IOWA PUBLIC INFORMATION BOARD

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Joan Corbin, Pella (Government Representative, 2024-2028)
E. J. Giovannetti, Urbandale (Public Representative, 2022-2026)
Barry Lindahl, Dubuque (Government Representative, 2024-2028)
Luke Martz, Ames (Public Representative, 2024-2028)

STAFF
Charlotte Miller, Executive Director
Charissa Flege, Deputy Director
Sarah Golwitzer, Agency Counsel
Johnathon T. Harris, Agency Counsel

Use the following link to watch the IPIB meeting live:

https://youtube.com/@IowaPublicInformationBoard

Note: If you wish to make public comment to the Board, please send an email to IPIB@iowa.gov prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

November 19, 2026
3 P.M. or immediately after the adjournment of November IPIB Board Meeting, whichever is later.

I. Call to Order..
II. Approve Agenda.*
III. Approve Minutes from March 19, 2026, Legislative Committee meeting.*
IV. Public Comment.
V. Determine IPIB's proposed legislation for 2026 legislative session and bills request made during the 2025 legislative session for any potential amendments needed to previous proposed legislation.*
VI. Determine potential next meeting.
VII. Adjourn.

*** Attachments**

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DRAFT MINUTES

March 19, 2026
Immediately after the adjournment of the March IPIB Board Meeting at 1PM.

I. Call to Order. Chair called the meeting to order at 3:43PM.

II. ***Approve Agenda.**** On a motion by Lindahl, second by Martz, move to approved the agenda. Approved, 3-0

III. ***Approve Minutes from November 20, 2025, Legislative Committee meeting.**** On a motion by Lindahl, second by Martz, to approve minutes from November 20, 2025 meeting. Approved 3-0.

IV. ***Public Comment***. No public comment.,

V. ***Review IPIB tracked legislation***. Miller provided an update on the propose legislation.

VI. ***Review and potential action on IPIB's legislation and comments made in subcommittees to determine any potential amendments needed or additional communications.*** Miller provided an update on amendments. Committee discussion occurred relating to the proposed amendment language. Committee directed staff to reach out to legislative staff regarding committee members and staff concerns with amendment language.

VII. ***Determine potential next meeting***.

VIII. ***Adjourn***. Meeting adjourned

*** Attachments**

House Study Bill 580 - Introduced

SENATE/HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED IOWA PUBLIC INFORMATION BOARD BILL)

A BILL FOR

An Act relating to the filing of complaints with the Iowa public information board.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

S.F. _____ H.F. _____

Section 1. Section 23.7, subsection 1, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

1. The board shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A providing for the timing, form, content, and means by which any aggrieved person, any taxpayer to or citizen of this state, the attorney general, or any county attorney may file a complaint with the board alleging a violation of chapter 21 or 22. The complaint must be filed within ~~sixty~~ ninety days from the time the alleged violation occurred or the complainant could have become aware of the violation with reasonable diligence. All complaints filed with the board shall be public records.

EXPLANATION

The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

This bill provides that a person has 90 days, rather than 60 days under current law, to file a complaint with the Iowa public information board after an alleged violation of Code chapter 21 (open meetings) or Code chapter 22 (open records) occurred or the complainant could have become aware of the alleged violation.

Proposed IPIB Legislation

An act relating to notice requirements for open meetings.

(b) Posting the notice in a prominent and conspicuous place which is easily accessible to the public and annually designated for such purposes by the governmental body, in a manner such that the notice is visible at all times.

Explanation

The language “easily accessible to the public” was removed from notice requirements accidentally. This bill would reinsert the language into the code section.

Proposed IPIB Legislation

An Act relating to the Iowa Public Information Board complaint and investigation process.

Amend Iowa Code section 23.8

23.8 Initial processing of complaint.

Upon receipt of a complaint alleging a violation of chapter 21 or 22, the board shall do either of the following:

1. Determine that, on its face, the complaint is within the board's jurisdiction, appears legally sufficient, and could have merit. In such a case the board shall accept the complaint, and shall notify the parties of that fact in writing.
2. a. Determine that, on its face, the complaint is outside its jurisdiction, is legally insufficient, is frivolous, is without merit, involves harmless error, other complaints are more worthy of attention, the board's resources are insufficient for adequate investigation, or relates to a specific incident that has previously been finally disposed of on its merits by the board or a court. In such a case the board shall decline to accept the complaint. If the board refuses to accept a complaint, the board shall provide the complainant with a written order explaining its reasons for the action.

   b. The board may decline to investigate a complaint, but shall not be prohibited from inquiring into the matter complained about or into related problems at some future time.

