

CHAPTER 217

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Referred to in [§252B.9](#)

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SUBCHAPTER II

FIELD SERVICES ORGANIZATION

SUBCHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**217.1 Programs of department.**

There is established a department of human services to administer programs designed to improve the well-being and productivity of the people of the state of Iowa. The department shall concern itself with the problems of human behavior, adjustment, and daily living through the administration of programs of family, child, and adult welfare, economic assistance including costs of medical care, rehabilitation toward self-care and support, delinquency prevention and control, treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders, care and treatment of persons with mental illness or an intellectual disability, and other related programs as provided by law.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.1]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §63, 159; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §38; 2012 Acts, ch 1019, §20](#)

Referred to in [§7E.5](#)

Department to develop and implement strategies to increase efficiencies by reducing paperwork, decreasing staff time, and providing more streamlined services; annual progress report to joint appropriations subcommittee on health and human services; [2010 Acts, ch 1031, §335](#)

217.2 Council on human services.

1. *a.* There is created within the department of human services a council on human services which shall act in a policymaking and advisory capacity on matters within the jurisdiction of the department. The council shall consist of seven voting members appointed by the governor subject to confirmation by the senate. Appointments shall be made on the basis of interest in public affairs, good judgment, and knowledge and ability in the field of human services. Appointments shall be made to provide a diversity of interest and point of view in the membership and without regard to religious opinions or affiliations. The voting members of the council shall serve for six-year staggered terms.

b. Each term of a voting member shall commence and end as provided by [section 69.19](#).

c. All voting members of the council shall be electors of the state of Iowa. No more than four members shall belong to the same political party and no more than two members shall, at the time of appointment, reside in the same congressional district. At least one member of the council shall be a member of a county board of supervisors at the time of appointment to the council. Vacancies occurring during a term of office shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the balance of the unexpired term subject to confirmation by the senate.

2. In addition to the voting members described in [subsection 1](#), the membership of the council shall include four legislators as ex officio, nonvoting members. The four legislators shall be appointed one each by the majority leader of the senate, the minority leader of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the minority leader of the house of representatives for terms as provided in [section 69.16B](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.2; 81 Acts, ch 78, §20, 21]

83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159; 2009 Acts, ch 115, §1

Confirmation, see §2.32

217.3 Duties of council.

The council on human services shall:

1. Organize annually and select a chairperson and vice chairperson.
2. Adopt and establish policy for the operation and conduct of the department of human services, subject to any guidelines which may be adopted by the general assembly, and the implementation of all services and programs thereunder.
3. Report immediately to the governor any failure by the director or any administrator of the department of human services to carry out any of the policy decisions or directives of the council.
4. Approve the budget of the department of human services prior to submission to the governor. Prior to approval of the budget, the council shall publicize and hold a public hearing to provide explanations and hear questions, opinions, and suggestions regarding the budget. Invitations to the hearing shall be extended to the governor, the governor-elect, the director of the department of management, and other persons deemed by the council as integral to the budget process. The budget materials submitted to the governor shall include a review of options for revising the medical assistance program made available by federal action or by actions implemented by other states as identified by the department, the medical assistance advisory council and the executive committee of the medical assistance advisory council created in [section 249A.4B](#), and by county representatives. The review shall address what potential revisions could be made in this state and how the changes would be beneficial to Iowans.
5. Insure that all programs administered or services rendered by the department directly to any citizen or through a local board of welfare to any citizen are coordinated and integrated so that any citizen does not receive a duplication of services from various departments or local agencies that could be rendered by one department or local agency. If the council finds that such is not the case, it shall hear and determine which department or local agency shall provide the needed service or services and enter an order of their determination by resolution of the council which must be concurred in by at least a majority of the members. Thereafter such order or resolution of the council shall be obeyed by all state departments and local agencies to which it is directed.

6. Adopt all necessary rules recommended by the director or administrators of divisions hereinafter established prior to their promulgation pursuant to [chapter 17A](#).

7. Approve the establishment of any new division or reorganization, consolidation or abolition of any established division prior to the same becoming effective.

