

15.108 Primary responsibilities.

The department has the following areas of primary responsibility:

1. *Finance.* To provide for financial assistance to businesses, local governments, and educational institutions through loans and grants of state and federal funds to enable them to promote and achieve economic development within the state. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Expend federal funds received as community development block grants as provided in [section 8.41](#).

b. Provide staff assistance to the corporation formed under authority of [sections 15E.11 to 15E.16](#) to receive and disburse funds to further the overall development and well-being of the state.

2. *Marketing.* To coordinate, develop, and make available technical services on the state and local levels in order to aid businesses in their start-up or expansion in the state. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Establish within the department a federal procurement office staffed with individuals experienced in marketing to federal agencies.

b. Aid in the marketing and promotion of Iowa products and services. The department may adopt, subject to the approval of the board, a label or trademark identifying Iowa products and services together with any other appropriate design or inscription and this label or trademark shall be registered in the office of the secretary of state. In authorizing the use of a marketing label or trademark to an applicant, the state, and any state agency, official, or employee involved in the authorization, is immune from a civil suit for damages, including but not limited to a suit based on contract, breach of warranty, negligence, strict liability, or tort. Authorization of the use of a marketing label or trademark by the state, or any state agency, official, or employee, is not an express or implied guarantee or warranty concerning the safety, fitness, merchantability, or use of the applicant's product or service. This paragraph does not create a duty of care to the applicant or any other person.

(1) The department may register or file the label or trademark under the laws of the United States or any foreign country which permits registration, making the registration as an association or through an individual for the use and benefit of the department.

(2) The department shall establish guidelines for granting authority to use the label or trademark to persons or firms who make a satisfactory showing to the department that the product or service meets the guidelines as manufactured, processed, or originating in Iowa. The trademark or label use shall be registered with the department.

(3) A person shall not use the label or trademark or advertise it, or attach it on any promotional literature, manufactured article or agricultural product without the approval of the department.

(4) The department may deny permission to use the label or trademark if the department believes that the planned use would adversely affect the use of the label or trademark as a marketing tool for Iowa products or its use would be inconsistent with the marketing objectives of the department. Notwithstanding [chapter 17A](#), the Iowa administrative procedure Act, the department may suspend permission to use the label or trademark prior to an evidentiary hearing which shall be held within a reasonable period of time following the denial.

c. Promote an import substitution program to encourage the purchase of domestically produced Iowa goods by identifying and inventorying potential purchasers and the firms that can supply them, contacting the suppliers to determine their interest and ability in meeting the potential demand, and making the buyers aware of the potential suppliers.

d. Aid in the promotion and development of the agricultural processing industry in the state.

3. *Local government and service coordination.* To coordinate the development of state and local government economic development-related programs in order to promote efficient and economic use of federal, state, local, and private resources.

a. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

(1) Provide the mechanisms to promote and facilitate the coordination of management and technical assistance services to Iowa businesses and industries and to communities by

the department, by the community colleges, and by the state board of regents institutions, including the small business development centers, the center for industrial research and service, and extension activities. In order to achieve this goal, the department may establish periodic meetings with representatives from the community colleges and the state board of regents institutions to develop this coordination. The community colleges and the state board of regents institutions shall cooperate with the department in seeking to avoid duplication of economic development services through greater coordinating efforts in the utilization of space, personnel, and materials and in the development of referral and outreach networks. The department shall also establish a registry of applications for federal funds related to management and technical assistance programs.

(2) Provide office space and staff assistance to the city development board as provided in [section 368.9](#).

(3) Provide technical and financial assistance to local and regional government organizations in Iowa, analyze intergovernmental relations in Iowa, and recommend policies to state agencies, local governments, the governor, and the general assembly as these pertain to economic development.

(4) Train field experts in local development and through them provide continuing support to small local organizations.

(5) Encourage cities, counties, local and regional government organizations, and local and regional economic development organizations to develop and implement comprehensive community and economic development plans. In evaluating financial assistance applications, the department shall award supplementary credit to applications submitted by cities, counties, local and regional government organizations, and local and regional economic development organizations that have developed a comprehensive community and economic development plan.

b. In addition to the duties specified in paragraph “a”, the department may:

(1) Perform state and interstate comprehensive planning and related activities.

(2) Perform planning for metropolitan or regional areas or areas of rapid urbanization including interstate areas.

