



**STATE OF IOWA YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
&
IOWA YOUTH CONGRESS
APPLICATION
2015**

**APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY MAY 1, 2015 RECEIVE PRIORITY CONSIDERATION
ALL APPLICATIONS DUE ON JUNE 12, 2015**

The following three pages describe both the State Of Iowa Youth Advisory Council and the Iowa Youth Congress in detail. The last three pages are the application. Please review and understand the descriptions prior to completing the application.



DESCRIPTION

Iowa Code section 216A.140.8: *A state of Iowa youth advisory council is created to provide input to the Governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers on youth issues. The purpose of the youth advisory council is to foster communication among a group of engaged youth and the Governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth.*

The **State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC)** is a non-partisan policy advising organization comprised of 21 voting members and three non-voting members. In 2009 SIYAC became a statutory network within the Iowa Department of Human Rights' section of the Iowa Code (216A.140.8) under the umbrella of the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD).

ELIGIBILITY and APPLICATION PROCESS

SIYAC's members are young people between the ages of 14 and 20 from across Iowa. Youth who have leadership qualities and want to become involved in the legislative process are encouraged to apply. This includes supporting legislation and meeting with legislators. Youth selected to serve as members of SIYAC will reflect the diversity in Iowa and the positive differences throughout our state and among its young people.

The council meets quarterly at the State Capitol in Des Moines and holds bi-weekly conference calls. Applications received by **May 1, 2015** will receive priority consideration and new SIYAC members will be selected by June 26, 2015. Members serve two-year terms. There are no fees for youth to participate and travel expenses to and from meetings will be reimbursed. Visit www.icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC for more information about SIYAC.

If you are interested in representing Iowa's youth in our state government, please read the following "Expectations & Commitments" and complete the attached application on pages 7-9 of this document. Create a separate document and type your answers to the questions on pages 8 and 9. A letter of recommendation will also be required for SIYAC applicants, which should be submitted to the SIYAC Coordinator directly by the person completing the recommendation letter.

EXPECTATIONS & COMMITMENTS

- SIYAC members will **begin their two-year term on July 1, 2015.**
- Members will serve a **two-year term**. Youth who are in good standing with the council may reapply for another term.
 - Youth who are in good standing with the council may seek to reapply for membership for consecutive terms.
 - Graduating seniors may choose to resign from their post or continue serving on SIYAC given that they are able to fulfill their SIYAC duties in addition to their post-secondary plans, and remain in Iowa (college, career, military, etc...).
 - The major SIYAC activity during the summer months is a new member orientation. Second year members will have the opportunity to assist in the orientation.
 - SIYAC members **may be dismissed** if they do not meet membership expectations or if there is concern among the council's members that a member has defaced the reputation of the council.
- Youth will be **responsible for their own transportation** to the SIYAC meetings. Mileage and meal reimbursement will be provided for members attending SIYAC events.
 - **There is no fee to participate in SIYAC.**
- Council members can expect numerous opportunities to demonstrate and develop **leadership, communication, teamwork and organizational skills**.
 - Officer and committee chair positions are available and are voted on by the council's members.
 - Members are responsible for both initiating and maintaining **communication via phone, email or other methods in addition to the formal SIYAC meetings**.
- Each SIYAC member will participate in **two service projects** each year.
- SIYAC members will **represent youth throughout the entire state of Iowa**; not merely each member's own personal opinions.
 - Youth will be responsible for **gathering input/opinions from other youth** in their community prior to each SIYAC meeting.
 - SIYAC will be expected to **collaborate with the Iowa Youth Congress** and to utilize this group as a resource that reflects the views of a wide range of Iowa's youth. To facilitate this, **SIYAC members will be encouraged to participate in Iowa Youth Congress events**.
- Youth will be expected to **attend all mandatory quarterly (four per year) SIYAC meetings at the State Capitol in Des Moines** and will also be encouraged to attend any additional relevant opportunities for civic engagement (local town hall meetings, city council meetings, etc...) or youth development (trainings, conferences, etc...) that may present themselves.
 - If excessive absences occur, membership will be evaluated by the council's Executive Committee based on the members' contribution to SIYAC.
 - Youth will **dress professionally** and appropriately at SIYAC meetings or events.
- Members will form committees within SIYAC to address pertinent youth issues. **Each committee will complete a long-term project** relevant to their issue.
 - For examples, visit our website <http://www.icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC/issues.html>
- **Partnerships with legislators, nonprofits, state and local leaders** that have common goals in addressing youth issues are highly encouraged.
 - SIYAC members will be expected to initiate and sustain these relationships. **Networking is a key component of effective representation.**



DESCRIPTION

Iowa Youth Congress (IYC) is a diverse and dynamic group of student representatives and we are always looking for students with new perspectives. Any Iowa high school student can apply to be part of IYC. There is no cost to participate and the program will provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities accepted into IYC.

IYC brings students from across the state to discuss issues that affect youth. Students from each region will meet in the fall of 2015 to brainstorm and discuss ideas they would like to see become new laws, or changes to current laws. After talking about these ideas in regional meetings, students decide what they will present at the all-student gathering at the Capitol in Des Moines.