8. Recommend to the governor the names of individuals qualified for the position of director of human services when a vacancy exists in the office.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.3]

83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159; 89 Acts, ch 283, §18; 95 Acts, ch 205, §36; 98 Acts, ch 1155, §7; 2005 Acts, ch 120, §1

Referred to in [§225C.6](#), [§249A.4B](#)

217.3A Advisory committees.

1. *General.* The council on human services shall establish and utilize the advisory committees identified in [this section](#) and may establish and utilize other advisory committees. The council shall establish appointment provisions, membership terms, operating guidelines, and other operational requirements for committees established pursuant to [this section](#).

2. *Child abuse prevention.* The council shall establish a child abuse prevention program advisory committee to support the child abuse prevention program implemented in accordance with [section 235A.1](#). The duties of the advisory committee shall include all of the following:

a. Advise the director of human services and the administrator of the division of the department of human services responsible for child and family programs regarding expenditures of funds received for the child abuse prevention program.

b. Review the implementation and effectiveness of legislation and administrative rules concerning the child abuse prevention program.

c. Recommend changes in legislation and administrative rules to the general assembly and the appropriate administrative officials.

d. Require reports from state agencies and other entities as necessary to perform its duties.

e. Receive and review complaints from the public concerning the operation and management of the child abuse prevention program.

f. Approve grant proposals.

3. *Child support.*

a. The council shall establish a child support advisory committee.

(1) Members of the advisory committee shall include at least one district judge and representatives of custodial parent groups, noncustodial parent groups, the general assembly, the office of ombudsman, the Iowa state bar association, the Iowa county attorneys association, and other constituencies which have an interest in child support enforcement issues, appointed by the respective entity.

(2) The legislative members of the advisory committee shall be appointed as follows: one senator each by the majority leader of the senate, after consultation with the president of the senate, and by the minority leader of the senate, and one member of the house of representatives each by the speaker of the house of representatives, after consultation with the majority leader of the house of representatives, and by the minority leader of the house of representatives.

b. The legislative members of the advisory committee shall serve for terms as provided in [section 69.16B](#). Appointments shall comply with [sections 69.16](#) and [69.16A](#). Vacancies shall be filled by the original appointing authority and in the manner of the original appointments.

c. The child support advisory committee shall assist the department in all of the following activities:

(1) Review of existing child support guidelines and recommendations for revision.

(2) Examination of the operation of the child support system to identify program improvements or enhancements which would increase the effectiveness of securing parental support and parental involvement.

(3) Recommendation of legislation which would clarify and improve state law regarding support for children.

d. The committee shall receive input from the public regarding any child support issues.

4. *Child welfare.*

a. The council shall establish a child welfare advisory committee to advise the department of human services on programmatic and budgetary matters related to the provision or purchase of child welfare services. The committee shall meet to review departmental budgets, policies, and programs, and proposed budgets, policies, and programs, and to make recommendations and suggestions to make the state child welfare budget, programs, and policies more effective in serving families and children.

b. The membership of the advisory committee shall include representatives of child welfare service providers, juvenile court services, the Iowa foster and adoptive parent association, the child advocacy board, the coalition for family and children's services in Iowa, children's advocates, service consumers, and others who have training or knowledge related to child welfare services. In addition, four members shall be legislators, all serving as ex officio, nonvoting members, with one each appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, the minority leader of the house of representatives, the majority leader of the senate, and the minority leader of the senate. The director of human services and the administrator of the division of the department of human services responsible for child welfare services, or their designees, shall also be ex officio, nonvoting members, and shall serve as resource persons to the advisory committee.

2010 Acts, ch 1031, §391; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §29

217.4 Meetings of council.

The council shall meet at least monthly. Additional meetings shall be called by the chairperson or upon written request of any three members thereof as necessary to carry out the duties of the council. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings or in the absence of the chairperson the vice chairperson shall preside. The members of the council shall be paid a per diem as specified in [section 7E.6](#) and their reasonable and necessary expenses.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.4]

90 Acts, ch 1256, §36

Mileage expense rate, see §70A.9

217.5 Director of human services.

The chief administrative officer for the department of human services is the director of human services. The director shall be appointed by the governor subject to confirmation by the senate and shall serve at the pleasure of the governor. The governor shall fill a vacancy in this office in the same manner as the original appointment was made. The director shall be selected primarily for administrative ability.