(3) Provide planning assistance to cities, counties, local and regional government organizations, and local and regional economic development organizations. Subject to the availability of funds for this purpose, the department may provide financial assistance to cities, counties, local and regional government organizations, and local and regional economic development organizations for the purpose of developing community and economic development plans.

(4) Assist public or private universities and colleges and urban centers to:

(a) Organize, initiate, develop, and expand programs which will provide special training in skills needed for economic and efficient community development.

(b) Support state and local research that is needed in connection with community development.

4. *Exporting.* To promote and aid in the marketing and sale of Iowa industrial and agricultural products and services outside of the state. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Perform the duties and activities specified for the agricultural marketing program under [sections 15.201](#) and [15.202](#).

b. To the extent deemed feasible and in coordination with the board of regents and the area community colleges, work to establish a conversational foreign language training program.

c. To the extent deemed feasible, promote and assist in the creation of one or more international currency and barter exchanges.

d. Seek assistance and advice from the export advisory board appointed by the governor and the Iowa district export council which advises the United States department of commerce. The governor is authorized to appoint an export advisory board.

e. To the extent deemed feasible, develop a program in which graduates of Iowa institutions of higher education or former residents of the state who are residing in foreign countries and who are familiar with the language and customs of those countries are

utilized as cultural advisors for the department and for Iowa businesses participating in trade missions and other foreign trade activities, and in which foreign students studying at Iowa institutions of higher education are provided means to establish contact with Iowa businesses engaged in export activities, and in which foreign students returning to their home countries are used as contacts for trading purposes.

5. *Tourism.* To promote Iowa's public and private recreation and tourism opportunities to Iowans and out-of-state visitors and aid promotional and development efforts by local governments and the private sector. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Build general public consensus and support for Iowa's public and private recreation, tourism, and leisure opportunities and needs.

b. Recommend high quality site management and maintenance standards for all public and private recreation and tourism opportunities.

c. Coordinate and develop with the department of transportation, the department of natural resources, the department of cultural affairs, the generation Iowa commission, the vision Iowa board, other state agencies, and local and regional entities public interpretation, marketing, and education programs that encourage Iowans and out-of-state visitors to participate in the recreational and leisure opportunities available in Iowa. The department shall establish and administer a program that helps connect both Iowa residents and residents of other states to new and existing Iowa experiences as a means to enhance the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the state. The program shall include a broad range of new opportunities, both rural and urban, including main street destinations, green space initiatives, and artistic and cultural attractions.

d. Coordinate with other divisions of the department to add Iowa's recreation, tourism, and leisure resources to the agricultural and other images which characterize the state on a national level.

e. Consolidate and coordinate the many existing sources of information about local, regional, statewide, and national opportunities into a comprehensive, state-of-the-art information delivery system for Iowans and out-of-state visitors.

f. Formulate and direct marketing and promotion programs to specific out-of-state market populations exhibiting the highest potential for consuming Iowa's public and private tourism products.

g. Provide ongoing long-range planning on a statewide basis for improvements in Iowa's public and private tourism opportunities.

h. Provide the private sector and local communities with advisory services including analysis of existing resources and deficiencies, general development and financial planning, marketing guidance, hospitality training, and others.

i. Measure the change in public opinion of Iowans regarding the importance of recreation, tourism, and leisure.

j. Provide annual monitoring of tourism visitation by Iowans and out-of-state visitors to Iowa attractions, public and private employment levels, and other economic indicators of the recreation and tourism industry and report predictable trends.

k. Identify new business investment opportunities for private enterprise in the recreation and tourism industry.

l. Cooperate with and seek assistance from the state department of cultural affairs.

m. Seek coordination with and assistance from the state department of natural resources in regard to the Mississippi river parkway under [chapter 308](#) for the purposes of furthering tourism efforts.

n. Collect, assemble, and publish a list of farmers who have agreed to host overnight guests, for purposes of promoting agriculture in the state and farm tourism, to the extent that funds are available.

o. Establish a revolving fund to receive contributions to be used for cooperative advertising efforts. Fees and royalties obtained as a result of licensing the use of logos and other creative materials for sale by private vendors on selected products may be deposited in the fund. The department shall adopt by rule a schedule for fees and royalties to be charged.

p. Establish, if the department deems necessary, a revolving fund to receive contributions

and funds from the product sales center to be used for start-up or expansion of tourism special events, fairs, and festivals as established by department rule.