New Section 23.8A

23.8A No investigation — notice to complainant.

If the board decides not to investigate, the complainant shall be informed of the reasons for the decision. If the ombudsman decides to investigate, the complainant and the agency shall be notified of the decision. After completing consideration of a complaint, whether or not it has been investigated, the board shall without delay inform the complainant of the fact, and if appropriate, shall inform the agency involved. The board shall on request of the complainant, and as appropriate, report the status of the investigation to the complainant.

Explanation:

Iowa Code Chapter 23 is amended to reflect how the office of the ombudsmen process in Iowa Code Sections 2C.12 and 2C.13to allow the board similar discretion as the ombudsmen in processing IPIB's complaints.

CHAPTER 2C

OMBUDSMAN

Referred to in §21.5, 23A.4, 70A.29

This chapter not enacted as a part of this title; transferred from chapter 601G in Code 1993

2C.1 Definitions.
2C.2 Office established.
2C.3 Appointment — vacancy.
2C.4 Citizen of United States and resident of Iowa.
2C.5 Term — removal.
2C.6 Deputy — assistant for penal agencies.
2C.7 Prohibited activities.
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2C.12 Complaints investigated.
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2C.18 Report to general assembly.
2C.19 Disciplinary action recommended.
2C.20 Immunities.
2C.21 Witnesses.
2C.22 Penalties.
2C.23 Citation.

2C.1 Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

1. *"Administrative action"* means any policy or action taken by an agency or failure to act pursuant to law.

2. *"Agency"* means all governmental entities, departments, boards, commissions, councils or institutions, and any officer, employee or member thereof acting or purporting to act in the exercise of official duties, but it does not include:

a. Any court or judge or appurtenant judicial staff.

b. The members, committees, or permanent or temporary staffs of the Iowa general assembly.

c. The governor of Iowa or the governor's personal staff.

d. Any instrumentality formed pursuant to an interstate compact and answerable to more than one state.

3. *"Employee"* means any employee of an agency.

4. *"Officer"* means any officer of an agency.

5. *"Person"* means an individual, aggregate of individuals, corporation, partnership, or unincorporated association.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.1]
C93, §2C.1

2C.2 Office established.

The office of ombudsman is established.
[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.2]
C93, §2C.2
2013 Acts, ch 10, §3

2C.3 Appointment — vacancy.

1. The ombudsman shall be appointed by the legislative council with the approval and confirmation of a constitutional majority of the senate and with the approval and confirmation of a constitutional majority of the house of representatives. The legislative council shall fill a vacancy in this office in the same manner as the original appointment. If the appointment or vacancy occurs while the general assembly is not in session, such appointment shall be reported to the senate and the house of representatives within thirty days of their convening at their next regular session for approval and confirmation.

2. The ombudsman shall employ and supervise all employees under the ombudsman's direction in such positions and at such salaries as shall be authorized by the legislative

council. The legislative council shall hear and act upon appeals of aggrieved employees of the office of ombudsman.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.3]
C93, §2C.3
2013 Acts, ch 10, §4; 2013 Acts, ch 140, §47

2C.4 Citizen of United States and resident of Iowa.

The ombudsman shall be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Iowa, and shall be qualified to analyze problems of law, administration, and public policy.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.4]
C93, §2C.4
2013 Acts, ch 10, §5

2C.5 Term — removal.

The ombudsman shall hold office for four years from the first day in July of the year of approval by the senate and the house of representatives, and until a successor is appointed by the legislative council, unless the ombudsman can no longer perform the official duties, or is removed from office. The ombudsman may at any time be removed from office by constitutional majority vote of the two houses of the general assembly or as provided by chapter 66. If a vacancy occurs in the office of ombudsman, the deputy ombudsman shall act as ombudsman until the vacancy is filled by the legislative council.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.5]
C93, §2C.5
2013 Acts, ch 10, §6

2C.6 Deputy — assistant for penal agencies.