The director shall not be selected on the basis of political affiliation and shall not engage in political activity while holding this position.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.5]

83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159; 88 Acts, ch 1134, §43

Confirmation, see §2.32

217.6 Rules and regulations — organization of department.

1. The director is hereby authorized to recommend to the council for adoption such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry into practice the programs of the various divisions and to establish such divisions and to assign or reassign duties, powers, and responsibilities within the department, all with the approval of the council on human services, within the department as the director deems necessary and appropriate for the proper administration of the duties, functions and programs with which the department is charged. Any action taken, decision made, or administrative rule adopted by any administrator of a division may be reviewed by the director. The director, upon such review, may affirm, modify, or reverse any such action, decision, or rule.

2. The rules and regulations adopted for the public benefits and programs administered by the department of human services shall apply the residency eligibility restrictions required by federal and state law.

3. The director shall organize the department of human services into divisions to carry

out in efficient manner the intent of [this chapter](#). The department of human services may be initially divided into the following divisions of responsibility: the division of child and family services, the division of mental health and disability services, the division of administration, and the division of planning, research and statistics.

4. If the department of human services requires or requests a service consumer, service provider, or other person to maintain required documentation in electronic form, the department shall accept such documentation submitted by electronic means and shall not require a physical copy of the documentation unless required by state or federal law.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.6; [81 Acts, ch 78, §20, 22](#)]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §64, 159](#); [94 Acts, ch 1170, §27](#); [2006 Acts, ch 1115, §21](#); [2010 Acts, ch 1031, §406](#); [2011 Acts, ch 34, §52](#); [2011 Acts, ch 122, §19, 23](#)

217.7 Administrators of divisions.

The director may appoint an administrator of each of the divisions. The administrators shall be selected on the basis of their particular professional qualifications, education, and background relative to the assigned responsibilities of their divisions.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.7]

[88 Acts, ch 1134, §44](#)

217.8 Division of child and family services.

The administrator of the division of child and family services shall be qualified by training, experience, and education in the field of welfare and social problems. The administrator is charged with the administration of programs involving neglected, dependent, and delinquent children, child welfare, family investment program, and aid to persons with disabilities and shall administer and be in control of other related programs established for the general welfare of families, adults, and children as directed by the director.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §218.79; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.8; [81 Acts, ch 27, §2](#); [82 Acts, ch 1260, §17](#)]

[90 Acts, ch 1239, §3](#); [93 Acts, ch 97, §24](#); [96 Acts, ch 1129, §113](#)

217.9 Additional duties.

The administrator of the division of child and family services may have the additional following duties, powers and responsibilities:

1. Develop a program of basic education, recreation, career and technical training and guidance for social adjustment.

2. Administer programs and statutes involved with child placement, employment and supervision of state boards.

3. Prepare a budget and such report or reports as required by law or as directed by the director.

4. Develop a program in corrective institutions for juveniles designed to rehabilitate the inmates and patients and institute a program of placement and parole supervision for all parolees of said corrective institutions for juveniles.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §218.80; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.9]

[2016 Acts, ch 1108, §20](#)

Subsection 1 amended

217.9A Repealed by [98 Acts, ch 1206, §19](#).

217.10 Administrator of division of mental health and disability services.

The administrator of the division of mental health and disability services shall be qualified as provided in [section 225C.3, subsection 3](#). The administrator's duties are enumerated in [section 225C.4](#).

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §218.75; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.10; [81 Acts, ch 78, §20, 23, 50](#)]

[94 Acts, ch 1170, §28](#); [2006 Acts, ch 1115, §22](#)

217.11 and 217.12 Repealed by [2008 Acts, ch 1072, §6](#). See [§216A.107](#).

217.13 Department to provide certain volunteer services — volunteer liability.

1. The department of human services shall establish volunteer programs designed to enhance the services provided by the department. Roles for volunteers may include but shall not be limited to parent aides, friendly visitors, commodity distributors, clerical assistants, medical transporters, and other functions to complement and supplement the department's work with clients. Roles for volunteers shall include conservators and guardians. The department shall adopt rules for programs which are established.