6. *Employee training and retraining.* To develop employee training and retraining strategies in coordination with the department of education and department of workforce development as tools for business development, business expansion, and enhanced competitiveness of Iowa industry, which will promote economic growth and the creation of new job opportunities and to administer related programs. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Coordinate and perform the duties specified under the Iowa industrial new jobs training Act in [chapter 260E](#), the Iowa jobs training Act in [chapter 260F](#), and the workforce development fund in [section 15.341](#).

b. In performing the duties set out in paragraph “a”, the department shall:

(1) Work closely with representatives of business and industry, labor organizations, the department of education, the department of workforce development, and educational institutions to determine the employee training needs of Iowa employers, and where possible, provide for the development of industry-specific training programs.

(2) Promote Iowa employee training programs to potential and existing Iowa employers and to employer associations.

(3) Stimulate the creation of innovative employee training and skills development activities, including business consortium and supplier network training programs, and new employee development training models.

(4) Coordinate employee training activities with other economic development finance programs to stimulate job growth.

(5) Review workforce development initiatives as they relate to the state’s economic development agenda, recommending action as necessary to meet the needs of Iowa’s communities and businesses.

(6) Incorporate workforce development as a component of community-based economic development activities.

7. *Small business.* To provide assistance to small business, targeted small business, microenterprises, and entrepreneurs creating small businesses to ensure continued viability and growth. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

a. Receive and review complaints from individual small businesses that relate to rules or decisions of state agencies, and refer questions and complaints to a governmental agency where appropriate.

b. Establish and administer the regulatory information service provided for in [section 15E.17](#).

c. Aid for the development and implementation of the Iowa targeted small business procurement Act established in [sections 73.15 through 73.21](#) and the targeted small business financial assistance program established in [section 15.247](#).

(1) (a) By December 1 of each year, the department of administrative services shall file a written report with the department of economic development regarding the Iowa targeted small business procurement Act activities during the previous fiscal year. At a minimum, the report shall include a summary of all activities undertaken by the department of administrative services in an effort to maximize the utilization of the targeted small business procurement Act.

(b) By December 1 of each year, the department of inspections and appeals shall file a written report with the department of economic development regarding certifications of targeted small businesses. At a minimum, the report shall include the number of certified targeted small businesses for the previous year and the increase or decrease in that number during the previous fiscal year compared to the prior fiscal year, the number of targeted small businesses that have been decertified over the previous fiscal year, and a summary of all activities undertaken by the department of inspections and appeals regarding targeted small business certification.

(c) By December 1 of each year, the department of economic development shall compile an internal report regarding the targeted small business financial assistance program. At a minimum, the report shall contain the number of loans, loan guarantees, and grants

distributed during the previous fiscal year, the individual amounts provided to targeted small businesses during the previous fiscal year, and how many financial assistance awards to targeted small businesses were the subject of repayment or collection activity during the previous fiscal year.

(d) By December 1 of each year, the targeted small business marketing and compliance manager of the department of economic development shall compile a list of the procurement goals established pursuant to [section 73.16, subsection 2](#), and the performance of each agency in meeting the goals. The compilation of the performance of each agency shall be based upon the reports required to be filed under [section 73.16, subsection 2](#).

(e) By January 15 of each year, the department of economic development shall submit to the governor and the general assembly a compilation of reports required under this subparagraph.

(2) The director, with cooperation from the other state agencies, shall publicize the procurement goal program established in [sections 73.15 through 73.21](#) to targeted small businesses and to agencies of state government, attempt to locate targeted small businesses able to perform contracts, and encourage program participation. The director may request the cooperation of the department of administrative services, the state department of transportation, the state board of regents, or any other agency of state government in publicizing this program.

(3) The director, in conjunction with other state agencies, shall publicize the financial assistance program established in [section 15.247](#) to targeted small businesses.

(4) When the director determines, or is notified by the head of another agency of state government, that a targeted small business is unable to perform a procurement contract, the director shall assist the small business in attempting to remedy the causes of the inability to perform. In assisting the small business, the director may use any management or financial assistance programs available through state or governmental agencies or private sources.

