

331.756 Duties of the county attorney.

The county attorney shall:

1. Diligently enforce or cause to be enforced in the county, state laws and county ordinances, violations of which may be commenced or prosecuted in the name of the state, county, or as county attorney, except as otherwise provided.

2. Appear for the state and the county in all cases and proceedings in the courts of the county to which the state or the county is a party, except actions or proceedings resulting from a change of venue from another county, and appear in the appellate courts in all cases in which the county is a party, and appear in all actions or proceedings which are transferred on a change of venue to another county or which require the impaneling of a jury from another county and in which the county or the state is a party.

3. Prosecute all preliminary hearings for charges triable upon indictment.

4. Prosecute misdemeanors under [chapter 664A](#). The county attorney shall prosecute other misdemeanors when not otherwise engaged in the performance of other official duties.

5. *a.* Enforce all forfeited bonds and recognizances and prosecute all proceedings necessary for the recovery of debts, revenues, moneys, fines, penalties, restitution of court-appointed attorney fees ordered pursuant to [section 815.9](#), including the expense of a public defender, and forfeitures accruing to the state, the county or a road district in the county, and all suits in the county against public service corporations which are brought in the name of the state. To assist in this duty, the county attorney may procure a designee to assist with collection efforts.

b. If the designee is a professional collection services agency, the county attorney shall file with the clerk of the district court an indication of the satisfaction of each obligation to the full extent of all moneys collected in satisfaction of that obligation, including all fees and compensation retained by the designee incident to the collection and not paid into the office of the clerk.

c. Before a county attorney designates another county official or agency to assist with collection of debts, revenues, moneys, fines, penalties, restitution of court-appointed attorney fees ordered pursuant to [section 815.9](#), including the expense of a public defender, and forfeitures, the board of supervisors of the county must approve the designation.

d. All fines, penalties, court costs, fees, and restitution for court-appointed attorney fees ordered pursuant to [section 815.9](#), including the expenses of a public defender which are delinquent as defined in [section 602.8107](#) may be collected by the county attorney or the county attorney's designee. The county attorney or the county attorney's designee may collect delinquent obligations under an installment agreement pursuant to [section 321.210B](#).

e. As used in [this subsection](#), "designee" means a professional collection services agency operated by a person or organization, including a private attorney, that is generally considered to have knowledge and special abilities not generally possessed by the state, a local government, or another county official or agency, or a county attorney or a county attorney's designee in another county where the fine, penalty, surcharge, or court cost was not imposed.

6. Commence, prosecute, and defend all actions and proceedings in which a county officer, in the officer's official capacity, or the county is interested or a party.

7. Give advice or a written opinion, without compensation, to the board and other county officers and to township officers, when requested by an officer, upon any matters in which the state, county, or township is interested, or relating to the duty of the officer in any matters in which the state, county, or township may have an interest, but the county attorney shall not appear before the board at a hearing in which the state or county is not interested.

8. Attend the grand jury when necessary for the purpose of examining witnesses before it or giving it legal advice. The county attorney shall procure subpoenas or other process for witnesses and prepare all informations and bills of indictment.

9. Give a receipt to all persons from whom the county attorney receives money in an official capacity and file a duplicate receipt with the county auditor.

10. Make reports relating to the duties and the administration of the county attorney's office to the governor when requested by the governor.