2. a. The director shall appoint a coordinator of volunteer services to oversee the provision of services of volunteer conservators and guardians on a volunteer basis to individuals in this state requiring such services. The coordinator, after consulting with personnel assigned to the district of the department, shall recommend to the director how best to serve the needs of individuals in need of the services of a guardian or conservator. Where possible, the coordinator shall recommend that the services be provided on a multicounty basis.

b. The coordinator shall cooperate with the administrators of the divisions of the department in providing these services and shall seek out alternative sources for providing the services required under [this section](#).

3. All volunteers registered with the department and in compliance with departmental rules are considered state employees for purposes of [chapter 669](#). However, [this section](#) does not except a conservator or guardian from an action brought under [section 658.1A](#) or [658.3](#). [This section](#) does not relieve a guardian or conservator from duties under [chapter 633](#).

[88 Acts, ch 1170, §1; 2005 Acts, ch 175, §91](#)

217.14 Reserved.

217.15 Administrator of division of administration.

The administrator of the division of administration shall be qualified in the general field of governmental administration with special training and experience in the areas of competitive bidding, contract letting, accounting and budget preparation.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.15]

217.16 Cooperation with other divisions.

The administrator of the division of administration shall cooperate with the administrators of the other divisions of the department of human services, assist them and the director of the department in the preparation of annual budgets and such other like reports as may be requested by the director or required by law.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.16]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159](#)

217.17 Administrator of division of planning.

The administrator of the division of planning, research, and statistics shall be qualified in the general field of governmental planning with special training and experience in the areas of preparation and development of plans for future efficient reorganization and administration of government social functions. The administrator of the division of planning, research, and statistics shall cooperate with the administrators of the other divisions of the department of human services, assisting them and the director of the department in their planning, research, and statistical problems. The administrator of the division of planning, research, and statistics shall assist the administrators, director, and the council on human services by proposing administrative and organizational changes at both the state and local level to provide more efficient and integrated social services to the citizens of this state. The planning, research, and statistical operations now forming an integral part of the present state functions assigned to the administrators of this department along with their future needs in this regard are all assigned to and shall be administered by the administrator of the division.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.17]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §65, 159; 2013 Acts, ch 90, §42](#)

217.18 Official seal.

The department shall have an official seal with the words “Iowa Department of Human Services” and such other design as the department prescribes engraved thereon. Every commission, order or other paper of an official nature executed by the department may be attested with such seal.

[S13, §2727-a1; SS15, §2727-a3; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §3281; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §217.8; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.18]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159](#)

217.19 Expenses.

1. The director of said department, the director’s staff, assistants and employees shall, in addition to salary, receive their necessary traveling expenses by the nearest traveled and practicable route, when engaged in the performance of official business.

2. The department of administrative services shall work with the department of human services to develop and implement an expense policy applicable to the members of a board, commission, committee, or other body under the auspices of the department of human services who meet the income requirements for payment of per diem in accordance with [section 7E.6, subsection 2](#). The policy shall allow for the payment of the member’s expenses to be addressed through use of direct billings, travel purchase card, prepaid expenses, or other alternative means of addressing the expenses in lieu of reimbursement of the member.

[S13, §2727-a5; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §3282; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §217.9; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.19]

[2008 Acts, ch 1187, §113](#)

217.20 Trips to other states. Repealed by 2011 Acts, ch 127, §56, 89. See §8A.512A.

217.21 Annual report.

The department shall, annually, at the time provided by law make a report to the governor and general assembly, and cover therein the annual period ending with June 30 preceding, which report shall embrace:

1. An itemized statement of its expenditures concerning each program under its administration.

2. Adequate and complete statistical reports for the state as a whole concerning all payments made under its administration.

3. Such recommendations as to changes in laws under its administration as the director may deem necessary.

4. The observations and recommendations of the director and the council on human services relative to the programs of the department.

5. Such other information as the director or council on human services may deem advisable, or which may be requested by the governor or by the general assembly.

[S13, §2727-a9, -a12, -a16, -a34; SS15, §2727-a3; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §3285; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, §217.11; C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §217.21]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159](#)

217.22 Reserved.

217.23 Personnel — merit system — reimbursement for damaged property.

1. The director of human services or the director’s designee, shall employ such personnel as are necessary for the performance of the duties and responsibilities assigned to the department. All employees shall be selected on a basis of fitness for the work to be performed with due regard to training and experience and shall be subject to the provisions of [chapter 8A, subchapter IV](#).

