

CHAPTER 341A

CIVIL SERVICE FOR DEPUTY COUNTY SHERIFFS

Referred to in §80F.1, 331.652

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341A.1 Definitions.

As used in [this chapter](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “*Commission*” means the civil service commission or a combined county civil service commission created pursuant to the provisions of [this chapter](#).
2. “*Commissioner*” means a member of the commission defined in [subsection 1](#).
3. “*County*” means a single county or several counties combined for the purposes enumerated in [section 341A.3](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.1]

341A.2 Civil service commission.

1. Subject to the alternate plan enumerated in [section 341A.3](#), there is created in each county a civil service commission composed of three members. Two members shall be appointed by the county board of supervisors and one member shall be appointed by the county attorney of each county. Appointees to the commission shall be residents of the county for at least two years immediately preceding appointment, and shall be electors. Terms of office shall be six years; however, the initial members of the commission shall be appointed as follows:

a. One of the members appointed by the board of supervisors shall serve for a period of two years while the other member shall serve for a period of six years and the board shall specify the term of each member so appointed.

b. The member appointed by the county attorney shall serve for a period of four years.

2. Any member of the commission may be removed by the appointing authority for incompetence, dereliction of duty, malfeasance in office, or for other good cause; however, no member of the commission shall be removed until apprised in writing of the nature of the charges against the member and a hearing on such charges has been held before the board of supervisors. In the event a vacancy occurs in the commission for any reason other than expiration of the term, an appointment to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term shall be made in the same manner as the original appointment.

3. A majority vote of the membership of the commission shall be sufficient to transact the business of the commission.

4. Not more than two commissioners shall be members of the same political party. Commissioners shall hold no elective or other appointive public office during their terms of appointment to the commission. Commissioners shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for necessary expense and mileage incurred in the actual performance of their duties.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.2]

[2000 Acts, ch 1057, §3](#); [2013 Acts, ch 30, §77](#)

Referred to in [§331.321, 331.756\(51\), 341A.3](#)

341A.3 Combined civil service system.

1. Any combination of counties in this state may, by resolution of the boards of supervisors in each county, establish a combined civil service system to serve such counties. The specific terms of the agreement regarding the operation of the combined civil service system, including the appointment of qualified commissioners, and any other matters pertinent to the operation of such system shall be contained in the resolutions adopted by the respective boards of supervisors of the participating counties. Counties participating in a combined civil service system need not be contiguous.

2. Appointment of commissioners in combined counties shall be by joint meeting of the boards of supervisors and county attorneys, respectively. Each group meeting jointly shall appoint one commissioner whose term shall be six years, except that initial terms shall be as provided in [section 341A.2](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.3]

[2000 Acts, ch 1057, §4](#); [2021 Acts, ch 76, §150](#)

Referred to in [§331.321](#), [331.756\(51\)](#), [341A.1](#), [341A.2](#)

341A.4 Statutory authority.

1. If a county or combination of counties has a civil service commission, this commission shall serve as the commission established by [this chapter](#) and shall have all the powers and duties provided by [this chapter](#).

2. If more than one civil service commission exists, the one from the county with the largest population shall serve as the commission under [this chapter](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.4]

[2021 Acts, ch 76, §150](#)

341A.5 Organization.

1. The commission shall hold an organizational meeting immediately after its establishment and shall elect one of its members as chairperson. The commission shall hold regular meetings at least once annually, and may hold additional meetings as may be required in the fulfillment of its responsibilities. All commission meetings shall be public meetings.

2. The commission shall appoint a personnel director who shall act as its secretary and such other personnel as may be necessary. The personnel director shall keep and preserve all records of the commission, including reports submitted to it and examinations held under its direction, advise the commission in all matters pertaining to the civil service system, and perform such other duties as the commission may prescribe. The commission may add the personnel director's duties to a presently employed county employee.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.5]

[89 Acts, ch 187, §1](#); [2021 Acts, ch 76, §150](#)

341A.6 Powers and duties.

The commission shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To adopt, and amend as necessary, rules pursuant to the provisions of [this chapter](#), which shall specify the manner in which examinations are to be held and appointments, promotions, transfers, reinstatements, demotions, suspensions, and discharges are to be made. The rules may make such other provisions regarding personnel administration and practices as are necessary or desirable in carrying out the purposes of [this chapter](#). The commission rules, and their amendments, shall be printed and made available without cost to the public.

