



Iowa Utilities Board

FY 2019 - 2023 Strategic Plan

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FY 2019 - 2023 Strategic Plan

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**Iowa Utilities Board
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Guiding Statements**

Our Mission

The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all Iowans.

Our Vision

The Iowa Utilities Board is valued as the regulatory expert and solutions-oriented partner regarding utility issues.

Our Guiding Principles

- We believe in continuous improvement and learning.
- Each of us is responsible and accountable for our contribution to fulfilling the mission and vision of the Iowa Utilities Board.
- We demonstrate respect for all people.
- All stakeholders receive equitable treatment.
- Consumers receive value in utility services and utilities receive an opportunity to earn a reasonable return on prudent investments.
- Economic growth and quality of life are supported by ensuring utility services are adequate to meet customer demand.
- Consumers are provided with the information they need to make informed choices about their utility services.
- Market solutions are implemented where appropriate.

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Strategic Goals**

The Board's customers and services are either explicitly or implicitly defined by Iowa Code. As a result, the Board's goals and strategies focus primarily on operational excellence and innovation within the bounds of the Board's statutory authority. The Board's strategic goals support the Iowa Energy Plan and Governor Reynolds' goals to create a competitive business environment and develop the most innovative energy policy in the country.

Goal 1: Deliver Excellent Customer Service.

The Board serves a variety of customers including utility consumers, utilities, elected officials, interested stakeholders, fellow employees, and the general public.

Goal 2: Maximize Employee Effectiveness.

Labor expense represents the single largest component of the Board's operating expense. Thus, it is critical that the Board maximize the effectiveness of its employees.

Goal 3: Ensure Compliance with Legal Requirements without Unnecessary Regulatory Burden.

The Board will ensure enforcement of applicable legal requirements as efficiently as possible.

Goal 4: Adapt to Changes in the External Environment.

The Board must be prepared to address new issues and requirements as utility technologies and State and Federal policies evolve and be prepared to facilitate utility innovation within the bounds of statutory requirements.

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Goal 1 – Deliver Excellent Customer Service

Lead: Business Manager

Team: Managers and Public Information Officer

Measures:

- **Time to process complaints and inquiries relative to Board established guidelines.**
- **Time to process filings in EFS relative to Board established guidelines.**

Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
A	Board decisions will be based on facts in the record, comply with statute, and communicate clearly.	Implement a new style guide to promote issuance of orders that are clear and consistent in style.	Regulatory Law Manager.	July 1, 2018.	Complete. Updated Style Guide was implemented in April of 2018. Subsequent updates were completed in April of 2019 and June of 2021.
B-1	Procedural schedules will be set to provide parties adequate time to present their cases but take no more time than is necessary.	Establish written procedures and checklists for various docket types.	Safety and Engineering Manager for initial processing of E and P dockets.	July 1, 2018.	Complete. E-Docket Procedure (IUB002) approved on October 14, 2019. P-Docket Procedure (IUB001) approved on January 20, 2020. Both procedures continue to receive improvement updates from staff.
B-2		Set procedural schedules for Board proceedings.	Regulatory attorneys for formal procedural schedules.	December 31, 2018.	Complete. Attorneys work with staff to set proposed procedural schedules for Board proceedings. Scheduling conferences are held to discuss and finalize procedural schedules with the parties.

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
C		Create external user guides for various docket types.	Customer Service Manager.	October 1, 2019.	Complete. The Quick User Filing Guide was updated and posted in January of 2020. A Quick Search Guide was created and posted in October of 2021.
D		Establish guidelines for determining appropriate use of scheduling and prehearing conferences.	Regulatory Law Manager.	December 31, 2018.	Complete. Scheduling and pre-hearing conference guidelines are utilized when contested case proceedings are required per Iowa Code chapter 17A.
E	Complaints and inquiries will be handled courteously and promptly. Responses will be based on facts and clearly communicated.	Enhance monitoring of customer service calls and training of customer service representatives.	Customer Service Manager.	July 1, 2018, and ongoing thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Recordings are reviewed bi-monthly and taken up with employees during one-on-one meetings.
F		Define requirements for a contact management system.	Business Manager.	August 1, 2018.	Complete. IUB 24/7 rollout completed March 2021 and continues to be used as the contact database system for the IUB.
G	Support systems and processes used by external parties will be easy to use and allow self-service to the extent possible. Internet enabled technologies will be used to facilitate transparency and participation.	Identify the requirements for a new electronic filing system with better public interface and workflow capabilities.	Customer Service Manager and Management Analyst.	December 31, 2018.	Incomplete – In Process. IUB has held multiple meetings with our current EFS vendor to discuss the next generation of our filing system. We have identified necessary projects, initial basic requirements, and are working on prioritizing the list of projects for a multi-year plan.