2. The department may expend moneys from the support allocation of the department as reimbursement for replacement or repair of personal items of the department’s employees damaged or destroyed by clients of the department during the employee’s tour of duty. However, the reimbursement shall not exceed three hundred dollars for each item. The

department shall establish rules in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) to carry out the purpose of [this section](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §217.23]

[85 Acts, ch 253, §7](#); [2003 Acts, ch 145, §208](#); [2007 Acts, ch 218, §37](#)

217.24 Payment by electronic funds transfer.

The department of human services shall continue expanding the practice of making payments to program participants and vendors by means of electronic funds transfer. The department shall seek the capacity for making payment by such means for all programs administered by the department.

[2010 Acts, ch 1031, §407](#)

217.25 through 217.29 Reserved.

217.30 Confidentiality of records — report of recipients.

1. The following information relative to individuals receiving services or assistance from the department shall be held confidential:

a. Names and addresses of individuals receiving services or assistance from the department, and the types of services or amounts of assistance provided, except as otherwise provided in [subsection 4](#).

b. Information concerning the social or economic conditions or circumstances of particular individuals who are receiving or have received services or assistance from the department.

c. Agency evaluations of information about a particular individual.

d. Medical or psychiatric data, including diagnosis and past history of disease or disability, concerning a particular individual.

2. Information described in [subsection 1](#) shall not be disclosed to or used by any person or agency except for purposes of administration of the programs of services or assistance, and shall not in any case, except as otherwise provided in [subsection 4](#), paragraph “b”, be disclosed to or used by persons or agencies outside the department unless they are subject to standards of confidentiality comparable to those imposed on the department by [this section](#).

3. Nothing in [this section](#) shall restrict the disclosure or use of information regarding the cost, purpose, number of persons served or assisted by, and results of any program administered by the department, and other general and statistical information, so long as the information does not identify particular individuals served or assisted.

4. a. The general assembly finds and determines that the use and disclosure of information as provided in [this subsection](#) are for purposes directly connected with the administration of the programs of services and assistance referred to in [this section](#) and are essential for their proper administration.

b. Confidential information described in [subsection 1](#), paragraphs “a”, “b”, and “c”, shall be disclosed to public officials for use in connection with their official duties relating to law enforcement, audits and other purposes directly connected with the administration of such programs, upon written application to and with approval of the director or the director’s designee. Confidential information described in [subsection 1](#), paragraphs “a”, “b”, and “c”, shall also be disclosed to public officials for use in connection with their official duties relating to the support and protection of children and families, upon written application to and with the approval of the director or the director’s designee.

c. It shall be unlawful for any person to solicit, disclose, receive, use, or to authorize or knowingly permit, participate in, or acquiesce in the use of any information obtained from any such report or record for commercial or political purposes.

d. If approved by the director of human services or the director’s designee pursuant to a written request, the department shall disclose information described in [subsection 1](#) to other state agencies or to any other person who is not subject to the provisions of [chapter 17A](#) and is providing services to recipients under [chapter 239B](#) who are participating in the promoting independence and self-sufficiency through employment job opportunities and basic skills program, if necessary for the recipients to receive the services.

e. Information described in [subsection 1](#), paragraphs “a”, “b”, and “c”, is subject to disclosure in accordance with [section 235A.15](#), [subsection 10](#).

5. If it is definitely established that any provision of [this section](#) would cause any of the programs of services or assistance referred to in [this section](#) to be ineligible for federal funds, such provision shall be limited or restricted to the extent which is essential to make such program eligible for federal funds. The department shall adopt, pursuant to [chapter 17A](#), any rules necessary to implement [this subsection](#).

6. The provisions of [this section](#) shall apply to recipients of assistance under [chapter 252](#). The reports required to be prepared by the department under [this section](#) shall, with respect to such assistance or services, be prepared by the person or officer charged with the oversight of the poor.