2. To administer practical tests designed to determine the ability of persons examined to perform the duties of the position for which they are seeking appointment. Such tests shall be designed and prepared by the director of the Iowa law enforcement academy, shall be administered by each commission in a uniform manner prescribed by the director, and shall be consistent with standards established pursuant to [chapter 80B](#) governing standards for employment of Iowa law enforcement officers. Notice of such tests shall be posted in the

office of the sheriff and the office of the board of supervisors not less than thirty days prior to giving such tests.

3. To conduct and prepare annual investigations and reports concerning the effectiveness of, and compliance with, the provisions of [this chapter](#) and the rules adopted by the commission, and pursuant thereto, to inspect all departments, offices, and positions of employment affected by [this chapter](#). In making such investigations a commissioner or the personnel director may administer oaths, issue subpoenas and require the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, documents, and accounts pertaining to such investigation, and may also cause the deposition of witnesses to be taken as in civil actions in the district court.

4. To conduct informal hearings concerning matters contemplated by [this chapter](#). The validity of any such hearing shall not be affected by the manner in which it is conducted, however, a majority of the commissioners shall affirm all orders, rules, and decisions made pursuant to such hearings.

5. To hear and determine appeals or complaints respecting the allocation of positions of employment, rejection of those persons certified to the sheriff for appointment, and such other matters as may be referred to the commission.

6. To arrange, compile, and administer competitive tests to determine the relative qualifications of persons seeking employment in any class of position and as a result thereof establish eligible lists for the various classes of positions, and provide that persons discharged because of curtailment of expenditures, reduction in force, and for like causes, head the list in the order of their seniority, to the end that they shall be the first to be reemployed. Notice of competitive tests to be given shall be published at least two weeks prior to holding the tests in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which a vacancy exists.

7. To certify to the county sheriff when a vacant position is to be filled, on written request, a list of the names of the persons passing the examination.

8. To keep such records as may be necessary for the proper administration of [this chapter](#).

9. To classify deputy sheriffs and subdivide them into groups according to rank and grade which shall be based upon the duties and responsibilities of the deputy sheriffs.

10. To purchase all necessary supplies, enter into contracts, and do all things necessary to carry out the provisions of [this chapter](#).

11. To keep records of the service of each employee in the classified service. These records shall contain facts and statements on all matters relating to the character and quality of the work done and the attitude of the individual to the work. All such service records and employee records shall be subject only to the inspection of the commission.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.6]

[2012 Acts, ch 1023, §157](#)

Referred to in [§341A.6A](#)

341A.6A Veteran eligibility.

If a veteran has been honorably discharged between forty-five days before and sixty days after an examination or test is administered under [section 341A.6](#), the commission may allow the veteran to be subject to such examination or testing up to ninety days following the date that the original examination or testing was conducted and if appropriate shall add the veteran's name and address to the eligibility list for a vacant position pursuant to [section 341A.13](#).

[2014 Acts, ch 1116, §57](#)

341A.7 Classifications.

1. The classified civil service positions covered by [this chapter](#) include persons actually serving as deputy sheriffs who are salaried pursuant to [section 331.904, subsection 2](#), but do not include a chief deputy sheriff, two second deputy sheriffs in counties with a population of more than one hundred thousand, three second deputy sheriffs in counties with a population of more than one hundred fifty thousand, and four second deputy sheriffs in counties with a population of more than two hundred thousand. However, a chief deputy

sheriff or second deputy sheriff who becomes a candidate for a partisan elective office for remuneration is subject to [section 341A.18](#). A deputy sheriff serving with permanent rank under [this chapter](#) may be designated chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff and retain that rank during the period of service as chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff and shall, upon termination of the duties as chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff, revert to the permanent rank.

2. If the positions of two second deputy sheriffs of a county were exempt from classified civil service coverage under [this chapter](#) based on the 1980 decennial census, the two second deputy positions shall remain exempt from classified civil service coverage under [this chapter](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, S81, §341A.7; 81 Acts, ch 117, §1219]

90 Acts, ch 1119, §1; 91 Acts, ch 110, §1; 2008 Acts, ch 1184, §68, 69

Referred to in [§341A.9](#)

341A.8 Bases of appointments and promotions.