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
H		Implement an improved system for tracking docket and other projects along with workflow management	Business Manager.	October 1, 2019.	<p>Incomplete – In Process.</p> <p>An Items Pending Access database was created in August of 2019 to replace a legacy system. Improvements to the current system continue to be made while the technology team is working with the EFS vendor to determine if Items Pending, Order Routing, and related workflows can be replaced.</p>
I		Develop improved customer comment forms for ease of use.	Public Information Officer.	July 1, 2018.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>New forms were created and placed on the website in June of 2019. Additional improvements have been made since that point in time.</p>
J	The Board's outreach efforts (e.g., website, news releases, and public meetings) will provide a clear, complete, and transparent view of the Board's operations and allow for participation via a variety of methods suitable to the audience.	Investigate the possibility of conducting customer satisfaction surveys.	Public Information Officer and Customer Service Manager.	July 1, 2020.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>The prospect of Customer Satisfaction surveys was discussed in 2021 and determination was made to not pursue that project.</p>
K		Modify hearing room to improve participant interaction, including improved technology.	Board Member, Public Information Officer, and Chief Operating Officer.	June 30, 2019.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>The hearing room remodel project was completed in June of 2019. The equipment and layout allow for effective participation from parties that are present and those who participate remotely.</p>

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
L		Implement web-enabled solutions to promote virtual participation via webinar such as Skype or Google Meet technologies, and update as new options become available.	Business Manager and Public Information Officer.	Ongoing.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>The Board’s live-streaming video and overall audio-visual experience was improved with the redesign of the hearing room in June of 2019.</p> <p>With the dramatic increase in remote participation for proceedings, the update to technology proved timely.</p>
M	The Board will provide timely and accurate communication with external parties regarding the status of matters.	Develop an outward-facing "Items Pending" document similar to the rules review summary.	Regulatory Law Manager.	December 31, 2019.	<p>Incomplete – In Process.</p> <p>No outward-facing document has been created to date.</p>

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Goal 2 – Maximize Employee Effectiveness

Lead: Safety and Engineering Manager

Team: Chief Operating Officer, Emergency Management Coordinator, Business Manager, and Public Information Officer

Measures:

- Number of employee training sessions attended.

Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
A	Staff will be provided clear direction and expectations through the use of position descriptions, individual performance plans, and on-going communication with management.	Schedule and hold all regular meetings (All-Staff, section, managers).	Chief Operating Officer.	July 1, 2018, and ongoing thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Monthly All-Staff meetings are scheduled 12 months in advance and are held as scheduled. Weekly section, manager, and administrative meetings are consistently held.
B		Establish schedule for review of IPPs, PDQs, and completion of employee evaluations in a timely manner.	Chief Operating Officer.	Ongoing.	Complete. A Google Sheet has been created for all employees containing: current IPP dates, length of current IPP, date of last review, date of next review, increase eligibility, and journey eligibility (if applicable).

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
C	Staff will be provided the training, coaching, and tools needed to perform their jobs.	Identify relevant or required training opportunities (regulatory and general office training).	Chief Operating Officer.	September 1, 2018, and quarterly thereafter.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>Required training for managers: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Discipline, Grievances, and the Merit System; Diversity Training for Managers & Supervisors; Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action; Investigating Employee Misconduct; Preventing Sexual Harassment for Supervisors; Substance Abuse Policy; From interview to Hire; Performance Evaluation; Unanet Training for Managers.</p> <p>Required training for employees: Diversity Training for Employees; Cybersecurity Training; Google Training; Phone Training; EFS Training; Unanet Training; Travel Procedures.</p>
D		Prepare and implement training plans.	Chief Operating Officer.	July 1, 2019.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>All employees have current IPPs and new employees are required to have a signed IPP as well.</p>
E	Pay increases will be based on performance and tied to Individual Performance Plan goal achievement.	Develop guidelines for increases.	Chief Operating Officer and Chair.	July 1, 2018.	<p>Complete.</p> <p>Increases are granted consistent with state rules and policies.</p>

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
F	Backup staff will be identified and trained for each function. Documentation will be in place to enable backup staff to perform the duties of primary staff.	Establish written practices and procedures for routine processes.	Emergency Management Coordinator.	July 1, 2020.	Complete – Ongoing. Written Policy and Procedure documents continue to be completed by Iowa Utilities Board staff. As of this update, 107 total policies and procedures have been approved and are in use.
G		Conduct quarterly review of essential functions and assignments.	Chief Operating Officer.	July 1, 2018, and quarterly review thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Each section is to maintain a list of assignments and essential functions.
H	Balance employee retention and turnover.	Identify training-ground positions and determine appropriate staffing levels for anticipated attrition.	Chief Operating Officer.	September 1, 2018, and annually thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Regular meetings are conducted with managers and leadership to discuss ongoing needs of staffing within the agency. Annual review occurs during budgeting and spending plan processes.
I		Investigate employee satisfaction survey.	Chief Operating Officer.	July 1, 2022.	Incomplete – In Process. In Process.