1. The ombudsman shall designate one of the members of the staff as the deputy ombudsman, with authority to act as ombudsman when the ombudsman is absent from the state or becomes disabled. The ombudsman may delegate to members of the staff any of the authority or duties of the office except the duty of formally making recommendations to agencies or reports to the governor or the general assembly.

2. The ombudsman shall appoint an assistant who shall be primarily responsible for investigating complaints relating to penal or correctional agencies.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.6]
84 Acts, ch 1046, §1
C93, §2C.6
2013 Acts, ch 10, §7

2C.7 Prohibited activities.

Neither the ombudsman nor any member of the staff shall:

1. Hold another public office of trust or profit under the laws of this state other than notary public as provided in chapter 9B.

2. Engage in other employment for remuneration with an agency against which a complaint may be filed under this chapter or that could create a conflict of interest or interfere in the performance of the person's duties under this chapter.

3. Knowingly engage in or maintain any business transactions with persons employed by agencies against whom complaints may be made under the provisions of this chapter.

4. Be actively involved in partisan affairs.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.7]
84 Acts, ch 1046, §2
C93, §2C.7
2012 Acts, ch 1050, §31, 60; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §8

2C.8 Closed files.

The ombudsman may maintain secrecy in respect to all matters including the identities of the complainants or witnesses coming before the ombudsman, except that the general

assembly, any standing committee of the general assembly or the governor may require disclosure of any matter and shall have complete access to the records and files of the ombudsman. The ombudsman may conduct private hearings.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.8]
C93, §2C.8
2013 Acts, ch 10, §9

2C.9 Powers.

The ombudsman may:

1. Investigate, on complaint or on the ombudsman's own motion, any administrative action of any agency, without regard to the finality of the administrative action, except that the ombudsman shall not investigate the complaint of an employee of an agency in regard to that employee's employment relationship with the agency except as otherwise provided by this chapter. A communication or receipt of information made pursuant to the powers prescribed in this chapter shall not be considered an ex parte communication as described in the provisions of section 17A.17.

2. Investigate, on complaint or on the ombudsman's own motion, any administrative action of any person providing child welfare or juvenile justice services under contract with an agency that is subject to investigation by the ombudsman. The person shall be considered to be an agency for purposes of the ombudsman's investigation.

3. Investigate, on complaint, any complaint received by an individual who holds a license, certificate, authorization, or statement of recognition issued by the board of educational examiners related to violence in the classroom or violence on school property, including any disclosure of information to which section 279.14B applies related to violence in the classroom or violence on school property. The ombudsman shall provide the results of the investigation to the department of education and the board of educational examiners. The ombudsman shall maintain secrecy in respect to the identities of the complainants.

4. Prescribe the methods by which complaints are to be made, received, and acted upon; determine the scope and manner of investigations to be made; and, subject to the requirements of this chapter, determine the form, frequency, and distribution of the conclusions and recommendations of the ombudsman.

5. Request and receive from each agency assistance and information as necessary in the performance of the duties of the office. Notwithstanding section 22.7, pursuant to an investigation the ombudsman may examine any and all records and documents of any agency unless its custodian demonstrates that the examination would violate federal law or result in the denial of federal funds to the agency. Confidential documents provided to the ombudsman by other agencies shall continue to maintain their confidential status. The ombudsman is subject to the same policies and penalties regarding the confidentiality of the document as an employee of the agency. The ombudsman may enter and inspect premises within any agency's control and may observe proceedings and attend hearings, with the consent of the interested party, including those held under a provision of confidentiality, conducted by any agency unless the agency demonstrates that the attendance or observation would violate federal law or result in the denial of federal funds to that agency. This subsection does not permit the examination of records or access to hearings and proceedings which are the work product of an attorney under section 22.7, subsection 4, or which are privileged communications under section 622.10.

