



The Iowa Extension Council Association Benefits YOUR Extension Council

IECA is your direct communication link to decision-makers

- Our **board members and executive director meet regularly with administrative team members** to voice your concerns, opinions, and suggestions. The Association sits at the table with Extension Administration to explain the challenges, formulate policies and practices that help solve local problems, smooth out local difficulties, and help county staff and councils be more effective with less effort.
- **Representation on many ISU Extension and Outreach state-wide committees** allows the association to represent county interests in many important decisions. In the past few years, council members have served on the Structured for Success committee, Open for Iowa committee, the *We Are Iowa 4-H Organizational Fundamentals* review committee, and the MOU renewal committee.

IECA investigates your Council's concerns and challenges

- IECA provides County Extension Councils **access to their own legal representation**. In FY2022, nearly a third of Iowa's county extension councils worked directly with Whitfield & Eddy to help with issues relating to employment law, staffing conflicts, real estate issues, policy review, and contract oversight. Additionally, Whitfield & Eddy has served the good of all extension councils by reviewing the personnel handbook template, delivering trainings to county extension councils and staff, and reviewing the MOU between Iowa State University and county extension districts.
- **Employee Assistance Program** for councils to offer to their county-paid employees. In 2022, nearly 400 county employees have access to benefits to help them with their problems and challenges in their everyday lives. IECA communicates directly with county staff via a regular newsletter, EAP News, about wellness resources and events offered through EAP.
- IECA is at the table to **negotiate with vendors on behalf of extension councils**. We are at the table when policy renewals and contracts are being negotiated, looking out for the best interest of councils.
- **Job postings of county-paid extension positions** on the IECA website assist with increasing qualified applicant pools.

IECA facilitates the sharing of best practices

- **IECA helps facilitate Extension Council training** designed by council members, when possible, to best meet the needs of council members. This includes webinars, 3-Minute videos, extension council orientation, and the Extension Council Conference.
- Periodic meetings of IECA allow members representing counties across the state to meet and **discuss best practices, common issues, and solutions to common problems**. This invaluable sharing of knowledge has facilitated rapid adoption of changes impacting councils.
- Quick, easy, and affordable **volunteer and county staff background screening**. The association provides cost savings by managing the contract with the background screening vendor and IECA staff assist county employees with background screening questions and support.

IECA communicates with its membership

- **The IECA website is maintained with a goal to provide easy-to-access information** for council members to fulfill their roles, including contact information for your IECA representative, timely news stories, and extension council training resources.
- **County Extension Council Members and Staff are kept up-to-date** on ISU Extension plans and initiatives through regular e-mail messages directly to each IECA member.
- IECA board members and the IECA executive director are **available to visit with the council members** in your county or region - by email, phone, in-person, or Zoom.

IECA provides legislative monitoring and leadership

- The legislative sub-committee **monitors legislative action** and keeps IECA members alerted to any proposed legislation that might affect Extension.
- **IECA hosts a legislative day for extension council** at the Iowa Capitol in Des Moines each spring. Council members and Extension supporters learn about the legislative process and meet with their legislators to discuss ways that Extension and Outreach serves their constituents. It is also an important opportunity to articulate how legislators can support Extension.

For more information about the Iowa Extension Council Association, visit ww.iaextensioncouncils.org.