

**135.11 Public health duties of department.**

The department shall:

1. Exercise general supervision over the public health, promote public hygiene and sanitation, prevent substance use disorder, and, unless otherwise provided, enforce the laws relating to the same.
2. Conduct campaigns for the education of the people in hygiene and sanitation.
3. Issue health bulletins containing fundamental health principles and other health data deemed of public interest.
4. Make investigations and surveys in respect to the causes of disease and epidemics, and the effect of locality, employment, and living conditions upon the public health. For this purpose the department may use the services of the experts connected with the state hygienic laboratory.
5. Establish stations throughout the state for the distribution of antitoxins and vaccines to physicians, pharmacists, and other persons, at cost. All antitoxin and vaccine thus distributed shall be labeled "Iowa Department of Health and Human Services".
6. Exercise general supervision over the administration and enforcement of the sexually transmitted diseases and infections law, [chapter 139A, subchapter II](#).
7. Exercise sole jurisdiction over the disposal and transportation of the dead bodies of human beings and prescribe the methods to be used in preparing such bodies for disposal and transportation. However, the department may approve a request for an exception to the application of specific embalming and disposition rules adopted pursuant to [this subsection](#) if such rules would otherwise conflict with tenets and practices of a recognized religious denomination to which the deceased individual adhered or of which denomination the deceased individual was a member. The department shall inform the board of mortuary science of any such approved exception which may affect services provided by a funeral director licensed pursuant to [chapter 156](#).
8. Establish, publish, and enforce rules which require companies, corporations, and other entities to obtain a permit from the department prior to scattering cremated human remains.
9. Exercise general supervision over the administration and enforcement of the vital statistics law, [chapter 144](#).
10. Administer healthy aging and essential public health services by approving grants of state funds to the local boards of health for the purposes of promoting healthy aging throughout the lifespan and enhancing health promotion and disease prevention services, and by providing guidelines for the approval of the grants and allocation of the state funds. Guidelines, evaluation requirements, and formula allocation procedures for the services shall be established by the department by rule.
11. Administer [chapters 125, 136A, 136C, 139A, 142, 142A, 144, and 147A](#).
12. Consult with the office of statewide clinical education programs at the university of Iowa college of medicine and annually submit a report to the general assembly by January 15 verifying the number of physicians in active practice in Iowa by county who are engaged in providing obstetrical care. To the extent data are readily available, the report shall include information concerning the number of deliveries per year by specialty and county, the age of physicians performing deliveries, and the number of current year graduates of the university of Iowa college of medicine and the Des Moines university — osteopathic medical center entering into residency programs in obstetrics, gynecology, and family practice. The report may include additional data relating to access to obstetrical services that may be available.
13. Administer the statewide maternal and child health program and the program for children with disabilities by conducting mobile and regional child health specialty clinics and conducting other activities to improve the health of low-income women and children and to promote the welfare of children with actual or potential conditions which may cause disabilities and children with chronic illnesses in accordance with the requirements of Tit. V of the federal Social Security Act. The department shall provide technical assistance to encourage the coordination and collaboration of state agencies in developing outreach centers which provide publicly supported services for pregnant women, infants, and children. The department shall also, through cooperation and collaborative agreements with

the mobile and regional child health specialty clinics, establish common intake proceedings for maternal and child health services. The department shall work in cooperation with the legislative services agency in monitoring the effectiveness of the maternal and child health centers, including the provision of transportation for patient appointments and the keeping of scheduled appointments.

14. Establish, publish, and enforce rules requiring prompt reporting of methemoglobinemia, pesticide poisoning, and the reportable poisonings and illnesses established pursuant to [section 139A.21](#).

15. Collect and maintain reports of pesticide poisonings and other poisonings, illnesses, or injuries caused by selected chemical or physical agents, including methemoglobinemia and pesticide and fertilizer hypersensitivity; and compile and publish, annually, a statewide and county-by-county profile based on the reports.

16. Adopt rules which require personnel of a licensed hospice, of a homemaker-home health aide provider agency which receives state homemaker-home health aide funds, or of an agency which provides respite care services and receives funds to complete training concerning blood-borne pathogens, including human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis, consistent with standards from the federal occupational safety and health administration.

17. Adopt rules which require all emergency medical services personnel, fire fighters, and law enforcement personnel to complete training concerning blood-borne pathogens, including human immunodeficiency virus and viral hepatitis, consistent with standards from the federal occupational safety and health administration.

18. Adopt rules which provide for the testing of a convicted or alleged offender for the human immunodeficiency virus pursuant to [sections 915.40 through 915.43](#). The rules shall provide for the provision of counseling, health care, and support services to the victim.

19. Establish ad hoc and advisory committees to the director in areas where technical expertise is not otherwise readily available. Members may be compensated for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. To encourage health consumer participation, public members may also receive a per diem as specified in [section 7E.6](#) if funds are available and the per diem is determined to be appropriate by the director. Expense moneys paid to the members shall be paid from funds appropriated to the department. A majority of the members of such a committee constitutes a quorum.

