

NEBRASKA**Dannette R. Smith, MSW****Chief Executive Officer**

Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services



Dannette R. Smith was appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Health and Human Services for the state of Nebraska in February of 2019. She brings more than 25 years of executive leadership experience in large, complex organizations to the State. She has spearheaded the development of the Department's business plan, which supports Governor Pete Ricketts' strategic vision. The plan outlines her four-pronged approach to leading the Department with the overarching strategy of 1) creating an integrated service delivery system; 2) establishing and enhancing collaborative relationships with community, stakeholders, and policymakers 3) aligning DHHS teammates under the mission of Helping People Live Better Lives; and 4) enhancing the Department's internal infrastructure to provide more effective, efficient, customer-focused services to Nebraskans.



Smith attributes much of her success to community engagement and the belief that when you bring stakeholders to the table, whether opposed or supportive, there is great opportunity for creative solutions. In 2020 and 2021 Smith was an Inspire Awards finalist in the category of Excellence in Government Service. Prior to joining DHHS, Smith was the Director of the Virginia Beach Department of Human Services. She has also worked in a leadership capacity in Cook County, IL, Mecklenburg County, NC, Atlanta, GA, and Seattle, WA.

Smith serves on the Council of State Governments as Co-Chair of the Human Services Task Force Subcommittee, on the board of the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), and has recently been selected for the Milbank Foundation Fellowship. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Eastern Michigan University, and a Master of Social Work from the University of Illinois in Chicago. Under the auspices of the Child Welfare League of America, she completed the child welfare leadership program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. She also participated in the County Administration Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.