

10-Year Replacement Plate Guidance

MVD Vehicle Central Programs

Background

Since April 2, 2012, Iowa DOT replaces license plates every 10 years because license plates commonly lose integrity and reflectivity within 10 years. The Midwest weather also affects license plates by causing bubbling in the license plate sheeting and affecting legibility. The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) recommends a rolling or full replacement cycle of license plates to ensure law enforcement and the traveling public have usable license plates. We understand some customers may not see a visible distinction in their existing plates after 10 years, but research shows the reduced reflectivity and legibility that supports this turnover process.

ARTS is programmed to automatically issue the replacement plates starting every January for all plates due for replacement in that calendar year. The 10-year replacement plate cycle is set up to be issued with registration renewal, but due to vehicle purchases during the tenth year the replacements may be issued during a plate transfer.

Guidance

The following process is outlined to ensure dealers, counties, and customers are on the same page for issuing the 10-year replacement plates and collecting the necessary fees.

If a trade-in deal or plate transfer comes into the county with the plates transferring to a different vehicle and the system shows that the plates are within the 10-year replacement year:

1. Do not issue the replacement plates if there will still be a registration renewal for the customer in the calendar year for the plates' 10-year replacement cycle. The county will override the 10-year replacement plates, using the *County Work Instruction* below, and issue the replacement plates at registration renewal within that same calendar year (even if the transfer occurs up until the customer's registration renewal month).

Ex 1: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in May and dealer sends in application with prorated registration for May thru July – Do not issue replacement plates because they will be issued upon July renewal.

Ex 2: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in May and dealer sends in application changing customer's reg month to September by paying only the amount to get to that month – Do not issue replacement plates because they will be issued at renewal later that same year.

2. Issue the replacement plates if there will not be a registration renewal for the customer in the calendar year for the plates' 10-year replacement cycle.

Ex 3: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in June and dealer sends in application with full registration for June thru July of the next year - Issue replacement plates because there will not be a renewal in that calendar year.

Ex 4: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in March and dealer sends in application changing customer's reg month to March by paying the full year of registration – Issue replacement plates because there will not be a renewal in that calendar year.

3. Issue the replacement plates if the dealer or customer insists on getting replacement plates because the plates are damaged or otherwise in need of replacement.

When to Collect Replacement Fee

1. Customer will pay the \$5 plate replacement fee:
 - a. If a dealer or customer insists on getting replacement plates, but there will still be a registration renewal in the same calendar year. (#3 above)
 - b. If the transaction occurs before the customer's registration month and there will be no renewal within the same calendar year, e.g. changing registration renewal month. (Ex 4 above)
2. Customer will not pay the \$5 replacement plate fee if the transaction occurs in the month before the customer's registration month or any time after and there will be no renewal within that same year. (Ex 3 above)

County Work Instruction

When the plates are due for replacement and you either process an *Update Registration* or a transaction with a plate transfer, the "Replace Plate" message appears in red text by the plate number.

If you are not going to process the plate replacement on a trade-in (T & R), plate transfer, or other, you may auto-approve the discretionary edit (DE 815) to avoid issuing the replacement plates. Situations where this may be necessary is during an *Update Registration* or plate transfer that occurs with a registration renewal remaining in the calendar year. After the transaction is complete, you will want to validate that the "Replace Plate" message is still showing for the vehicle in an *Update Registration*, so that the replacement plates are issued at registration renewal in the same year.

The following example shows an *Update Registration* transaction with plates due for replacement in December 2025.

The screenshot shows the 'Update Registration' window for a 2015 Ford F350 Super Duty. The VIN is 1F1RF3B12F6C13079. The vehicle is a Truck with a Business Trade / 6 usage. The location is OVMCS - Primary. The registration period is 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025. The application is 'Update Registration'. The received date is 3/5/2025. The renewal customer is [REDACTED]. The reason is 'Updated'. The ADS Capable checkbox is checked. The tracking # is [REDACTED]. The subject to reg is 3/5/2025. The request refund checkbox is unchecked.