(5) The department of economic development shall establish targeted small business advocate service providers for purposes of providing mentoring, outreach, and professional development services to targeted small businesses certified pursuant to [section 10A.104](#). Targeted small business advocate service providers shall be established through a request for proposals process. Entities eligible to bid under the request for proposals process shall include but not be limited to a business accelerator, a small business development center, or any organization that provides mentoring, outreach, and professional development services to businesses. A person serving on or staffing a governor's task force on targeted small businesses during calendar year 2006 shall not be eligible to be part of a bid under the request for proposals process until after July 1, 2009. A person serving on or staffing a governor's targeted small business advisory council shall not be eligible to be part of a bid under the request for proposals process until three years following the termination of service or staffing the advisory council. The advice and services provided by providers shall extend to all areas of business management in its practical application, including but not limited to accounting, engineering, drafting, grant writing, obtaining financing, locating bond markets, market analysis, and projections of profit and loss.

d. If determined necessary by the board, provide training for bank loan officers to increase their level of expertise in regard to business loans.

e. To the extent feasible, cooperate with the department of workforce development to establish a program to educate existing employers and new or potential employers on the rates and workings of the state unemployment compensation program and the state workers' compensation program.

f. Study the feasibility of reducing the total number of state licenses, permits, and certificates required to conduct small businesses.

g. Encourage and assist small businesses to obtain state contracts and subcontracts by cooperating with the directors of purchasing in the department of administrative services, the state board of regents, and the state department of transportation in performing the following functions:

(1) Developing a uniform small business vendor application form which can be adopted by all agencies and departments of state government to identify small businesses and targeted

small businesses which desire to sell goods and services to the state. This form shall also contain information which can be used to determine certification as a targeted small business pursuant to [section 10A.104, subsection 8](#).

- (2) Compiling and maintaining a comprehensive source list of small businesses.
- (3) Assuring that responsible small businesses are solicited on each suitable purchase.
- (4) Assisting small businesses in complying with the procedures for bidding and negotiating for contracts.
- (5) Simplifying procurement specifications and terms in order to increase the opportunities for small business participation.
- (6) When economically feasible, dividing total purchases into tasks or quantities to permit maximum small business participation.
- (7) Preparing timely forecasts of repetitive contracting requirements by dollar volume and types of contracts to enhance the participation of responsible small businesses in the public purchasing process.
- (8) Developing a mechanism to measure and monitor the amount of participation by small businesses in state procurement.

h. In addition, the department shall provide assistance to a small business advisory council which shall consist of nine members appointed as follows:

(1) Not more than five of the members shall be from the same political party. The governor shall appoint the members of the advisory council to four-year terms beginning and ending as provided by [section 69.19](#), subject to confirmation by the senate. Two-thirds of the membership of the advisory council shall consist of individuals who own and operate a small business or individuals employed in the management of a small business.

(2) A vacancy on the advisory council shall be filled in the same manner as regular appointments are made for the unexpired portion of the regular term.

(3) The advisory council shall meet in May of each year for the purpose of electing one of its members as chairperson and one of its members as vice chairperson. However, the chairperson and vice chairperson shall not be from the same political party. The advisory council shall meet at least quarterly.

(4) Members of the advisory council shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. All expenses shall be paid from appropriations to the department for those purposes.

(5) The duties of the advisory council may include but shall not be limited to the following:

(a) Advise and consult with the board with respect to matters which are of concern to small business.

(b) Submit recommendations to the board relating to actual or proposed activities concerning small business.

(c) Submit recommendations for legislative or administrative action.

(d) Review and monitor small business programs and agencies in order to determine their effectiveness and whether they complement or compete with each other, and to coordinate the delivery of programs and services aimed at small businesses.

(e) Initiate small business studies as deemed necessary.

(f) Provide other information or perform other duties which would be of assistance to small business.

8. *Case management.* To provide case management assistance to low-income persons for the purpose of establishing or expanding small business ventures as provided in [section 15.246](#).

9. *Miscellaneous.* To provide other necessary services, the department shall:

a. Collect and assemble, or cause to have collected and assembled, all pertinent information available regarding the industrial, agricultural, and public and private recreation and tourism opportunities and possibilities of the state of Iowa, including raw materials and products that may be produced from them; power and water resources; transportation facilities; available markets; the banking and financing facilities; the availability of industrial sites; the advantages of the state as a whole, and the particular sections of the state, as industrial locations; the development of a grain alcohol motor fuel industry and its related products; and other fields of research and study as the board deems necessary. This

information, as far as possible, shall consider both the encouragement of new industrial enterprises in the state and the expansion of industries now existing within the state, and allied fields to those industries. The information shall also consider the changing composition of the Iowa family and the level of poverty among different age groups and different family structures in Iowa society and their impact on Iowa families.

