IOWA Office of Civil Rights

Fiscal Year 2026 Performance Report

Iowa Office of Civil Rights

October 28, 2026

Message from the Director:

This report outlines the Iowa Office of Civil Rights' (IOCR) performance for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026) as required pursuant to Iowa Code section 8E.210.

The IOCR's mission is to provide impartial, efficient, and fact-driven investigative analyses of discrimination complaints filed in Iowa and promote civil rights outreach and education opportunities throughout the state.

Over the past year, the IOCR has upheld justice throughout the administrative process, educated thousands of Iowans about civil rights and IOCR's mission, and advanced internal process improvements. The IOCR completed a record-breaking number of investigative legal reports compared to previous years. We are able to directly tie this increased output to program efficiencies established over the last three years.

As we look to Fiscal Year 2027 and beyond, the IOCR is dedicated to continual process improvements to create efficiencies, reduce processing times of investigations, and continue to provide quality investigative legal reports to the thousands of parties that interact with the IOCR each year.

IOCR's mission continues as strong as it did when it was established in 1965. It is truly an honor to lead this mission for our state and my dedicated team.

Thank you for the privilege to serve,



Kristen Stiffler
Executive Director
Iowa Office of Civil Rights

Executive Summary

The Iowa Office of Civil Rights concluded FY26 with strong operational results, demonstrating exceptional progress in IOCR's strategic initiatives outlined in the IOCR FY25-FY27 Strategic Plan.

This report outlines progress towards Agency goals in FY26. IOCR tracked strategic initiatives, numerous key performance indicators, and operational measures. Many of these measures are ambitious goals that depend on external factors that may be beyond IOCR's control. Some IOCR measures are statutory or contractual recommendations; however, prudence requires the IOCR to assess realistic goals, with an eye toward opportunities to excel.

Performance Results

Key Improvement Efforts

01 Successfully implemented SF 579 by creating an efficient process for local commissions to transfer aged files to IOCR

02 Reduced error rate of federal submissions by 15%

03 Improved customer service and investigative efficiency through use of updated technology

Major Accomplishments

01 Implemented custom-built case management system leading to improve case processing

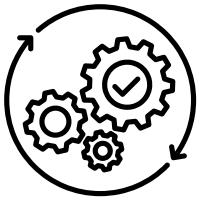
02 Exceeded housing investigation target by 17%

03 Increased EEOC submissions by 5% from FY25 and 18% increase from FY24

FY2026 Overall Improvement Efforts

Strategic Initiative 1

Advancing Operational Excellence

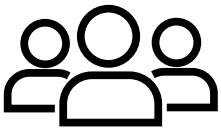


The IOCR's leadership team identified program efficiencies utilizing Lean Six Sigma principles.

IOCR leveraged state contracts to update its 20-year-old case management system. These technological improvements continue to result in improved intake processing times for Iowans, and reduced paper, printing, and mailing costs for the state.

Strategic Initiative 2

Elevate Organizational Health

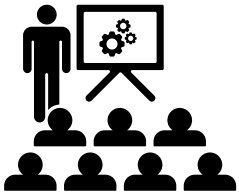


The IOCR's leadership team focused on structuring the Agency to elevate legal talent and provide staff with experienced legal managers specializing in civil rights law.

IOCR's turnover rate has reached a 15-year low. The Agency has established personal performance metrics that reflect the Agency's core values and mission.

Strategic Initiative 3

Increase Stakeholder Engagment



The IOCR expanded its education and outreach programming in FY26, by emphasizing new outreach events to reach more Iowans and promoted the IOCR free Fair Housing Compliance Hotline.

In Q2 of FY27, IOCR submitted an ambitious federal grant to expand education and outreach to all corners of the state.

IOCR FY26 Performance Results

EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM			
Measure	**Target**	**Actual**	**Comments & Analysis**
Provide high-quality education and outreach events annually	25	29	IOCR continues to bring focus and awareness through education and outreach opportunities, including explaining the Iowa Civil Rights Act, individual rights under the Act, and how to stay compliant.
Percentage of intakes completed within statutory timelines	90%	86%	IOCR continues to find ways to improve intake processes to ensure statutory requirements are met at the time of the initial filing.

EMPLOYMENT+ PROGRAM			
Measure	**Target**	**Actual**	**Comments & Analysis**
Complete over 1,000 Employment+ investigative reports (Tier 1 and Tier 2 Reports)	1000	1205	The Employment+ Team exceeded expectations for the number of investigative reports completed in FY26.
Submit 950 EEOC investigative closures	950	962	IOCR received credit for 950 investigation closures by the EEOC, an increase of 33 investigative closures from FY25.
IOCR legal analysis recommendations upheld by administrative law judge	100%	100%	Administrative law judges have continued to agree with IOCR's legal analysis following their independent legal review.
Tier 1 investigations completed within statutory suggested timeframe	Average 80% of Tier 1 Reports issued within 180 days of complaint submission	Averaged 98% of Tier 1 Reports issued within 365 days of complaint submission	IOCR reports a steady rise in case volume, with filed complaints growing by more than 30% since 2020. Tier 1 investigations average 8 months from the filing date to produce an investigative legal report.

IOCR FY26 Performance Results

HOUSING PROGRAM			
Measure	**Target**	**Actual**	**Comments & Analysis**
Complete over 150 HUD investigations	150	175	The Housing Team continues to efficiently complete housing investigations and is nationally recognized by HUD as a top performing partner (FHAP).
Percentage of HUD perfected complaints completed within 45 days of initial interview	85%	Over 90%	The Housing Team continues to find ways to improve the intake process from date of initial interview to perfected complaint.
IOCR legal analysis recommendations upheld by administrative law judge	100%	99%	Administrative law judges have continued to agree with IOCR's legal analysis following their independent legal review.