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
J	Work will be planned, assigned as appropriate, and monitored.	Implement an improved system for tracking docket and other projects.	Business Manager.	October 1, 2019.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>An Items Pending Access database was created in August of 2019 to replace a legacy system used for several years.</p> <p>Improvements to that database continue to be made while the technology team is working with the EFS vendor to determine if Items Pending, Order Routing, and related workflows can be replaced.</p>
K	When cost-effective, information technology will be used to establish process, provide documentation and transparency, reduce cost, manage work, facilitate communication with the public, and minimize error.	Continually identify and evaluate opportunities.	Business Manager and Public Information Officer.	September 1, 2019, and annually thereafter.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>IUB 24/7 tracks progress in completing tasks assigned within the system to include company contacts, registrations, and annual reporting requirements.</p> <p>The state’s use of the Workday system should lead to further efficiencies.</p>

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Goal 3 – Ensure Compliance with Legal Requirements without Unnecessary Regulatory Burden.

Lead: Regulatory Law Manager

Team: Managers

Measures:

- **Percent of orders issued on or before statutory deadline.**
- **Percent of administrative rules reviewed per the schedule established in I.A.C. 199-3.11(2).**
- **Percent of late payments followed up on within targeted timelines.**
- **Percent of late annual report filings followed up on within Board established timelines.**

Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
A	Administrative rules will be reviewed as required by Iowa Code section 17A.7(2) to update or eliminate regulations that are outdated, redundant, or inconsistent or incompatible with statutes and other administrative rules.	Follow schedule for administrative rules review in 199 IAC 3.11.	Regulatory Law Manager.	Ongoing.	Complete – Ongoing. Administrative Rules are reviewed as required by Iowa Code section 17A.7(2) and 199 IAC 3.11. A publicly available tracking spreadsheet is used to monitor progress.
B	The Board's information systems will allow staff and external parties to easily file, find, and obtain information that is required to be filed with the Board and information regarding opportunities for participation in Board processes.	Identify the requirements for a new electronic filing system with better public interface and workflow capabilities.	Customer Service Manager and Management Analyst.	December 31, 2018.	Incomplete – In Process. IUB has held multiple meetings with our current EFS vendor to discuss the next generation of our filing system. We have identified necessary projects, initial basic requirements, and are working on prioritizing the list of projects for a multi-year plan.

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
C	Review all regular reports received by the agency for usefulness to the Board or to agency customers and eliminate unnecessary reports.	Establish and implement schedule for annual review of the list of regular filings to identify reporting requirements that are or have become obsolete or otherwise unnecessary for the Board or external users.	Regulatory Analysis Manager.	July 1, 2018, and annually thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. A spreadsheet documenting regular filings and containing recommendations was created in July of 2018. The document has served as a basis for review of regular filings along with 5-year rule reviews.
D-1		Follow policy and procedure for billing and collection.	Accounting Manager.	Ongoing.	Complete – Ongoing. AA001 (Quarterly Direct Bills) and AA002 (Board Review of Projects Flagged for Billing Determination) were approved in January of 2020. AA005 (Industry Direct Assessment Calculation and Billing - Remainder Billing) was approved in January of 2022.
D-2		Follow policy and procedure for annual reports.	Accounting Manager.	Ongoing.	Complete – Ongoing. AA015 (Accounting Review of Annual Reports) was approved in July of 2021. Accounting has established metrics for tracking progress.

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Goal 4 – Adapt to Changes in the External Environment

Lead: Regulatory Analysis Manager

Team: Board Members, Chief Operating Officer, Emergency Management Coordinator, and Managers

Measures:

- **Number of training sessions attended.**

Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
A	The Board staff's organizational structure, including reporting structure and individual positions, will be routinely reviewed and modified as needed to address the changing needs of the agency and the industry.	Review agency organizational structure on an ongoing basis, with a full review by August 1 of each year for budgeting purposes.	Chair and Chief Operating Officer.	August 1, 2018, and annually thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Organizational Structure reviewed for annual budget and spending plan purposes annually.
B	The Board's internal procedures will be reviewed and adapted as needed.	Complete review of internal procedures by October 1 of each year.	Emergency Management Coordinator.	October 1, 2019, and annually thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. As of this update, 108 total policies and procedures have been approved and in use.
C	Regular informal contacts (meetings, conference calls, etc.) will take place to facilitate communication between the Board and stakeholders.	Schedule quarterly meetings.	Legislative Liaison.	July 1, 2018, and quarterly thereafter.	Complete – Ongoing. Meetings are routinely scheduled and held.

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Subgoal	Strategies	Actions	Person(s) Responsible	Due By	2022 Update
D	The Board will participate in national, regional, and state organizations/activities to represent Iowa's interests and to identify in advance changes that could impact regulation of Iowa's utilities.	Identify opportunities for and track participation in outside organizations and activities.	Board Members.	July 1, 2018, and quarterly thereafter.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>Board Members regularly participate in regional organizations: Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), Organization of MISO States (OMS), Southwest Power Pool (SPP), Regional State Committee (RSC), and Mid-America Regulatory Conference (MARC).</p> <p>Board Members participate in National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).</p> <p>The Iowa Utilities Board has a position on the Iowa Energy Center's governing board.</p>
E	Whether in docketed cases or with respect to administrative issues, staff will present alternatives for consideration.	Staff memos and verbal briefings will include alternatives when appropriate.	Regulatory Law Manager and Regulatory Analysis Manager.	Ongoing.	<p>Complete – Ongoing.</p> <p>Memorandums include positions of parties as options considered. Staff recommendations based upon options presented.</p>