

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
Community Advocacy & Services

# Our Iowa Plan

Iowa is equitable, just, accessible and inclusive



Government  
Access



Civic  
Engagement



Community  
Connection



Youth  
Leadership

*Seven Distinct Communities  
Working Together*

Native American Affairs  
Status of African Americans  
Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs  
Latino Affairs  
Deaf Services  
Persons with Disabilities  
Status of Women

Iowa is in a period of concentrated change. Over the next few decades, our state, and the people who live here, will experience a significant shift. As our population ages, we will experience increased physical challenges, from hearing loss to mobility concerns. Our youth are more ethnically and racially diverse than at any time in history. There are 180 languages spoken in Iowa today, representing 180 distinct cultures and ways of life. By 2050, analysis shows that 53% of our population will be non-white.

### **We must direct our resources to help people reach their full potential.**

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How we live, work and thrive in the future will be defined by the actions we take today. The Department of Human Rights is uniquely positioned to help Iowans embrace this change by creating an intentional, purposeful and coordinated program that is responsive to the needs of our state.

### **How do we do this?**

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We must shift how we do our work to create a different kind of results.

To set our direction, we began by defining our goal for Iowa – asking ourselves what Iowa would look like when we could call our work done. We then completed an examination of those characteristics, commitments and requirements that are fundamental to our identity and our reason for existing. Next, we identified which of those characteristics, commitments and requirements that we are positioned to influence, establishing universal points of distinction and focus for our organization.

We assessed where we could produce meaningful change in both the short and long term, and identified specific ways we could measure our impact on Iowa and with the populations we serve. This planning process has yielded the united strategic direction for the Division.

### **Strategies and Measures**

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- Improve access to government
  - Number of instances of government organizations receiving technical assistance from DHR (interpreting policies, rules and laws; referring to the right resource; advising on best practices)
  - Number of instances of training delivered to government organizations regarding underserved populations
  - Number of instances of Iowans receiving technical assistance to connect with government
  
- Increase civic engagement and participation
  - Number of people trained to self-advocate with state and local government
  - Number of people educated about voting
  - Number of people from underrepresented populations who serve on state and local boards and commissions
  
- Enhance engagement with the Department of Human Rights in our communities
  - Number of people connected to DHR through new media
  - Number of people attending informational/educational sessions delivered by DHR
  - Number of publications/media accepting DHR developed feature articles
  
- Improve leadership connections with youth
  - Number of youth age 14-24 who are involved in DHR initiatives
  - Number of people involved in DHR youth-oriented new media
  - Number of youth in DHR programs who achieve their leadership goals
  - Number of youth from underrepresented populations who are involved in DHR youth leadership programs