1. All appointments to and promotions to classified civil service positions in the office of county sheriff shall be made solely on merit, efficiency, and fitness, which shall be ascertained by open competitive examinations and impartial investigations, and no person in the classified civil service shall be reinstated in or transferred, suspended, or discharged from any such place, position, or employment contrary to the provisions of [this chapter](#).

2. Whenever possible, vacancies shall be filled by promotion. Promotion shall be made from among deputy sheriffs qualified by competitive examination, training, and experience to fill the vacancies and whose length of service entitles them to consideration. The commission shall for the purpose of certifying to the sheriff the list of deputy sheriffs eligible for promotion, rate the qualified deputy sheriffs on the basis of their service record, experience in the work, seniority, and military service ratings. Seniority shall be controlling only when other factors are equal. The names of not more than the ten highest on the list of ratings shall be certified. The certified eligible list for promotion shall hold preference for promotion until the beginning of a new examination, but in no case shall such preference continue longer than two years following the date of certification, after which said list shall be canceled and no promotion to such grade shall be made until a new list has been certified eligible for promotion. The sheriff shall appoint one of the ten certified persons.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.8]

2021 Acts, ch 76, §150

Referred to in [§341A.9](#)

341A.9 Appointment as of effective date.

All persons holding a position on August 15, 1973, which is deemed classified by [section 341A.7](#) are eligible for a permanent appointment under civil service to the offices or positions currently held if they qualify for appointment pursuant to [section 341A.8](#), and every such person shall be inducted permanently into civil service in the office or position of employment which the person then holds. The commission shall designate a permanent rank for those persons as chief deputy on August 15, 1973, and such persons shall be inducted permanently into civil service in that rank.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.9]

341A.10 Citizenship.

An applicant for any position under civil service shall be a citizen of the United States who can read and write the English language, and shall meet the minimum requirements of the Iowa law enforcement academy for a law enforcement officer.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.10]

341A.11 Probationary period — permanent status.

The tenure of every deputy sheriff holding an office or position of employment under the provisions of [this chapter](#) shall be conditional upon a probationary period. If the employee has successfully completed training at the Iowa law enforcement academy or a regional training facility certified by the director of the Iowa law enforcement academy prior to initial appointment as a deputy sheriff, the probationary period shall be for a period of up to nine

months and shall commence with the date of initial appointment as a deputy sheriff. If the employee has not successfully completed training at the Iowa law enforcement academy or a regional training facility certified by the director of the Iowa law enforcement academy prior to initial appointment as a deputy sheriff, the probationary period shall commence with the date of initial employment as a deputy sheriff and shall continue for a period of up to nine months following the date of successful completion of training at the Iowa law enforcement academy or a regional training facility certified by the director of the Iowa law enforcement academy. During the probationary period, the appointee may be removed or discharged by the sheriff without the right of appeal to the commission. Each deputy sheriff who transfers from one jurisdiction to another shall be employed subject to a probationary period of up to nine months. After the probationary period, the deputy sheriff may be removed or discharged, suspended without pay, demoted, or reduced in rank, or deprived of vacation privileges or other privileges for any of the following reasons:

1. Incompetency, inefficiency, or inattention to or dereliction of duty.
2. Dishonesty, intemperance, immoral conduct, insubordination, discourteous treatment of the public or a fellow employee, or any other act of omission or commission tending to injure the public, or any other willful failure to properly conduct oneself, or any willful violation of the provisions of [this chapter](#) or the rules to be adopted hereunder.
3. Mental or physical unfitness for the position held.
4. Dishonest, disgraceful, or prejudicial conduct.
5. Drunkenness or habitual use of intoxicating liquor, or use of narcotics, or any other habit-forming drug, liquid, preparation, or controlled substance.
6. Conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
7. Any other act or failure to act or to follow reasonable regulations prescribed by the sheriff which in the judgment of the commission is sufficient to show the offender to be unsuitable or unfit for employment.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.11]

[98 Acts, ch 1124, §2](#)

341A.12 Discipline — hearing — appeals.

