

Health and Human Services: Alignment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Team Members

-March 2022-

Both departments have been through a lot of change. Why are we doing this now?

There are extensive connections between Iowa's public health and human services work to help all Iowans live safe, stable, and healthy lives. It's become clear we can serve Iowans more effectively and efficiently through:

1. An integrated organizational structure that brings like functions and services together
2. Shared direction among state staff and partners and shared connection with the big picture
3. A welcoming and efficient 'front door' to health and human services
4. Closed loops and warm handoffs to connect Iowans seamlessly to services and supports that are right for them
5. Improved use and integration of data to make informed decisions and provide seamless service to Iowans

Will my job change?

It's possible some job functions might eventually be different, but most positions won't change.

Throughout the process we will engage with you through surveys, focus groups and other meetings to get the best understanding of your day-to-day functions in order to understand where services and supports for Iowans can be improved.

You will be made aware of any impact to your job well before any implementation.

Will there be layoffs?

No. Reductions in force aren't anticipated and you shouldn't be concerned for your job.

The way you work, or for whom you work might change, but the important work we do won't change.

If changes occur in my chain of command, will that affect the telework policy my team has in place or will I be able to continue working the same schedule?

HHS leadership remains supportive of telework. There is also recognition of the value that in-person work provides, including opportunities for collaboration, creativity and connection.

Your responsibilities aren't expected to change significantly. The scope of work we do won't change. Telework arrangements should be similar to what is currently in place.

What is the timing of these changes?

2021-2022	2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2025+
Explore and Analyze	Prepare and Establish Foundation	Launch and Pilot	Scale and Broaden	Routinize and Continuously Improve

By June 30, 2022

- Identify, scope and begin the work of building the administrative foundation for the new department.
- Expand the Functional Organizational Chart to a detailed Table of Organization so staff understand reporting structures for the new department.

July 1, 2022 and Beyond

- On July 1, 2022, state legislation is anticipated to establish a transition department of health and human services.
- Identify, scope, and plan a sequence of projects, with staff engagement, to start implementing priority recommendations in the Final Change Package, recognizing full integration of the agencies will take time (months or even years to fully implement).
- Begin implementation of the new table of organization.

We plan to communicate to all staff and partners across the new organization and Iowa's larger health and human services community throughout this process.

How can I be involved in the process?

You'll be able to give feedback through surveys and can volunteer to be part of focus groups. Your input will help inform recommendations for alignment, potential challenges, risks or opportunities we need to consider.

You'll also get to provide feedback after the changes are implemented.

It will be important to monitor changes and whether they meet expected outcomes. Your feedback and that from external stakeholders is crucial to ensuring we achieve our goals for alignment.

Will there be an effort to align job classifications and salaries, too?

If your job functions change as part of alignment enough to need a job classification change or salary modification, we will use existing human resource processes to address it.

If these kinds of changes are needed, they will happen after alignment.

Who can I connect with if I have questions?

Please use the 'contact us form' here: <https://hhsalignment.iowa.gov/contact-us>, and we will work to answer your questions as quickly as possible.

We've created an [HHS Alignment webpage](#) where we share information, frequently asked questions, and updates on progress as this effort moves forward.

Please also feel free to speak to your manager with any questions or concerns you might have.

What do I tell external stakeholders?

We will share similar messages with external stakeholders and will offer opportunities for them to provide feedback.

If you get questions from a stakeholder group, you can share information from these FAQs or ask them to use the 'contact us form' here: <https://hhsalignment.iowa.gov/contact-us> to submit any additional questions they might have.

Will the alignment include cost of living raises?

Cost of living adjustments can only be made by the legislature through the appropriation process. That is not something the department can do on its own. While alignment may create some opportunities to apply for positions that would include raises, it isn't something that can be implemented across the board.

Will this alignment seek to address staffing shortages or turnover rates?

We are very aware of the impact the pandemic has had on staff workload and morale over the past two years. Implementing initiatives to support our staff is a priority.

Alignment may not specifically address these issues; however, each area within HHS is looking at all available recruitment and retention strategies to address staff shortages and turnover.

When will needs, such as email platform and document sharing integration, financial and HR needs be addressed?

Business needs will be prioritized for planning ahead of the July 1, 2022 creation date for the new department. It is anticipated that many of these functions will continue to run in tandem as project plans for integration of the functions are developed.

How will this alignment affect current projects, such as quality improvement projects?

Any existing or ongoing projects in program areas affected by the priority recommendations will be reviewed during implementation planning, with the goal of minimal or no disruption to current projects.

What is the vision for epidemiological support and services? Will this be in the PH functional area?

Epidemiological support and services may be included in the Table of Organization, to be released prior to July 1, 2022. The Table of Organization will be drafted with a vision of ensuring epidemiological support and expertise is accessible to all public health functions, as well as client services across the system.

There appears to be significant changes to how Field Operations and Adult, Children and Family Services (ACFS) are represented on the functional organization chart. What should we expect to happen here?

First, changes in this structure will not happen immediately—and in fact will take some time. Throughout this process we've talked with team members and stakeholders about the challenges of having policy separated from practice. However, we still have a lot of work to do to understand how this will come together. The Department will be engaging in an assessment effort similar to alignment, focused on this split in practice and policy, and specifically focusing on how to best structure protective services in the new HHS structure. Of course, we will engage our team and stakeholders throughout this process.

As a joined agency, when should we change our email signature?

As we start implementation work, several projects have been identified as priorities, with targeted completion dates prior to October 2022. Rebranding is one of those priority projects, and rebranding work will include development of a Health and Human Services logo. After the rebranding work is completed, we will develop a use guide which will address email signatures, templates, letterheads, etc.