



# IOWA QUALITY STANDARDS

Supporting a Statewide System  
of Homelessness Services

## **What are the Iowa Quality Standards?**

The Iowa Quality Standards (IQS) are a project of the Iowa Council on Homelessness (ICH) in an effort to eliminate homelessness by creating a strong, connected system of quality services across the state. The resulting standards are the characteristics of quality programs as identified by Council and Committee members, providers, consumers, and other stakeholders.

Use of the IQS is voluntary. The IQS cover four main areas: governance, operations, services, and performance. The purpose of the IQS is to help Iowa organizations identify their strengths, as well as areas for improvement, and provide helpful resources in both areas.

## **How were the Iowa Quality Standards developed?**

The ICH established the State Planning Advisory Committee to implement a deliberative process and ongoing stakeholder engagement to develop the standards for quality programs. Over two years, the ICH's State Planning Advisory Committee held regular work sessions and conducted outreach meetings to gain important feedback and develop the 44 standards to reflect current needs and best practices. The broad, statewide outreach effort to inform, engage, and hear from stakeholders resulted in peer-developed standards. The standards were finalized in June 2015.

## **What are the benefits of using the Iowa Quality Standards?**

- » Provides clear examples of coordination and collaboration efforts to funding sources
- » Applies to all programs, regardless of size, structure, and services provided
- » Coordinates services and resources across the state creating a statewide system
- » Provides access to the research and resources
- » Provides a flexible timeline; the self-appraisal can be completed at any time

## **How to use the Iowa Quality Standards?**

There are three parts to the IQS. First is the self-appraisal checklist that lets you and your organization evaluate which standards you already meet and what are some priority areas of improvement. The next section is a more in-depth look at each standard that includes an explanation of the standard, measures of success to show whether or not your organization meets the standard, and a list of resources and websites for use related to that particular standard. The final section is the Appendix which includes templates and sample documents for organizations to download and customize.

*(continued on next page)*

There is no timeline for completing the self-appraisal and related work your organization will do towards meeting additional standards. The IQS is meant to be a voluntary and flexible tool for your organization to identify priorities and work towards improvement in a way that best fits you.

### **How to access the Iowa Quality Standards?**

- » You can visit the Iowa Quality Standards page on the Iowa Finance Authority website [here](#).
- » Download the IQS Handbook [here](#) to view the standards and self-appraisal tool.
- » Download the IQS Appendix with a list of helpful resources [here](#).

**For more information contact Amber Lewis at [Amber.Lewis@iowa.gov](mailto:Amber.Lewis@iowa.gov).**