1. No person in the classified civil service who has been permanently appointed or inducted into civil service under provisions of [this chapter](#) shall be removed, suspended, or demoted except for cause, and only upon written accusation of the county sheriff, which shall be served upon the accused, and a duplicate filed with the commission. Any person so removed, suspended, or reduced in rank or grade may, within ten days after presentation to the person of the order of removal, suspension or reduction, appeal to the commission from such order. The commission shall, within two weeks from the filing of such appeal, hold a hearing thereon, and fully hear and determine the matter, and either affirm, modify, or revoke such order. The appellant shall be entitled to appear in person, produce evidence, and to have counsel. The finding and decision of the commission shall be certified to the sheriff, and shall be enforced and followed by the sheriff, but under no condition shall the employee who has appealed to the commission be permanently removed, suspended, or reduced in rank until such finding and decision of the commission is certified to the sheriff pursuant to the rules of civil procedure.

2. The county or the accused may appeal from the commission's finding and decision to the district court of the county where the accused resides. Such appeal shall be taken by serving upon the commission within thirty days after the entry of its finding and decision, a written notice of appeal, stating the grounds thereof, and demanding that a certified transcript of the record and of all papers on file in the office of the commission affecting or relating to its finding and decision, be filed by the commission with the court. The commission shall, within ten days after the filing of the notice make, certify, and file such transcript with the court. The court shall proceed to hear and determine the appeal in a summary manner. Such hearing shall be confined to the determination of whether the finding and decision of the commission to affirm, modify, or revoke the order of the sheriff was made in good faith and for cause, and

no appeal shall be taken except upon such grounds. The decision of the district court may be appealed to the supreme court.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.12]

2007 Acts, ch 58, §1; 2008 Acts, ch 1031, §46

Referred to in §80F.1

Internal investigations and rights of peace officers and public safety and emergency personnel, see §80F.1

341A.13 Vacant positions filled.

Whenever a position in the classified service is to be filled, the sheriff shall notify the commission of that fact, and the commission shall certify the names and addresses of the ten candidates standing highest on the eligibility list for the class or grade for the position to be filled. The sheriff shall appoint one of the ten persons so certified, and the appointment shall be deemed permanent.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.13]

Referred to in §341A.6A

341A.14 Payroll certified.

No treasurer, auditor, or other officer, or employee of any county subject to [this chapter](#) shall approve the payment of or be in any manner involved in paying, auditing, or approving salary, wage, or other compensation for services to any person subject to the provisions of [this chapter](#), unless a payroll, estimate, or account for such salary, wage, or other compensation containing the names of the persons to be paid, the amount to be paid to each person, the services on account of which same is paid, and any other information which, in the judgment of the civil service commission should be furnished on such payroll, bears the certificate of the civil service commission, or of its personnel director or other duly authorized agent. The certificate shall state that the persons named therein have been appointed or employed in compliance with the terms of [this chapter](#) and the rules of the commission, and that the payroll, estimate, or account is, insofar as known to the commission, a true and accurate statement. The commission shall refuse to certify the pay of any public officer or employee whom it finds to be illegally or improperly appointed, and may further refuse to certify the pay of any public officer or employee who, willfully or through culpable negligence, violates or fails to comply with [this chapter](#) or with the rules of the commission.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.14]

341A.15 Leave of absence.

Leave of absence, without pay, may be granted by any county sheriff to any person under civil service. The sheriff shall give notice of leave to the commission.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.15]

2013 Acts, ch 90, §94

341A.16 Civil suits.

The commission shall initiate and conduct all civil suits necessary for the proper enforcement of [this chapter](#) and the rules of the commission. The commission shall be represented in such suits by the county attorney. In the case of the combined counties, any one or more of the county attorneys of such combined counties may be selected by the commission to represent it.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.16]

Referred to in §331.756(52)

341A.17 Examination or registration right.

