gender balanced.

## IOWA CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Iowa Civil Rights Commission ***	1-800-457-4416
Ames Human Relations Commission *	515-239-5101
Bettendorf Human Relations Commission *	563-344-4470
Burlington Human Rights Commission *	319-753-8178
Cedar Falls Human Rights Commission *	319-268-5112
Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission *	319-286-5036
Clinton Human Rights Commission *	563-242-3207
Council Bluffs Human Relations Commission	712-328-4618
Davenport Civil Rights Commission *	563-326-7888
Decorah Human Rights Commission *	563-382-3651
Des Moines Human Rights Commission **	515-283-4284
Dubuque Human Rights Commission **	563-589-4190
Fort Dodge Human Rights Commission *	515-576-2201
Fort Madison Human Rights Commission	319-372-7700
Grinnell Human Rights Commission *	641-269-3703
Indianola Human Rights Commission	515-961-9410
Iowa City Human Rights Commission *	319-356-5022
Marshalltown Human Rights Commission	641-754-5712
Mason City Human Rights Commission ***	641-421-3618
Mount Pleasant Human Rights Commission	319-385-1470
Muscatine Human Rights Commission *	563-264-1550
Ottumwa Human Rights Commission	641-683-3600
Sioux City Human Rights Commission **	712-279-6985
Urbandale Civil Rights Commission *	515-331-6703
Waterloo Commission on Human Rights **	319-291-4441
West Des Moines Human Rights Commission *	515-273-0633

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS *	515 242-5655
Division of Community Action Agencies	515-281-4204
Division of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning	515-242-5834
Division of Deaf Services	V/TTY 515-281-3164
Division of Latino Affairs	515-281-4080
Division of Persons with Disabilities	1-888-219-0471
Division on the Status of African Americans	515-281-3855
Division on the Status of Asian & Pacific Islanders	515-281-4223
Division on the Status of Native Americans	515-242-5655
Division on the Status of Women	515-281-4461

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:  
<http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc>

\* Member of The League of Iowa Human Rights Agencies

\*\* Member of The League of Iowa Human Rights Agencies; contracts with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

\*\*\* Member of The League of Iowa Human Rights Agencies; contracts with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development & U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission