



[SF 579](#) – Local Civil Rights Commission (LSB1493SV)
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Fiscal Note Version – New

Description

[Senate File 579](#) requires that any complaint filed with a local civil rights agency or commission where a party is a political subdivision must be referred to the Iowa Office of Civil Rights (IOCR). Further, upon request by any party, complaints alleging violation of Iowa Code chapter [216](#) not resolved within 12 months must be transferred to the IOCR. This Bill directs that local agencies or commissions must provide notice within 300 days of the filing of a complaint of the right to transfer the complaint after 12 months and to cross-file complaints with the IOCR when the complaint arises under State law, rule, or regulation within the jurisdiction of the IOCR.

The Bill also establishes that the term of a commissioner appointed to a local civil rights agency or commission is set at two years.

Background

Iowa currently has 25 local civil rights commissions, pursuant to Iowa Code section [216.19](#). Local commissions may investigate complaints alleging violations of the [Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965](#) and may cross-file complaints with the IOCR. Local commissions are not required to share comprehensive caseload or processing time data with the IOCR.

The IOCR receives approximately 50.0% of funding from the federal government and approximately 50.0% from the State General Fund. The IOCR maintains federal workshare agreements with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for most employment cases and with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for most housing cases. Federal reimbursement is not received for investigations involving education, public accommodation, or credit.

For FY 2026, the IOCR was appropriated \$1.4 million in the annual Administration and Regulation Appropriations Act.

Assumptions

- Of the 25 local commissions, 10 currently conduct investigations.
- The IOCR anticipates referral of approximately 10 complaints from each of the 10 commissions resulting in approximately 100 additional complaints per year.
- Transferred complaints may require substantial staff time.
- The IOCR estimates an additional 2.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions will be required to investigate and administratively process additional complaints. These additional FTE positions are estimated using starting salary costs and benefits and include the following job classes:
 - 1.0 Attorney 1 FTE position at an estimated cost of \$85,000.
 - 1.0 Civil Rights Specialist FTE position at an estimated cost of \$74,000.
 - 0.5 Administrative Assistant 2 FTE position at an estimated cost of \$35,000.
- It is unknown how many transferred cases would qualify for federal reimbursement under existing workshare agreements.

- It is unknown whether federal workshare funding levels will increase, decrease, or remain stable.
- Complaint processing times may increase by up to six months based on current workload.

Fiscal Impact

Senate File 579 is estimated to cost a minimum of approximately \$194,000 annually for 2.5 FTE positions to the IOCR. It is unknown what portion of this cost would be funded by the General Fund or through federal funding.

Source

Iowa Office of Civil Rights

/s/ Jennifer Acton

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The fiscal note for this Bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.