11. Cooperate with the auditor of state to secure correction of a financial irregularity as provided in [section 11.53](#).
12. Submit reports as to the condition and operation of the county attorney's office when required by the attorney general as provided in [section 13.2, subsection 1](#), paragraph "g".
13. Hear and decide objections to a nomination filed with the county election commissioner as provided in [section 44.7](#).
14. Review the report and recommendations of the Iowa ethics and campaign disclosure board and proceed to institute the recommended actions or advise the board that prosecution is not merited, as provided in [sections 68B.32C and 68B.32D](#).
15. Prosecute or assist in the prosecution of actions to remove public officers from office as provided in [section 66.11](#).
16. Institute legal proceedings against persons who violate laws administered under [chapter 10A, subchapter II](#), as provided in [section 10A.210](#).
17. Investigate complaints and prosecute violations of child labor laws as provided in [section 92.22](#).
18. Prosecute violations of employment security laws and rules as provided in [section 96.17, subsection 2](#).
19. Assist, at the request of the director of revenue, in the enforcement of cigar and tobacco tax laws as provided in [sections 453A.32 and 453A.49](#).
20. Prosecute nuisances as provided in [section 99.24](#).
21. Attend the hearing, interrogate witnesses, and advise a license-issuing authority relating to the revocation of a license for violation of gambling laws as provided in [section 99A.7](#). The county attorney shall also represent the license-issuing authority in appeal proceedings taken under [section 99A.6](#).
22. Represent the state fire marshal in legal proceedings as provided in [section 100.20](#).
23. Prosecute, at the request of the director of the department of natural resources or an officer appointed by the director, violations of the state fish and game laws as provided in [section 481A.35](#).
24. Assist the department of public safety in the enforcement of beer and liquor laws as provided in [section 123.14](#). The county attorney shall also prosecute nuisances, forfeitures of abatement bonds, and foreclosures of the bonds as provided in [sections 123.62 and 123.86](#).
25. Serve as attorney for the county health care facility administrator in matters relating to the administrator's service as a conservator or guardian for a resident of the health care facility as provided in [section 135C.24](#).
26. At the request of the director of health and human services, commence legal action to enjoin the unlawful use of radiation-emitting equipment as provided in [section 136C.5](#).
27. Prosecute violations of the Iowa veterinary practice Act as provided in [section 169.19](#).
28. Assist the department of inspections, appeals, and licensing in the enforcement of the rules setting minimum standards to protect consumers from foodborne illness adopted pursuant to [section 137F.2](#) and the Iowa hotel sanitation code, as provided in [sections 137C.30 and 137F.19](#).
29. Institute legal procedures on behalf of the state to prevent violations of [chapter 9H or 202B](#).
30. Prosecute violations of the Iowa dairy industry laws as provided in [section 179.11](#).
31. Prosecute persons who fail to file an annual or special report with the secretary of agriculture under the meat and poultry inspection Act as provided in [section 189A.17](#).
32. Cooperate with the secretary of agriculture in the enforcement of label requirements for food packages as provided in [section 191.7](#).
33. Prosecute violations of the Iowa commercial feed law as provided in [section 198.13, subsection 3](#).
34. Cooperate with the secretary of agriculture in the enforcement of the agricultural seed laws as provided in [section 199.14](#).
35. Prosecute violations of the Iowa fertilizer law as provided in [section 200.18, subsection 5](#).
36. Prosecute violations of the Iowa drug, device, and cosmetic Act as requested by the board of pharmacy as provided in [section 126.7](#).

37. Provide the Iowa department of corrections with information relating to the background and criminal acts committed by each person sentenced to a state correctional institution from the county as provided in [section 904.202](#).

38. Proceed to collect, as requested by the county, the reasonable costs for the care, treatment, training, instruction, and support of a person with an intellectual disability from parents or other persons who are legally liable for the support of the person with an intellectual disability as provided in [section 222.82](#).

39. Appear on behalf of the director of health and human services in support of an application to transfer a person with mental illness who becomes incorrigible and dangerous from a state mental health institute to the Iowa medical and classification center as provided in [section 226.30](#).

40. Carry out duties relating to the hospitalization of persons for mental illness as provided in [section 229.12](#).

41. Carry out duties relating to the collection of the costs for the care, treatment, and support of persons with mental illness as provided in [sections 230.25](#) and [230.27](#).

42. Carry out duties relating to the care, guidance, and control of juveniles as provided in [chapter 232](#).

43. Prosecute violations of law relating to the family investment program, medical assistance, and supplemental assistance as provided in [sections 239B.15](#), [249.13](#), and [249A.56](#).

44. Commence legal proceedings to enforce the rights of children placed under foster care arrangements as provided in [section 233A.11](#).

45. Furnish, upon request of the governor, a copy of the minutes of evidence and other pertinent facts relating to an application for a pardon, reprieve, commutation, or remission of a fine or forfeiture as provided in [section 914.5](#).

46. At the request of the state geologist, commence legal proceedings to obtain a copy of the map of a mine or mine extension as provided in [section 456.12](#).

47. Enforce, upon complaint, the performance of duties by officers charged with the responsibilities of controlling or eradicating noxious weeds as provided in [section 317.23](#).

48. Commence legal proceedings to remove billboards and signs which constitute a public nuisance as provided in [section 318.11](#).

49. Assist, upon request, the attorney general in the prosecution of violations of common carrier laws and regulations as provided in [section 327C.30](#).

50. Enforce the control of vegetation on railroad property by the railroad corporations as provided in [section 327F.29](#).

51. Appoint a member of the civil service commission for deputy sheriffs as provided in [section 341A.2](#) or [341A.3](#).

52. Represent the civil service commission for deputy sheriffs in civil suits initiated by the commission for the proper enforcement of the civil service law as provided in [section 341A.16](#).

53. Present to the grand jury at its next session a copy of the report filed by the department of corrections of its inspection of the jails in the county as provided in [section 356.43](#).

54. Represent the township trustees in counties having a population of less than twenty-five thousand except when the interests of the trustees and the county are adverse as provided in [section 359.18](#).

55. Make a written report to the department of inspections, appeals, and licensing within fifteen days of the end of each calendar quarter of the amount of funds which were owed to the state for indigent defense services and which were recouped pursuant to [subsection 5](#).

56. Represent the assessor and the board of review in legal proceedings relating to assessments as provided in [section 441.41](#).

57. Represent the state in litigation relating to the inheritance tax if requested by the department of revenue as provided in [section 450.1](#).

