



Jewish Federation
of Greater Des Moines

Director, Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)

Position Summary

The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines seeks a strategic, relationship-driven professional to lead and expand its Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) work in Greater Des Moines and across Iowa. The position will lead the Federation's community relations, public affairs, civic and interfaith engagement, antisemitism response, Israel engagement, and Partnership2Gether efforts.

Serving as a key external representative of the Federation, this professional will build and strengthen relationships with government officials, faith leaders, educational institutions, civic organizations, business leaders, Jewish communities, and other stakeholders throughout Iowa, while helping deepen connections between our community and Israel through Partnership2Gether and other Israel engagement initiatives.

This position requires exceptional judgment, strong communication skills, political and community awareness, and the ability to navigate complex and evolving issues while fostering collaboration across diverse stakeholders and perspectives.

Key Responsibilities

Government & Public Affairs

- Serve as a primary representative of the Federation to external stakeholders and community partners.
- Develop and maintain bipartisan/non-partisan relationships with local, state, and federal elected officials, government agencies, and policymakers, ensuring that the perspectives and concerns of Iowa's Jewish community are understood by public officials.
- Monitor legislation, public policy, and emerging issues affecting the Jewish community and advise Federation leadership on opportunities for education, engagement, and advocacy.
- Support advocacy efforts on issues of concern to the Federation and Iowa's Jewish community, including opportunities to engage lay leaders in public affairs and relationship building.

Antisemitism & Education

- Monitor and respond to antisemitism and anti-Jewish bias in Iowa, working with Federation leadership, Jewish institutions, schools, universities, government officials, law enforcement, and community partners as appropriate.
- Help individuals and institutions navigate incidents of antisemitism, connecting them with appropriate resources and determining when Federation engagement, education, advocacy, or public response is warranted.
- Build relationships with K-12 school districts, educators, higher education institutions, and state education leaders to strengthen understanding of Jewish identity, antisemitism, Israel, and the Holocaust.
- Serve as a resource to educators and administrators confronting antisemitism, anti-Jewish bias, or challenging issues involving Jewish students and families.

Israel Engagement, Partnership2Gether & Jewish Community Relations

- Serve as a knowledgeable and constructive resource on Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship, helping the Federation engage elected officials, civic partners, educational institutions, media, and community stakeholders on issues related to Israel and the Middle East.
- Lead the Federation's participation in Partnership2Gether (P2G), strengthening relationships with our partners in Israel's Western Galilee and identifying opportunities for meaningful people-to-people connections between Iowans and Israelis.
- Develop and support P2G programs, exchanges, delegations, visiting speakers, and other opportunities that connect the Greater Des Moines Jewish community and broader community with Israel.
- Build opportunities for community members to develop deeper understanding of Israel and its people through relationships, educational programs, visiting speakers, and direct engagement.
- Build relationships with Jewish communities, congregations, and institutions throughout Iowa, identifying opportunities for collaboration and connecting communities with Federation and national resources.
- Engage with Jewish Federations of North America, JCRC networks, Partnership2Gether, and other national and international Jewish organizations to bring resources, expertise, relationships, and opportunities to Iowa.

Interfaith & Civic Partnerships

- Strengthen relationships with Christian, Muslim, and other faith communities, as well as ethnic, cultural, nonprofit, business, and civic organizations.
- Build durable partnerships that foster mutual understanding, create opportunities for collaboration, and enable communities to support one another during moments of celebration, challenge, and crisis.
- Identify opportunities for the Federation and Jewish community to participate meaningfully in civic and interfaith coalitions and community initiatives.

Communications & JCRC Leadership

- In partnership with Federation leadership, serve as a public voice and resource for media on issues affecting the Jewish community; cultivate relationships with journalists and help develop statements, talking points, op-eds, testimony, and other public communications.
- Staff and help strengthen the Federation's Jewish Community Relations Council, engaging lay leaders in setting priorities, building relationships, advocacy, and community initiatives.
- Work closely with the Federation's Executive Director and other senior staff to identify emerging issues, develop institutional positions and responses, and advance the Federation's community relations priorities.
- Coordinate with the Secure Community Network and other security and law-enforcement partners when community relations or antisemitism concerns intersect with safety and security issues.

Desired Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent combination of education and relevant professional experience required.
- Experience in community relations, public affairs, government relations, advocacy, education, communications, nonprofit leadership, interfaith engagement, or a related field.
- Exceptional interpersonal and relationship-building skills.
- Strong written and verbal communication abilities, including the ability to communicate effectively with public officials, community leaders, media, and diverse audiences.
- Demonstrated ability to navigate sensitive and complex issues with professionalism, sound judgment, discretion, and political awareness.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively across political, religious, cultural, and ideological differences.
- Knowledge of Jewish communal life, antisemitism, Israel, and contemporary issues affecting the Jewish community preferred; demonstrated ability and willingness to develop this expertise required.
- Ability to represent the Federation credibly and professionally in public settings, including meetings with elected officials, community forums, media interviews, and sensitive conversations.
- Experience working with diverse stakeholders and community partners.

Core Competencies

- Strategic Advocacy & Public Affairs
- Coalition Building & Relationship Management
- Community Engagement
- Antisemitism Response & Issue Management
- Israel Engagement & Partnership Building

- Communications & Public Representation
- Lay/Professional Partnerships
- Policy & Community Awareness
- Cross-Cultural & Interfaith Engagement

Success Outcomes in Year 1

- Establish a strong network of relationships with key local and statewide government, education, faith, civic, media, and Jewish communal leaders.
- Develop a working map of key stakeholders, partners, emerging issues, and opportunities affecting Iowa's Jewish community.
- Establish clear Federation protocols and partnerships for identifying, assessing, and responding to incidents of antisemitism.
- Increase the Federation's proactive engagement with Iowa policymakers and public officials across the political spectrum.
- Expand relationships with K-12 and higher education leaders and position the Federation as a trusted resource on Jewish identity, antisemitism, Israel, and Holocaust education.
- Strengthen the Federation's participation in Partnership2Gether, establishing strong working relationships with partners in the Western Galilee and identifying a sustainable pipeline of programs, exchanges, speakers, delegations, and other opportunities for engagement.
- Strengthen the JCRC's lay leadership structure and create meaningful opportunities for volunteers to participate in advocacy and relationship building.
- Deepen interfaith and intercommunity partnerships, including relationships that exist before a crisis occurs.
- Increase the Federation's visibility and credibility as a resource on issues affecting Iowa's Jewish community and Israel.