7. Violation of [this section](#) shall constitute a serious misdemeanor.

8. The provisions of [this section](#) shall take precedence over [section 17A.12](#), [subsection 7](#).
[C39, §3828.047; C46, 50, 54, 58, §239.10, 241.25, 249.44; C62, 66, §239.10, 241.25, 241A.16, 249.44, 249A.18; C71, 73, §239.10, 241.25, 241A.16, 249.44, 249A.8; C75, 77, 79, 81, §217.30] [93 Acts, ch 54, §1](#); [93 Acts, ch 97, §8](#); [97 Acts, ch 41, §32](#); [2000 Acts, ch 1088, §1](#); [2000 Acts, ch 1123, §1](#); [2004 Acts, ch 1153, §1](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1072, §2](#); [2013 Acts, ch 90, §43](#)

Referred to in [§135G.12](#), [§135H.13](#), [§216A.107](#), [§217.31](#), [§232.71D](#), [§235A.15](#), [§235A.17](#), [§235A.24](#), [§237.9](#), [§237.21](#), [§239B.8](#), [§299.13](#)
For requirement to make available requested record of reasons for excluding child from attending a hearing or meeting, see [§232.91](#)

217.31 Action for damages.

Any person may institute a civil action for damages under [chapter 669](#) or to restrain the dissemination of confidential records set out in [section 217.30](#), [subsection 1](#), paragraph “b”, “c”, or “d”, in violation of that section, and any person, agency or governmental body proven to have disseminated or to have requested and received confidential records in violation of [section 217.30](#), [subsection 1](#), paragraph “b”, “c”, or “d”, shall be liable for actual damages and exemplary damages for each violation and shall be liable for court costs, expenses, and reasonable attorney fees incurred by the party bringing the action. In no case shall the award for damages be less than one hundred dollars.

Any reasonable grounds that a public employee has violated any provision of [section 217.30](#) shall be grounds for immediate removal from access of any kind to confidential records or suspension from duty without pay.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §217.31]

[2013 Acts, ch 90, §44](#)

217.32 Office space in county.

Where the department of human services assigns personnel to an office located in a county for the purpose of performing in that county designated duties and responsibilities assigned by law to the department, it shall be the responsibility of the county to provide and maintain the necessary office space and office supplies and equipment for the personnel so assigned in the same manner as if they were employees of the county. The department shall at least annually, or more frequently if the department so elects, reimburse the county for a portion, designated by law, of the cost of maintaining office space and providing supplies and equipment as required by [this section](#), and also for a similar portion of the cost of providing the necessary office space if in order to do so it is necessary for the county to lease office space outside the courthouse or any other building owned by the county. The portion of the foregoing costs reimbursed to the county under [this section](#) shall be equivalent to the proportion of those costs which the federal government authorizes to be paid from available federal funds, unless the general assembly directs otherwise when appropriating funds for support of the department.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §217.32]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159](#)

217.33 Legal services.

The director of human services pursuant to a state plan funded in part by the federal government may provide services for eligible persons by contract with nonprofit legal aid organizations.

[C77, 79, 81, §217.33]

[83 Acts, ch 96, §157, 159](#)

217.34 Debt setoff.

The investigations division of the department of inspections and appeals and the department of human services shall provide assistance to set off against a person's or provider's income tax refund or rebate any debt which has accrued through written contract, nonpayment of premiums pursuant to [section 249A.3, subsection 2](#), paragraph "a", subparagraph (1), subrogation, departmental recoupment procedures, or court judgment and which is in the form of a liquidated sum due and owing the department of human services. The department of inspections and appeals, with approval of the department of human services, shall adopt rules under [chapter 17A](#) necessary to assist the department of administrative services in the implementation of the setoff under [section 8A.504](#) in regard to money owed to the state for public assistance overpayments or nonpayment of premiums as specified in [this section](#). The department of human services shall adopt rules under [chapter 17A](#) necessary to assist the department of administrative services in the implementation of the setoff under [section 8A.504](#), in regard to collections by the child support recovery unit and the foster care recovery unit.

[83 Acts, ch 96, §160; 83 Acts, ch 153, §2; 89 Acts, ch 250, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §209; 2011 Acts, ch 120, §2; 2013 Acts, ch 138, §122, 127](#)

217.35 Fraud and recoupment activities.

Notwithstanding the requirement for deposit of recovered moneys under [section 239B.14](#), recovered moneys generated through fraud and recoupment activities are appropriated to the department of human services to be used for additional fraud and recoupment activities performed by the department of human services or the department of inspections and appeals. The department of human services may use the recovered moneys appropriated to add not more than five full-time equivalent positions, in addition to those funded by annual appropriations. The appropriation of the recovered moneys is subject to both of the following conditions:

1. The director of human services determines that the investment can reasonably be expected to increase recovery of assistance paid in error, due to fraudulent or nonfraudulent actions, in excess of the amount recovered in the previous fiscal year.