6. Issue a subpoena to compel any person to appear, give sworn testimony, or produce documentary or other evidence relevant to a matter under inquiry. The ombudsman, deputies, and assistants of the ombudsman may administer oaths to persons giving testimony before them. If a witness either fails or refuses to obey a subpoena issued by the ombudsman, the ombudsman may petition the district court having jurisdiction for an order directing obedience to the subpoena. If the court finds that the subpoena should be obeyed, it shall enter an order requiring obedience to the subpoena, and refusal to obey the court order is subject to punishment for contempt.

7. Establish rules relating to the operation, organization, and procedure of the office of

ombudsman. The rules are exempt from chapter 17A and shall be published in the Iowa administrative code.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.9; 82 Acts, ch 1026, §1]
88 Acts, ch 1247, §1; 89 Acts, ch 296, §78
C93, §2C.9
2003 Acts, ch 178, §46; 2006 Acts, ch 1153, §12; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §10; 2013 Acts, ch 140, §48; 2023 Acts, ch 96, §1
Referred to in §21.5, 279.14B

2C.10 No charge for services.

A monetary charge or other charge shall not be levied upon any person as a prerequisite to presentation of a complaint to the ombudsman.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.10]
C93, §2C.10
2013 Acts, ch 10, §11

2C.11 Subjects for investigations.

1. An appropriate subject for investigation by the office of ombudsman is an administrative action that might be:

a. Contrary to law or regulation.

b. Unreasonable, unfair, oppressive, or inconsistent with the general course of an agency's functioning, even though in accordance with law.

c. Based on a mistake of law or arbitrary in ascertainments of fact.

d. Based on improper motivation or irrelevant consideration.

e. Unaccompanied by an adequate statement of reasons.

2. The ombudsman may also be concerned with strengthening procedures and practices which lessen the risk that objectionable administrative actions will occur.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.11]
C93, §2C.11
2007 Acts, ch 126, §1; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §12; 2013 Acts, ch 140, §49

2C.11A Subjects for investigations — disclosures of information.

The office of ombudsman shall investigate a complaint filed by an employee who is not a merit system employee or an employee covered by a collective bargaining agreement and who alleges that adverse employment action has been taken against the employee in violation of section 70A.28, subsection 2. A complaint filed pursuant to this section shall be made within thirty calendar days following the effective date of the adverse employment action. The ombudsman shall investigate the matter and shall issue findings relative to the complaint in an expeditious manner.

2006 Acts, ch 1153, §13; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §13
Referred to in §70A.28

2C.12 Complaints investigated.

1. The ombudsman may receive a complaint from any source concerning an administrative action. The ombudsman shall conduct a suitable investigation into the administrative actions complained of unless the ombudsman finds substantiating facts that:

a. The complainant has available another remedy or channel of complaint which the complainant could reasonably be expected to use.

b. The grievance pertains to a matter outside the ombudsman's power.

c. The complainant has no substantive or procedural interest which is directly affected by the matter complained about.

d. The complaint is trivial, frivolous, vexatious, or not made in good faith.

e. Other complaints are more worthy of attention.

f. The ombudsman's resources are insufficient for adequate investigation.

g. The complaint has been delayed too long to justify present examination of its merit.

2. The ombudsman may decline to investigate a complaint, but shall not be prohibited from inquiring into the matter complained about or into related problems at some future time.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.12]
C93, §2C.12
2008 Acts, ch 1032, §201; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §14

2C.13 No investigation — notice to complainant.

If the ombudsman decides not to investigate, the complainant shall be informed of the reasons for the decision. If the ombudsman decides to investigate, the complainant and the agency shall be notified of the decision. After completing consideration of a complaint, whether or not it has been investigated, the ombudsman shall without delay inform the complainant of the fact, and if appropriate, shall inform the agency involved. The ombudsman shall on request of the complainant, and as appropriate, report the status of the investigation to the complainant.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.13; 82 Acts, ch 1026, §2]
C93, §2C.13
2005 Acts, ch 19, §4; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §15

2C.14 Institutionalized complainants.

A letter to the ombudsman from a person in a correctional institution, a hospital, or other institution under the control of an agency shall be immediately forwarded, unopened, to the ombudsman by the institution where the writer of the letter is a resident. A letter from the ombudsman to such a person shall be immediately delivered, unopened, to the person.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.14]
C93, §2C.14
2005 Acts, ch 19, §5; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §16

2C.15 Reports critical of agency or officer.