20. Administer annual grants to county boards of health for the purpose of conducting programs for the testing of private water supply wells, the closing of abandoned private water supply wells, and the renovation or rehabilitation of private water supply wells. Grants shall be funded through moneys transferred to the department from the agriculture management account of the groundwater protection fund pursuant to [section 455E.11, subsection 2](#), paragraph “b”, subparagraph (2), subparagraph division (b). The department shall adopt rules relating to the awarding of the grants.

21. Establish and administer, if sufficient funds are available to the department, a program to assess and forecast health workforce supply and demand in the state for the purpose of identifying current and projected workforce needs. The program may collect, analyze, and report data that furthers the purpose of the program. The program shall not release information that permits identification of individual respondents of program surveys.

22. Develop and maintain the statewide perinatal program based on the recommendations of the American academy of pediatrics and the American college of obstetricians and gynecologists contained in the most recent edition of the guidelines for perinatal care, and adopt rules in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) to implement those recommendations. Hospitals within the state shall determine whether to participate in the statewide perinatal program, and select the hospital’s level of participation in the program. A hospital having determined to participate in the program shall comply with the guidelines appropriate to the level of participation selected by the hospital. Perinatal program surveys and reports are privileged and confidential and are not subject to discovery, subpoena, or other means of legal compulsion for their release to a person other than the affected hospital, and are not admissible in evidence in a judicial or administrative proceeding other than a proceeding involving verification of the participating hospital under [this subsection](#).

23. In consultation with the department of corrections, the antibiotic resistance task force, and the American federation of state, county and municipal employees, develop educational programs to increase awareness and utilization of infection control practices in institutions listed in [section 904.102](#).

24. Administer the Iowa youth survey, in collaboration with other state agencies, as appropriate, every two years to students in grades six, eight, and eleven in Iowa's public and nonpublic schools. Survey data shall be evaluated and reported, with aggregate data available online at the Iowa youth survey internet site.

25. Adopt rules requiring ambulatory surgical centers to report quality data to the department of health and human services that is consistent with the data required to be reported to the centers for Medicare and Medicaid services of the United States department of health and human services as authorized by the Medicare Improvements and Extension Act of 2006 under Tit. I of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-432, and the regulations adopted under such Acts. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, nothing in [this subsection](#) shall require an ambulatory surgical center to provide health data to the department of health and human services or any other public or private entity that is in addition to, different than, or exceeds the quality data required to be reported to the centers for Medicare and Medicaid services of the United States department of health and human services.

1. [C97, §2565; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(1)]

2, 3. [C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(2, 3)]

4. [C97, §2565; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(4)]

5, 6. [C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(8, 9); C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(7, 8)]

7. [S13, §2572-a, -b, -c; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(11); C73, §135.11(10); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(9)]

8. [C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(12); C73, §135.11(11); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(10)]

9. [S13, §2575-a42; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(13); C73, §135.11(12); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(11)]

10. [C97, §2565; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(14); C73, §135.11(13); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(12)]

11, 12. [C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(15, 16); C73, §135.11(14, 15); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(13, 14)]

13. [C97, §2565; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2191; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, §135.11(17); C73, §135.11(16); C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(15)]

14. [C75, 77, 79, 81, §135.11(16)]

15. [82 Acts, ch 1260, §55]

83 Acts, ch 27, §7; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §1104; 87 Acts, ch 8, §2; 87 Acts, ch 115, §22; 87 Acts, ch 225, §202; 88 Acts, ch 1224, §12; 89 Acts, ch 304, §103; 90 Acts, ch 1259, §10; 91 Acts, ch 258, §29; 93 Acts, ch 140, §4; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §11; 94 Acts, ch 1132, §9; 96 Acts, ch 1036, §2; 96 Acts, ch 1128, §1; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §23; 97 Acts, ch 23, §13; 97 Acts, ch 197, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1053, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1087, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1090, §60, 84; 98 Acts, ch 1221, §12; 99 Acts, ch 141, §2; 2000 Acts, ch 1058, §14; 2000 Acts, ch 1066, §37; 2000 Acts, ch 1223, §18; 2001 Acts, ch 58, §3; 2001 Acts, ch 122, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 184, §6; 2001 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 1, §25, 28; 2002 Acts, ch 1108, §7; 2003 Acts, ch 33, §8, 11; 2003 Acts, ch 35, §45, 49; 2003 Acts, ch 44, §36; 2004 Acts, ch 1167, §1; 2005 Acts, ch 89, §2, 3; 2007 Acts, ch 10, §18; 2007 Acts, ch 159, §17; 2008 Acts, ch 1058, §1, 2, 15; 2008 Acts, ch 1084, §11; 2008 Acts, ch 1088, §83; 2008 Acts, ch 1180, §20; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §263; 2009 Acts, ch 151, §30; 2010 Acts, ch 1088, §4 – 6; 2011 Acts, ch 63, §33; 2012 Acts, ch 1113, §22; 2013 Acts, ch 129, §49; 2014 Acts, ch 1106, §1; 2017 Acts, ch 148, §2, 20; 2018 Acts, ch 1041, §127; 2019 Acts, ch 91, §1; 2023 Acts, ch 16, §31; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §126; 2024 Acts, ch 1170, §210

Referred to in §237.3, 455E.11  
Laboratory tests, §263.7, 263.8

For future amendment to subsection 11, effective July 1, 2025, see 2024 Acts, ch 1161, §21, 137  
Subsection 22 amended