b. Apply for, receive, contract for, and expend federal funds and grants and funds and grants from other sources.

c. Except as otherwise provided in [sections 8A.110, 260C.14, and 262.9](#), provide that an inventor whose research is funded in whole or in part by the state shall assign to the state a proportionate part of the inventor's rights to a letter patent resulting from that research. Royalties or earnings derived from a letter patent shall be paid to the treasurer of state and credited by the treasurer to the general fund of the state. However, the department in conjunction with other state agencies, including the board of regents, shall provide incentives to inventors whose research is funded in whole or in part by the state for having their products produced in the state. These incentives may include taking a smaller portion of the inventor's royalties or earnings than would otherwise occur under this paragraph or other provisions of the law.

d. Administer or oversee federal rural economic development programs in the state.

e. At the director's discretion, accept payment by credit card of any fees, interest, penalties, subscriptions, registrations, purchases, or other payments, or any portion of such payments, which are due or collected by the department. The department may adjust the amount of the payment to reflect the costs of processing the payment as determined by the treasurer of state and the payment by credit card shall include, in addition to all other charges, any discount charged by the credit card issuer.

f. Provide technical assistance to individuals who are pursuing the purchase and operation of employee-owned businesses.

10. *Economic development planning and research activities.* To provide leadership and support for economic and community development activities statewide. To carry out this responsibility, the department may establish a research center for economic development programs and services whose duties may include but are not limited to the following:

a. Implementation of a comprehensive statewide economic development planning process and provision of leadership, coordination, and support to regional and local economic and community planning efforts.

b. Coordination of the delivery of economic and community development programs with other local, regional, state, federal, and private sector programs and activities.

c. Collection and analysis of data and information, development of databases and performing research to keep abreast of Iowa's present economic base, changing market demands, and emerging trends, including identification of targeted markets and development of marketing strategies.

d. Provision of access to databases to facilitate sales and exports by Iowa businesses.

e. Establishment of a database of community and economic information to aid local, regional, and statewide economic development and service delivery efforts.

11. *Housing development.*

a. To provide assistance to local governments, housing organizations, economic development groups, and other local entities to increase the development of housing in the state and to improve the quality of existing housing in order to maximize the effects of other economic development efforts.

b. To carry out this responsibility, the department shall:

(1) Provide housing needs assessments.

(2) Provide a one-stop source, in coordination with other agencies of the state, for housing development assistance.

(3) Establish programs which assist communities or local entities in developing housing to meet a range of community needs, including programs to assist homeless shelter operations

and programs to assist in the development of housing to enhance economic development opportunities in the community.

86 Acts, ch 1142, §1; 86 Acts, ch 1238, §44; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §808; 87 Acts, ch 101, §2; 87 Acts, ch 106, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1098, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1273, §6 – 8; 89 Acts, ch 196, §1; 89 Acts, ch 209, §1; 89 Acts, ch 258, §12; 90 Acts, ch 1047, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1140, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1156, §3; 90 Acts, ch 1255, §2; 91 Acts, ch 28, §1; 91 Acts, ch 109, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1089, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1244, §11; 93 Acts, ch 167, §9; 93 Acts, ch 180, §34, 35; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §4; 94 Acts, ch 1199, §16; 96 Acts, ch 1186, §1 – 4, 23; 97 Acts, ch 15, §1, 2; 97 Acts, ch 214, §1; 98 Acts, ch 1175, §1, 2; 99 Acts, ch 197, §20, 23; 2001 Acts, ch 61, §2 – 5; 2003 Acts, ch 44, §9; 2003 Acts, ch 71, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §138, 286; 2003 Acts, 1st Ex, ch 1, §76, 133

[2003 Acts, 1st Ex, ch 1, §76, 133, amendment adding new paragraph g to subsection 9, stricken pursuant to *Rants v. Vilsack*, 684 N.W.2d 193]

2006 Acts, ch 1100, §1; 2007 Acts, ch 126, §5; 2007 Acts, ch 207, §6, 18; 2008 Acts, ch 1122, §4, 7 – 9; 2008 Acts, ch 1178, §2

Referred to in [§8A.111](#), [15.104](#), [19B.7](#), [73.20](#), [455B.199B](#)

Confirmation, see §2.32