Iowa Youth Congress members will travel from all parts of Iowa to talk about their issues formally in the House of Representatives Chamber at the Capitol in Des Moines. They will spend a full day over the weekend discussing their ideas in the same style as Iowa representatives and will attend a celebratory Dream Forward dinner afterward.

ELIGIBILITY and APPLICATION PROCESS

Iowa Youth Congress models itself after the Iowa House of Representatives and accepts up to 100 high school participants. The application process for Iowa Youth Congress has two steps. The first is to fill out the application and send it in. The second will only be necessary if there are more than 100 applicants. In that case, you will be asked to participate in an interview over the phone. The questions for this interview will be sent to you once you apply, but will only be necessary if more than 100 students apply. This interview will help IYC select the students who will participate in the current year and determine those who will be listed as alternates, who will then get priority for next year's IYC. Anyone is welcome to apply!

EXPECTATIONS & COMMITMENTS

- Members are expected to participate for the full year and attend all events, unless excused.
- All officers are expected to run and attend all meetings, unless excused.
- While participating in the Annual Event, and other formal events, students will dress in business wear. Members will respect one another and act in a responsible manner at all times.
- While in Des Moines, all members will follow the rules given to them at the beginning of the weekend. If any rules are broken that member may be asked to leave.
- Members will be expected to research bills they propose before all meetings.
- Members are expected to write or contact their legislators after the Annual House Session, to gain support of the IYC bills.



**STATE OF IOWA YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
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APPLICATION COVER PAGE**

Please print this page and fill out the following legibly with an ink pen. If you have any questions while completing this application contact Betsy Penisten, SIYAC Coordinator or Jessica McMillan, IYC Coordinator, at 515-725-2836.

Check the program to which you are applying

*** You may only apply to one program**

IYAC applications that are not offered a position with SIYAC may be offered a position with IYC.

SIYAC IYC

Name: _____ School: _____

Grade (2014-15): _____ E-mail: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: Iowa Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

How long have you lived in Iowa? _____

Please provide your signature to verify the above information given is accurate.

Signature of Youth Applicant	Date
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Please have your parent/guardian provide their signature to verify that you have their permission to participate in the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council from 2015-2017 or the Iowa Youth Congress from 2015-2016.

Signature of Parent/Guardian	Date
Name of Parent/Guardian (Please print)	

The Iowa Code (216A.140.8.b) states that the Iowa Department of Human Rights shall “*strive to maintain a diverse council membership and shall take into consideration race, ethnicity, disabilities, gender, and geographic location of residence of the applicants*”. To facilitate these efforts, you are provided with the opportunity to indicate the following optional information below.

Gender:

Race and/or Ethnicity:

Please note any reasonable accommodations that you may need to participate in SIYAC or IYC meetings or events so that we can make adequate arrangements and assure accessibility.

Do you have access to transportation? If so, what type?

How did you hear about SIYAC and/or IYC?

Please complete typed narrative responses to the following questions within a separate document. To apply, submit the narrative document along with the Application Cover Page.

Applications received by May 1, 2015 will receive priority consideration. All final applications must be received by June 12, 2015. Recommended response length is two to five sentences per question.

1. Have you been involved with SIYAC, SIYAC-sponsored activities, or IYC in the past? If yes, explain.
2. Please explain your involvement in any formalized organization(s) within your community or school. What is the purpose of the organization(s)? If selected for SIYAC or IYC, what would you do to formally connect SIYAC or IYC issues to the organizations with which you are currently involved?

3. SIYAC and IYC are groups of young people who will serve as a voice for *all* youth throughout the state. How are you a representative of Iowa's youth?
4. Conversely, what sets you apart from other youth in Iowa and/or your community? How have these differences helped you to achieve your goals?
5. Describe your familiarity with Iowa's state government.
6. What is one action that you believe SIYAC or IYC should take to improve the lives of youth in Iowa?
7. If selected as a member, you may be asked to speak to a local coalition, school board, city council, legislators, or other entities about SIYAC and IYC. Have you spoken to any of these entities (or any similar) in the past? If so, please list them.

The following questions should only be answered by those applying to SIYAC.

8. **It is important to note that serving on SIYAC requires dedication and a continual time commitment between formal meetings throughout the entire school year.** Please list *every* extracurricular activity in which you will be participating during the next school year. Include academic, athletic or community involvement, employment, and any other activities that will require your time.
9. The amount of time that SIYAC membership requires depends on the leadership responsibilities that members accept. How will you manage your time to ensure that you dedicate sufficient attention to all of your responsibilities (including SIYAC if you are selected as a member)?
10. **One letter of recommendation is required to complete the application for SIYAC only.** Please clearly include the name and contact information of the adult who will submit this letter. **The adult writing the recommendation should submit the letter directly to the SIYAC Coordinator via one of the methods below.** The adult writing the recommendation should be a non-family member who can discuss your individual strengths as well as your ability to work as part of a team. Examples of possible adults to write this letter are: *teachers, organization leaders, coaches, employers, mentors, community coalition members, legislators, etc.*

Submit application materials via one of these methods		
<u>Postal Mail</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Fax</u>
State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council/Iowa Youth Congress Department of Human Rights 321 E. 12th Street Lucas State Building, 2nd Floor Des Moines, IA 50319	SIYAC@iowa.gov <i>Please scan the completed materials and attach them to the email</i>	515-242-6119