2. The amount expended for the additional fraud and recoupment activities shall not exceed the amount of the projected increase in assistance recovered.

[2005 Acts, ch 175, §92](#)

217.36 Distribution of earned income tax credit information.

1. The department shall ensure that educational materials relating to the federal and state earned income tax credits are provided in accordance with [this section](#) to each household receiving assistance or benefits under:

a. The hawk-i program under [chapter 514I](#).

b. The family investment program under [chapter 239B](#).

c. The medical assistance Act under [chapter 249A](#).

d. The food programs defined in [section 234.1](#) which are administered by the department.

e. Any other appropriate programs administered by, or under the oversight of, the department of human services.

2. The department shall, by mail or through the internet, provide a household described in [subsection 1](#) with access to:

a. Internal revenue service publications relating to the federal earned income tax credit.

b. Department of revenue publications relating to the state earned income tax credit.

c. Information prepared by tax preparers who provide volunteer or free federal or state

income tax preparation services to low-income and other eligible persons and who are located in close geographic proximity to the person.

3. In January of each year, the department or a representative of the department shall mail to each household described in [subsection 1](#) information about the federal and state earned income tax credit that provides the household with referrals to the resources described in [subsection 2](#).

4. The mailings required by the department under [this section](#) do not have to be made as a separate mailing but may be included in existing mailings being made to the appropriate households.

[2008 Acts, ch 1157, §1](#)

217.37 Repealed by 91 Acts, ch 258, §72.

217.38 Restitution to individuals of Japanese ancestry.

Notwithstanding any other law of this state, payments paid to an eligible individual of Japanese ancestry under section 105 of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, Pub. L. No. 100-383, Tit. I, shall not be considered as income or an asset for determining the eligibility for state or local government benefit or entitlement programs. The proceeds are not subject to recoupment for the receipt of governmental benefits or entitlements and liens, except liens for child support, are not enforceable against these sums for any reason.

[89 Acts, ch 285, §1; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180](#)

217.39 Persecuted victims of World War II — reparations — heirs.

Notwithstanding any other law of this state, payments paid to and income from lost property of a victim of persecution for racial, ethnic, or religious reasons by Nazi Germany or any other Axis regime or as an heir of such victim which is exempt from state income tax as provided in [section 422.7, subsection 35](#), shall not be considered as income or an asset for determining the eligibility for state or local government benefit or entitlement programs. The proceeds are not subject to recoupment for the receipt of governmental benefits or entitlements, and liens, except liens for child support, are not enforceable against these sums for any reason.

[2000 Acts, ch 1103, §1, 3](#)

217.40 Training for guardians and conservators.

The department of human services, or a person designated by the director, shall establish training programs designed to assist all duly appointed guardians and conservators in understanding their fiduciary duties and liabilities, the special needs of the ward, and how to best serve the ward and the ward's interests.

[89 Acts, ch 178, §2](#)

217.41 Refugee services foundation.

1. The department of human services shall cause a refugee services foundation to be created for the sole purpose of engaging in refugee resettlement activities to promote the welfare and self-sufficiency of refugees who live in Iowa and who are not citizens of the United States. The foundation may establish an endowment fund to assist in the financing of its activities. The foundation shall be incorporated under [chapter 504](#).

2. The foundation shall be created in a manner so that donations and bequests to the foundation qualify as tax deductible under federal and state income tax laws. The foundation is not a state agency and shall not exercise sovereign power of the state. The state is not liable for any debts of the foundation.

3. The refugee services foundation shall have a board of directors of five members. One member shall be appointed by the governor and four members shall be appointed by the director of human services. Members of the board shall serve three-year terms beginning on July 1, and ending on June 30. A vacancy on the board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the remainder of the term. Not more than two members appointed by the director of human services shall be of the same gender or of the same political party.