58. Institute proceedings to enjoin persons from violating water treatment laws as provided in [section 455B.224](#).

59. Conduct legal proceedings relating to the condemnation of private property as provided in [section 6B.2](#).

60. Institute legal proceedings against violations of insurance laws as provided in [section 511.7](#).

61. Assist, as requested by the attorney general, with the enforcement of the Iowa competition law as provided in [section 553.7](#).

62. Initiate proceedings to enforce provisions relating to the recordation of conveyances and leases of agricultural land as provided in [section 558.44](#).

63. Bid on real estate on behalf of the county when necessary to secure the county from loss as provided by [section 569.2](#).

64. Prosecute a complaint to establish paternity and compel support for a child as provided in [section 600B.19](#).

65. Give to an accused person a copy of each report of the findings of the criminalistics laboratory in the investigation of an indictable criminal charge against the accused as provided in [section 691.4](#).

66. Notify state and local governmental agencies issuing licenses or permits, of a person's conviction of obscenity laws relating to minors as provided in [section 728.8](#).

67. In the case of appeal from the district court, furnish the attorney general with a copy of the notice of appeal and pertinent material from the district court proceedings as provided in [section 814.8](#).

68. Certify fees and mileage payable to witnesses subpoenaed by the county attorney before the district court as provided in [section 815.3](#).

69. Carry out duties relating to extradition of fugitive defendants as provided in [chapter 820](#) and securing witnesses as provided in [chapter 819](#).

70. Advise the director of the judicial district department of correctional services of the facts and circumstances surrounding the crime committed and the record and history of the defendant granted probation as provided in [section 907.8](#).

71. Carry out the duties imposed under [sections 915.12](#) and [915.13](#).

72. Establish a child protection assistance team in accordance with [section 915.35](#).

73. Bring an action in the nature of quo warranto as provided in [rule of civil procedure 1.1302](#).

74. Perform other duties required by law and duties assigned pursuant to [section 331.323](#).

75. Bring actions under [chapter 66](#) for failure to pay fines imposed pursuant to [section 39A.6](#) and not dismissed pursuant to [chapter 17A](#).

[C97, SS15, §301; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5180; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §336.2; S81, §331.756; 81 Acts, ch 117, §756; 82 Acts, ch 1021, §10, 12(1), ch 1100, §28, ch 1104, §59]

83 Acts, ch 96, §111, 112, 157, 159; 84 Acts, ch 1163, §2; 84 Acts, ch 1299, §9; 85 Acts, ch 195, §42; 86 Acts, ch 1001, §21; 86 Acts, ch 1112, §11; 86 Acts, ch 1155, §8; 86 Acts, ch 1238, §17; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §1117; 87 Acts, ch 30, §18; 87 Acts, ch 98, §4; 88 Acts, ch 1134, §73; 89 Acts, ch 197, §30; 90 Acts, ch 1165, §17; 92 Acts, ch 1242, §30, 31; 93 Acts, ch 97, §39; 93 Acts, ch 110, §2 - 4; 93 Acts, ch 142, §12; 93 Acts, ch 163, §32; 94 Acts, ch 1023, §106; 94 Acts, ch 1170, §53; 94 Acts, ch 1173, §29, 30; 95 Acts, ch 49, §9; 95 Acts, ch 143, §9; 95 Acts, ch 169, §3; 96 Acts, ch 1034, §31; 96 Acts, ch 1111, §2; 96 Acts, ch 1129, §113; 96 Acts, ch 1131, §1; 96 Acts, ch 1186, §23; 97 Acts, ch 41, §32; 98 Acts, ch 1090, §69, 84; 98 Acts, ch 1162, §28, 30; 2002 Acts, ch 1119, §159; 2003 Acts, ch 107, §3; 2003 Acts, ch 115, §15, 19; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §286; 2004 Acts, ch 1101, §40; 2005 Acts, ch 167, §57, 66; 2006 Acts, ch 1010, §94; 2006 Acts, ch 1097, §18; 2006 Acts, ch 1115, §33; 2006 Acts, ch 1185, §121; 2007 Acts, ch 10, §175; 2007 Acts, ch 152, §51; 2007 Acts, ch 196, §7; 2007 Acts, ch 215, §219; 2008 Acts, ch 1032, §199; 2008 Acts, ch 1172, §22; 2011 Acts, ch 43, §3 - 5; 2011 Acts, ch 75, §39; 2012 Acts, ch 1019, §125; 2012 Acts, ch 1021, §70; 2013 Acts, ch 130, §32, 35; 2017 Acts, ch 54, §49; 2019 Acts, ch 100, §10; 2021 Acts, ch 12, §71, 73; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1105, 2016, 2067, 2073; 2024 Acts, ch 1043, §87

Referred to in [§96.11](#)

For future strike of subsections 25, 38, and 41, effective July 1, 2025, see 2024 Acts, ch 1161, §120, 137
Subsection 28 amended