



*Pieces of Iowa's Past*, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

**March 14, 2012**

**THIS WEEK:**

**THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT**

**BACKGROUND:**

The text and documents presented here were taken from the book *The Government of Iowa* by Frank Edward Horack, A.M., Ph.D. Dr. Horack was assistant professor of political science at the University of Iowa and secretary of the Iowa State Historical Society. The book was published in 1911 and 1915 by Charles Scribner's Sons.

## **The Functions of Government**

It would be difficult to make a definite and complete enumeration of the functions of government, for the list is constantly expanding to meet the growing needs of society. The functions of government have sometimes been classified as *essential* and *optional*. By essential functions of government is meant those activities of the State which aim to preserve its own existence and to maintain internal order, including the protection of life, liberty, and property. By optional functions of government is meant by those activities of the State which are undertaken to promote the general welfare of its citizens along moral, intellectual, and economic lines. They include many activities

which, if not undertaken by government, would be discriminatingly or inefficiently performed by private agencies, or perhaps they would not be undertaken at all.

As the State has undertaken new functions, it has created special agents to see that these functions are properly performed. Thus there has been established in Iowa a large number of offices, boards, and commissions. It would be impractical to give a detailed description of all of these agencies of the State, but a brief outline of each is included in the table below. In the table here presented it is intended only to give the names of the State agencies, the method of appointment, the term of office, the compensation, and duties prescribed by law.

TABLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS.

NAME OF OFFICE	HOW CHOSEN	TERM OF OFFICE	YEARLY SALARY	POWERS AND DUTIES
Custodian of Public Buildings	Appointed by Governor with consent of Senate	2 yrs.	\$1500	Has charge of Capitol Building and grounds. Has charge of the janitors and police force. Contracts for fuel, light, water, ice, etc., subject to approval of Executive Council
Director of Weather and Crop Service	Appointed by Governor on recommendation of State Board of Agriculture	2 yrs.	\$1500	Establishes two or more volunteer weather and crop stations in each county. Tabulates reports for permanent records of climate and crops. Issues publications relative to weather and crops
Fish and Game Warden	Appointed by Governor	3 yrs.	\$1600	Has charge of the restocking and distribution of fish and game in the State. Appoints numerous deputies to aid in the enforcement of the fish and game laws of the State

TABLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS—*Continued.*

NAME OF OFFICE	HOW CHOSEN	TERM OF OFFICE	YEARLY SALARY	POWERS AND DUTIES
Dairy and Food Commissioner	Appointed by Governor	2 yrs.	\$2700 <sup>1</sup>	Inspects creameries and dairies, enforces the pure food laws, the stock food and seed laws, and the paint law. Issues licenses for the sale of milk and cream
Hotel Inspector	The Civil Engineer or State Board of Health	7 yrs.	\$1500 <sup>1</sup>	Required to inspect every hotel once each year or oftener on the complaint of three or more patrons. Enforces laws relative to construction, fire escapes, and sanitation
Inspector of Bees	Appointed by Governor	2 yrs.	\$3 per day and expenses for time spent, not to exceed \$1000 a year	Inspects apiaries for disease known as "foul brood" to give instructions for treatment of same. May destroy infected colonies if necessary
State Binder	Elected by General Assembly	2 yrs.	Paid for work on a schedule fixed by law	Binds the laws, journals, and other publications issued by authority of the General Assembly
State Inspectors of Boats	Appointed by Governor; as many as necessary	2 yrs.	Fees collected	Inspects sail and steamboats plying upon the inland waters of the State, and issues certificates for same. Also issues certificates to engineers and pilots
State Fire Marshal	Appointed by Governor with consent of Senate	4 yrs.	\$2500	Devotes his entire time to the work. Appoints deputies and inspectors to investigate the cause and origin of every fire and make a record of the same. Examines buildings and compels owners to render same safe from fire. Requires teachers to hold fire drills



TABLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS—*Continued.*

NAME OF OFFICE	HOW CHOSEN	TERM OF OFFICE	YEARLY SALARY	POWERS AND DUTIES
State Inspectors of Oils	Governor appoints 14 inspectors, one of whom is designated as Chief Inspector	2 yrs.	Fees not to exceed \$150 per month for chief and \$100 for others	Examine and test all oils offered for sale and mark the same approved or rejected
State Mine Inspectors	Governor appoints three and assigns each to a district	3 yrs.	\$1800 <sup>1</sup>	Examine and inspect the mines of the State and enforce the laws relative to safety and sanitation therein
State Printer	Elected by General Assembly	2 yrs.	Paid for work on schedule fixed by law	Must keep his office at the capital, and maintain a printing plant sufficient to do all work required
State Veterinary Surgeon	Appointed by Governor	3 yrs.	\$1800	Has supervision of all contagious and infectious diseases among domestic animals within the State or in transit through the State. Is ex officio a member of the State Board of Health, the Department of Agriculture, and the Commission of Animal Health
Superintendent of Weights and Measures	Appointed by Governor	At the pleasure of the Governor	\$50	Must take charge of and safely keep the standards of weights and measures of the State. Compares his weights and measures with those in the counties at least once in ten years

<sup>1</sup> Entitled to necessary travelling expenses.