Before announcing a conclusion or recommendation that criticizes an agency or any officer or employee, the ombudsman shall consult with that agency, officer, or employee and shall attach to every report sent or made under the provisions of this chapter a copy of any unedited comments made by or on behalf of the officer, employee, or agency.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.15]
C93, §2C.15
2013 Acts, ch 10, §17

2C.16 Recommendations to agency.

1. The ombudsman shall state recommendations to an agency, if, after having considered a complaint and whatever material the ombudsman deems pertinent, the ombudsman finds substantiating facts for any of the following:

a. A matter should be further considered by the agency.
b. An administrative action should be modified or canceled.
c. A rule on which an administrative action is based should be altered.
d. Reasons should be given for an administrative action.
e. Any other action should be taken by the agency.

2. If the ombudsman requests, the agency shall, within twenty working days notify the ombudsman of any action taken on the recommendations or the reasons for not complying with them.

3. If the ombudsman believes that a law resulted in an administrative action which is unfair or otherwise objectionable, the ombudsman shall notify the general assembly concerning desirable statutory change.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.16]
C93, §2C.16
2008 Acts, ch 1031, §3; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §18; 2014 Acts, ch 1092, §1

2C.17 Publication of conclusions.

1. The ombudsman may publish the conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions and transmit them to the governor or the general assembly or any of its committees. When publishing an opinion adverse to an agency or official the ombudsman shall, unless excused by the agency or official affected, include with the opinion any unedited reply made by the agency.

2. Any conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions so published may at the same time be made available to the news media or others who may be concerned.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.17]
C93, §2C.17
2005 Acts, ch 19, §6; 2013 Acts, ch 10, §19

2C.18 Report to general assembly.

The ombudsman shall by December 31 of each year submit an economically designed and reproduced report to the general assembly and to the governor concerning the exercise of the ombudsman's functions during the preceding fiscal year. In discussing matters with which the ombudsman has been concerned, the ombudsman shall not identify specific persons if to do so would cause needless hardship. If the annual report criticizes a named agency or official, it shall also include unedited replies made by the agency or official to the criticism, unless excused by the agency or official affected.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.18; 82 Acts, ch 1026, §3]
C93, §2C.18
2013 Acts, ch 10, §20; 2013 Acts, ch 140, §50; 2019 Acts, ch 89, §6

2C.19 Disciplinary action recommended.

If the ombudsman believes that any public official, employee or other person has acted in a manner warranting criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the ombudsman shall refer the matter to the appropriate authorities.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.19]
C93, §2C.19
2013 Acts, ch 10, §21

2C.20 Immunities.

No civil action, except removal from office as provided in chapter 66, or proceeding shall be commenced against the ombudsman or any member of the staff for any act or omission performed pursuant to the provisions of this chapter unless the act or omission is actuated by malice or is grossly negligent, nor shall the ombudsman or any member of the staff be compelled to testify in any court with respect to any matter involving the exercise of the ombudsman's official duties except as may be necessary to enforce the provisions of this chapter.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.20]
C93, §2C.20
2013 Acts, ch 10, §22

2C.21 Witnesses.

A person required by the ombudsman to provide information shall be paid the same fees and travel allowances as are extended to witnesses whose attendance has been required in the district courts of this state. Officers and employees of an agency shall not be entitled to such fees and allowances. A person who, with or without service of compulsory process, provides oral or documentary information requested by the ombudsman shall be accorded the same privileges and immunities as are extended to witnesses in the courts of this state, and shall also be entitled to be accompanied and advised by counsel while being questioned.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.21]
C93, §2C.21
2013 Acts, ch 10, §23

2C.22 Penalties.

A person who willfully obstructs or hinders the lawful actions of the ombudsman or the ombudsman's staff, or who willfully misleads or attempts to mislead the ombudsman in the ombudsman's inquiries, shall be guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.22]
C93, §2C.22
2013 Acts, ch 10, §24

2C.23 Citation.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the *"Iowa Ombudsman Act"*.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §601G.23]
C93, §2C.23
2013 Acts, ch 10, §25