A commissioner or any other person shall not, in person or in cooperation with another, deceive or obstruct any person in respect to the person's right of examination or registration according to the commission rules, or falsely mark, grade, estimate, or report upon the examination or proper standing of any person examined, registered, or certified pursuant to [this chapter](#), or aid in so doing, or make any false representation concerning the same, or concerning the person examined. A commissioner or other person shall not furnish any person with special or secret information for the purpose of improving or reducing the

prospects or chances of any person who is or will be examined, registered, or certified, or persuade any other person, or permit or aid in any manner any other person to impersonate the person who is or will be examined, registered, or certified, in connection with any examination or registration of application or request to be examined or registered. The right of any person to an appointment or promotion shall not be withheld because of sex, color, creed, national origin, political affiliation or belief, nor shall any person be dismissed, demoted, or reduced in grade for such reason.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.17]

[2012 Acts, ch 1023, §157](#)

341A.18 Civil rights respected.

1. A person shall not be appointed or promoted to, or demoted or discharged from, any position subject to civil service, or in any way favored or discriminated against with respect to employment in the sheriff's office because of the person's political or religious opinions or affiliations or race or national origin or sex, or age.

2. *a.* A person holding a position subject to civil service shall not, during the person's scheduled working hours or when performing duties or when using county equipment or at any time on county property, take part in any way in soliciting any contribution for any political party or any person seeking political office, nor shall such employee engage in any political activity that will impair the employee's efficiency during working hours or cause the employee to be tardy or absent from work. The provisions of [this section](#) do not preclude any employee from holding any office for which no pay is received or any office for which only token pay is received.

b. A person shall not seek or attempt to use any political endorsement in connection with any appointment to a position subject to civil service.

c. A person shall not use or promise to use, directly or indirectly, any official authority or influence, whether possessed or anticipated, to secure or attempt to secure for any person an appointment or advantage in the appointment to a position subject to civil service, or an increase in pay or other advantage in employment in any such position, for the purpose of influencing the vote or political action of any person or for any consideration.

d. An employee shall not use the employee's official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election or affecting the results thereof.

3. Any officer or employee subject to civil service who violates any of the provisions of [this section](#) shall be subject to suspension, dismissal, or demotion subject to the right of appeal herein.

4. All employees shall retain the right to vote as they please and to express their opinions on all subjects.

5. An officer or employee subject to civil service and a chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff, who becomes a candidate for a partisan elective office for remuneration, upon request, shall automatically be given a leave of absence without pay, commencing thirty days before the date of the primary election and continuing until the person is eliminated as a candidate or wins the primary, and commencing thirty days before the date of the general election and continuing until the person is eliminated as a candidate or wins the general election, and during the leave period shall not perform any duties connected with the office or position so held. The officer or employee subject to civil service, or chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff, may, however, use accumulated paid vacation time for part or all of any leave of absence under [this section](#). The county shall continue to provide health benefit coverages, and may continue to provide other fringe benefits, to any officer or employee subject to civil service, or to any chief deputy sheriff or second deputy sheriff during any leave of absence under [this section](#).

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.18]

[90 Acts, ch 1119, §2](#); [2000 Acts, ch 1033, §1, 2](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1026, §80](#)

Referred to in [§80F.1, 341A.7](#)

341A.19 Aid from all county officers and employees.

All officers and employees of each county shall aid in carrying out the provisions of [this chapter](#). Rules as may, from time to time, be prescribed by the commission shall afford the commission, its members, and employees, all reasonable facilities and assistance in the inspection of books, documents, and accounts applying or in any way pertaining to all offices, places, positions, and employments subject to civil service. All officers and employees of a county shall produce books, documents, and accounts, and attend and testify, whenever required to do so by the commission or any commissioner.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.19]

341A.20 Budget.

The county board of supervisors of each county shall provide in the county budget for each fiscal year a sum equal to one-half of one percent of the preceding year's total payroll of those included under the jurisdiction and scope of [this chapter](#). The funds so provided shall be used for the support of the commission. Any part of the funds not expended for the support of the commission during the fiscal year shall be returned to the county, or counties, according to the ratio of contribution, on the first day of January which is not a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday following the end of the fiscal year.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.20]

[83 Acts, ch 123, §156, 209](#)

Referred to in [§331.324, 331.427](#)

341A.21 Misdemeanor.

Any person who willfully violates any of the provisions of [this chapter](#) shall be guilty of a simple misdemeanor. The district court shall have jurisdiction of all such offenses.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §341A.21]