4. The refugee services foundation may accept and administer trusts deemed by the board to be beneficial. Notwithstanding [section 633.63](#), the foundation may act as trustee of such a trust.

[2004 Acts, ch 1049, §191](#); [2004 Acts, ch 1175, §146](#); [2005 Acts, ch 3, §50](#)

217.41A Electronic health records system task force. Repealed by 2008 Acts, ch 1188, §28. See §135.156.

SUBCHAPTER II

FIELD SERVICES ORGANIZATION

217.42 Service areas — offices.

1. The organizational structure to deliver the department's field services shall be based upon service areas designated by the department. The service areas shall serve as a basis for providing field services to persons residing in the counties comprising the service area.

2. The department shall maintain an office in each county. Based on the annual appropriations for field operations, the department shall strive to maintain a full-time presence in each county. If it is not possible to maintain a full-time presence in each county, the department shall provide staff based on its caseweight system to assure the provision of services. The department shall consult with the county boards of supervisors of those counties regarding staffing prior to any modification of office hours.

3. A county or group of counties may voluntarily enter into a [chapter 28E](#) agreement with the department to provide funding or staff persons to deliver field services in county offices. The agreement shall cover the full fiscal year but may be revised by mutual consent.

[92 Acts, ch 1079, §1](#); [2001 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 4, §1, 9](#); [2010 Acts, ch 1031, §296, 401, 402](#)

217.43 Service area advisory boards — location of county offices.

1. The department shall establish a service area advisory board in each service area. Each of the county boards of supervisors of the counties comprising the service area shall appoint two service area advisory board members. The following requirements apply to the appointments made by a county board of supervisors: the membership shall be appointed in accordance with [section 69.16](#), relating to political affiliation, and [section 69.16A](#), relating to gender balance; not more than one of the members shall be a member of the board of supervisors; and appointments shall be made on the basis of interest in maintaining and improving service delivery. Appointments shall be made a part of the regular proceedings of the board of supervisors and shall be filed with the county auditor and the service area manager. A vacancy on the board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The boards of supervisors shall develop and agree to other organizational provisions involving the advisory board, including reporting requirements.

2. The purpose of the advisory boards is to improve communication and coordination between the department and the counties and to advise the department regarding maintenance and improvement of service delivery in the counties and communities comprising the service areas.

3. The department shall determine the community in which each county office will be located. The county board of supervisors shall determine the location of the office space for the county office. The county board of supervisors shall make reasonable efforts to collocate the office with other state and local government or private entity offices in order to maintain the offices in a cost-effective location that is convenient to the public.

[92 Acts, ch 1079, §2](#); [93 Acts, ch 54, §2](#); [2001 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 4, §2, 9](#)

Referred to in [§251.3](#), [§251.5](#), [§331.321](#)

Emergency relief duties of service area advisory board, see [§251.5](#)

217.44 Service areas — employee and volunteer record checks.

1. The department shall conduct criminal and child and dependent adult abuse record checks of persons who are potential employees, employees, potential volunteers, and

volunteers in service area offices in a position having direct contact with the department's clients. The record checks shall be performed in this state and the department may conduct these checks in other states. If the department determines that a person has been convicted of a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse, the department shall perform an evaluation to determine whether the crime or founded abuse warrants prohibition of the person's employment or participation as a volunteer. The record checks and evaluation shall be performed in accordance with procedures adopted for this purpose by the department.

2. In an evaluation, the department shall consider the nature and seriousness of the crime or founded child or dependent adult abuse in relation to the position sought or held, the time elapsed since the commission of the crime or founded abuse, the circumstances under which the crime or founded abuse was committed, the degree of rehabilitation, the likelihood that the person will commit the crime or founded abuse again, and the number of crimes or founded abuses committed by the person involved.

3. The department may permit a person who is evaluated to be employed or to participate as a volunteer if the person complies with the department's conditions relating to employment or participation as a volunteer which may include completion of additional training.

4. If the department determines that the person has committed a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse which warrants prohibition of employment or participation as a volunteer, the person shall not be employed by or participate as a volunteer in a department service area office in a position having direct contact with the department's clients.

[2000 Acts, ch 1112, §52](#); [2001 Acts, 2nd Ex, ch 4, §3, 9](#)