

in certain areas of concern, including education, employment, health, housing, administration of justice, welfare, and recreation.

The nine-member commission, appointed by the governor, sets policy and direction for the staff. As of July 1, 1986, the staff support for the commission is provided by the Division for Spanish Speaking People, part of the Department of Human Rights. The division administrator is appointed by the governor with Senate confirmation. Its mandate set forth in Chapter 16, *Code of Iowa* (1977) was amended assigning additional responsibilities for recommending interpreters for use by Iowa courts.

Status of Blacks, Commission on the

Gary Lawson, administrator; Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines 50319; 515/281-3855

VERNON A. AVANT, Des Moines; term expires 1992

GERALD FIELDS, Sioux City; term expires 1992

JONATHAN R. NARCISSE, Des Moines; term expires 1994

MARY POWERS, Cedar Falls; term expires 1992

DEATRA R. ROBINSON, Des Moines; term expires 1992

GEORGE A. ROSSUM, Council Bluffs; term expires 1994

MC KENZLY WILSON, Cedar Rapids; term expires 1994

The Commission on the Status of Blacks was created by statute in 1988. The nine-member commission, appointed by the governor, sets policy and direction for the staff who comprise the Status of Blacks Division within the Department of Human Rights. The division administrator is appointed by the governor with Senate confirmation.

The objectives of the commission include studying the changing needs and problems of black Iowans and recommending new programs, policies, and constructive action to the governor and the General Assembly in such areas as:

1. Public and private employment policies and practices.
2. Iowa labor laws.
3. Legal treatment relating to political and civil rights.
4. Black children, youth, and families.
5. Expanded programs to assist blacks as consumers.
6. The employment of blacks and the initiation and sustentation of black businesses and black entrepreneurship.
7. Blacks as members of private and public boards, committees, and organizations.
8. Education, health, housing, social welfare, human rights, and recreation.
9. The legal system, including law enforcement, both criminal and civil.
10. Social service programs.

Duties of the commission include:

1. Serving as an information clearinghouse on programs and agencies operating to assist blacks.
2. Conducting conferences and training programs for blacks, public and private agencies and organizations, and the general public.
3. Coordinating, assisting, and cooperating with public and private agencies in efforts to expand equal rights and opportunities for blacks in the areas of: employment, economic development, education, health, housing, recreation, social welfare, social services, and the legal system.
4. Serving as the central permanent agency for the advocacy of services for blacks.
5. Providing assistance and cooperating with individuals and public and private agencies and organizations in joint efforts to study and resolve problems relating to the improvement of the status of blacks.
6. Publishing and disseminating information relating to blacks, including publicizing their accomplishments and contributions to the state.
7. Evaluating existing and proposed programs and legislation for their impact on blacks.
8. Coordinating or conducting public training programs for blacks to enable them to assume leadership positions.
9. Conducting surveys of blacks to ascertain their needs.
10. Assisting the Department of Personnel in the elimination of underutilization of blacks in the state's workforce.
11. Recommending legislation to the governor and the General Assembly designed to improve the educational opportunities and the economic and social conditions of blacks in the state.