

871—23.71(96) Governmental entity—definition.

23.71(1) The definition of a governmental entity is held to include but not be limited to:

a. An organization or any division, department, agency, commission, or board of a state or political subdivision established by proper authorities, authorized and created under constitutional provisions or statutes, for the purpose of carrying out a portion of the function of government, including both governmental and proprietary functions.

b. An instrumentality is one that is organized to carry on some function or purpose of government for a state or a political subdivision. There is expressed or implied statutory or other authority creating it. It is an independent legal entity with power to hire, supervise, and discharge its own employees. Generally, it can sue or be sued in its own name, to hold, convey real and personal property and borrow money.

c. Political subdivisions include counties, cities, municipalities, towns, villages, and townships, as well as irrigation, flood control, sanitation, utility, reclamation, drainage, improvement, and public school districts and authorities or any combination of these and similar governmental entities within the state of Iowa.

d. Instrumentalities shall include departments, boards, agencies, commissions, county or municipal corporations, associations and organizations of a state or a political subdivision of the state when the instrumentality is operated by virtue of the authority, power, or powers conferred upon the instrumentality by a state or political subdivision of the state, or when the instrumentality is controlled, supervised or receives direction, expressed or implied, from a state or political subdivision of a state or such rights are vested in public authority or authorities, or the state or the political subdivision of a state has the right, expressed or implied, to control or direct the policy, operation or to influence the organizations or action of individuals, parties or interests that control those who manage or administer the affairs of such organizations.

23.71(2) In cases involving the status of an organization as to whether it is a state, a state instrumentality, a political subdivision of a state or a political subdivision instrumentality, the following factors may be taken into account:

a. Whether the revenues are subject to control by a state, a political subdivision of a state or an instrumentality of either.

b. Whether the organization has broad powers of taxation, appropriation or authority to levy special assessments on the land located in the district that will stand as a lien upon the property assessed.

c. Whether the organization has been created or is existing by virtue of a state, a political subdivision of the state or instrumentality of either, which operates in the public interest, without profit to private persons, and whose purpose is presumed to be a public benefit and conducive to the public health, convenience and welfare.

d. Whether the organization is organized or used for a governmental purpose or an aid in the function of government or it performs a governmental function.

e. Whether there is an expressed or implied statutory or other authority necessary or existing for the creation or use of the organization.

23.71(3) The term “employment” does not apply to services performed for this state, a political subdivision of this state, an Indian tribe or an instrumentality of either by an individual who is an elected official; a member of a legislative body; a member of the judiciary of a state or political subdivision; a member of the state national guard, air national guard, or armed forces reserve; an employee on a temporary-duty basis in the case of fire, storm, snow, earthquake, flood or similar emergency; or in a position designated as a major nontenured policymaking or advisory position pursuant to state law if the position does not ordinarily require duties of more than eight hours per week.

a. The exclusion for a governmental entity or Indian tribe from coverage of unemployment of the services of an employee serving on a temporary basis in case of fire, storm, snow, earthquake, flood, or similar emergency applies only to those individuals who are hired or pressed into service to assist directly with an emergency or urgent distress associated with an emergency, including such temporary tasks as firefighting, rescue, removal of storm debris, cleaning up mud and flood debris, restoration of public facilities, snow removal and road clearance. Volunteer firefighters and police officers, and snow removal personnel, who are called to duty in emergency situations such as fires, floods, emergency snow removal or

similar public emergency to perform services on a temporary basis for which they receive pay, are excluded from coverage. The exclusion does not apply to permanent employees whose usual responsibilities include emergency situations.

b. The provision that excludes an individual employed by a governmental entity or Indian tribe who exercises duties in a position defined in state law as a major nontenured policymaking or advisory position, or a policymaking or advisory position that ordinarily does not require duties of more than eight hours per week, covers those individuals holding positions designated by, or pursuant to, state law as a policymaking or advisory position. Political subdivisions that have authority to enact ordinances or resolutions without recourse to the state legislature but under authority of state law may also establish and define such positions. The positions may qualify for the exclusion if the political subdivision has enacted an ordinance or resolution creating or designating one of its positions as policymaking or advisory, provided power to make the ordinance or resolution is authorized or permitted by the laws of the state. If the state law or local ordinance or resolution properly designated the positions as policymaking or advisory, the exclusion is clearly applicable. Where the law or the ordinance does not clearly and specifically so categorize or label the position, other pertinent factors such as job descriptions, the qualification of individuals considered for and appointed to the position, and the responsibilities involved shall be taken into account in determining the character of the position for purposes of applying the exclusion.

(1) “Policymaker” is defined as generally referring to the determination of the direction, emphasis and scope of action in the development of, and the administration of, governmental programs. Such responsibilities are confined to and inherent in jobs of the higher echelons of government.

(2) An “advisory position” is one that advises established governmental agencies and officers with respect to policy, program and administration without having authority to implement the recommendations.

(3) The word “major” in the phrase “major nontenured policymaking or advisory position” refers to high level governmental positions usually filled by appointment by the chief executive of the political entity (governor, mayor, etc.), or a council, and that involves responsibilities affecting the entire political entity, whether it be the state, county or city.

(4) The term “nontenured” is used in its usual meaning to mean that the position is not covered by merit system or civil service law or rules with respect to duration of appointment to the service.

(5) Service in a policymaking or advisory position where the performance of the duties ordinarily does not require more than eight hours per week is exempted. It makes no difference whether the position is tenured. If the position ordinarily requires more than eight hours per week, the exclusion does not apply. The number of hours required should be determined by reference to the law establishing the position and the actual time spent by incumbents.

c. An elected official includes an individual appointed to serve the unexpired term of an elected position. Such an individual’s services for such period are excluded because the individual is performing excluded services.

d. An official elected by a body other than the public, such as by a vote by the legislature, board of supervisors, council, school board or trustees, to perform services for a government entity, such individual is not excluded from coverage.

e. Services performed for the state national guard or the air national guard are excluded from coverage of the employment security law only as to the services in the individual’s “military” capacity. It does not apply to any service performed in any other capacity.

f. If a member of the state national guard or air national guard is employed in a civilian capacity performing services for either organization as distinguished from “military” service, the civilian service would be covered as an employee of a governmental entity to the same extent as any other employee.

23.71(4) Exemption from “employment” for individuals performing services for a governmental entity or Indian tribe as part of an unemployment work relief or work training program. Services performed by an individual for a government entity or Indian tribe for the purpose of qualifying or repaying a welfare or relief grant will not be considered “employment” provided that:

a. The major purpose of the program under which the work is performed is to relieve individuals from their unemployment or poverty.

b. The government entity does not pay the welfare or relief grant directly to the individual but instead pays items such as rent, power bills, medical bills, etc., for the individual.

c. The services performed by the individuals do not displace regularly employed workers of the government entity.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 96.7(8) and 96.1A(16) “a”(6).

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