

NEWS RELEASE

Oct. 19, 2017 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dubuque Scores High on Municipal Equality Index

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The Human Rights Campaign, in partnership with the Equality Federation Institute, has issued its 2017 Municipal Equality Index, a ranking of municipalities across the country based on the inclusiveness of their laws, policies, and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) residents. Dubuque's score for 2017 is 94 out of a possible 100.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is a national education and advocacy organization working to achieve equality for LGBTQ people. Since 2012, the HRC has issued the annual Municipal Equality Index (MEI), ranking cities on a scale from zero to 100 based on 44 criteria covering non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the city leadership's public position on equality.

Dubuque's 2017 score of 94 represents an almost 15 percent increase from 2016 when the city's score was 82. The increased in score was due to:

- adding an LGBTQ liaison in the city manager's office and in the police department,
- additional leadership support for LGBTQ equality, and
- clarification that non-discrimination requirements in contracts include gender identity.

Dubuque was awarded all available points for its non-discrimination laws, municipal services, and law enforcement. The City received partial credit for the following:

- Two out of a possible six points for having a regular practice of routinely including non-discrimination requirements in contracts. Full credit would require a formal policy or ordinance that requires all businesses the City contracts with for goods or services to have an employee non-discrimination policy that expressly covers sexual orientation and gender identity.
- One out of a possible three points for leadership's public position on LGBTQ equality for annual pro-equality proclamations. Full credit would require active leadership advocacy for additional pro-equality legislation and policies.

The City received bonus points for the following:

- Two bonus points for being a welcoming workplace for LGBTQ individuals based on having LGBTQ-inclusive intercultural training for all City staff;

- Two bonus points for offering programming specifically for LGBTQ youth based on the City's financial and staff support for the Multicultural Family Center and its LGBTQ youth programs; and
- Two bonus points for having an ordinance that expressly gives the Human Rights Commission enforcement authority.

In 2017, a total of 506 cities were ranked. Dubuque's score of 94 is 65 percent higher than the national city score average of 57 points. Sixty-eight cities scored 100 points; 25 percent scored over 79 points; 50 percent scored over 59 points; 25 percent scored less than 35; and 11 cities scored zero points.

2017 Scores for cities in Iowa:

- Ames – 84
- Cedar Rapids – 100
- Davenport – 100
- Des Moines – 97
- Iowa City – 100
- Dubuque – 94
- Sioux City – 91
- Waterloo – 67
- West Des Moines – 79

Of the seven cities with a population between 50,000 and 60,000, Dubuque's 2017 score of 94 was the highest, followed by:

- Ithaca, NY = 84
- Ames, IA = 84
- Manhattan, KS = 57
- Carson City, NV = 56
- Farmington, NM = 50
- Grand Island, NE = 19
- Cape Girardeau, MO = 3

The MEI rated 506 cities including the 50 state capitals, the 200 largest cities in the United States, the five largest cities or municipalities in each state, the cities home to the state's two largest public universities, municipalities that have high proportions of same-sex couples, and 98 cities selected by HRC and Equality Federation state group members and supporters.

The full report, including detailed scorecards for every city, as well as a searchable database, is available online at www.hrc.org/mei.

###