The registration details table shows the following information:

Start	End	Usage	Tonnage	Plate Type	Veh Type	Fee Description	Annual Fee	Fee Amount
3/1/2025	12/31/2025	Business Trade	6	County Std	Truck	Owner Reg Fee, 10 Mon	\$195.00	\$162.00

The 'Exp Date' is set to Dec 2025. The 'Reg Interval' is Annual. The 'Renewal Pref' is Postcard. The 'Weight' is 6,900. The 'List Price' is \$34,800.00. The 'Color' is Gray. The 'Color 2' is [REDACTED]. The 'Sq Footage' is [REDACTED]. The 'ADS Restriction' is [REDACTED]. The 'Damage' is [REDACTED].

The 'Customer' section shows the following information:

Customer ID	ID Type	Legal Name	Print Name	Residency Address	Date
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

The 'Plate Changes' section shows the following information:

Plate Disposition	Plate Type	Plate #
Current Plate	County Std	CZZ976
New Plate	County Std	AutoAssign

The 'Transaction Fees' table shows the following information:

Transaction Fees	Fee	Penalty
Registration Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
EV Reg Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00
Plate Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00

The 'Replace Plate' message is highlighted in red text next to the plate number CZZ976.

Following is the DE for auto-approval:

btn...	ID	Edits and Exceptions	btn Process Edit	Status	Re
	DE 815	Plate is out of life cycle and needs replaced	Process Edit	Needs Approval	

The following example shows a title and registration transaction from a trade-in where the replacement plates do not need to be processed (#1 above). In this case, change the drop-down under the *Plate Disposition* column to "Transfer" and you may auto-approve DE 815.

VIN 5NPEB4AC1DH742576 **Location**

Vehicle 2013 Hyundai Sonata GLS **Veh Type** Automobile **Set**

Application Vehicle Status Fee Detail Registration Detail Relate Customers Mailing Credits Documents Exceptions

...	Action	Title#	Plate#	Plate Disp	Disp Date	Veh Disp	Reg End	Credit Summary	Credit Sur
X	Credit	25AC00957...	CZ2976	Transfer	3/5/2025	Traded	12/31/2025	10 Mon @ \$195.00 = \$162.00	

Customer ID	ID Type	Legal Name	Residency Address	Relationship	Priority
				Owner	1
				Owner	2

If you are going to process the plate replacement because they are due under the guidelines above, deals coming through ERT will need to be treated differently. In the *Credits* tab, select "Removed" in the drop-down under the *Plate Disposition* column because there is not a choice for the replacement cycle. Then, go under Dispose Plate to change that plate to "Replacement Cycle" instead of "Removed."

Plate Disp **Disp Date** **Veh Disp**

▼ 1/15/2025 ▼ Traded ▼

Dealer Returned
Removed
Transfer

VRT Reports PWD Plate Merge Customer MCS Inventory Finance Drive

ELT Customer
Manage Vehicle
SI Application
Title and Reg
UCPlates
Vehicle Ownership Maintenance

Add/Release SI
Additional Fee for New Registration
Cancel Title
Convert Title
Corrected Title
Dispose Plate

Disposition

Old Disposition Reason
Removed

Old Disposition Date
1/15/2025

New Disposition Reason
Replacement Cycle

New Disposition Date
1/15/2025

Save Cancel

Dealer Research

The dealer should conduct a search in the Dealer Inquiry under *Vehicle Inquiry* to know if the plates are due for the 10-year replacement. Within the *Plate* section, it will be noted that the plates are “Due for Replacement on Renewal Date.”

Vehicle Inquiry**See Also:**

Vehicle			
VIN	1FTRF3BT3FEC13079	Type	Truck
Vehicle	2015 Ford F350 Super Duty PK	Colors	Gray
Weight	6900	GVWR	11500
Cylinders	8	List Price	\$34,800.00
Odometer	380 Miles - Actual	Cuml. Damage	
Sq. Footage		ADS Capable	
Designations			
Title			
Title Number	25AC00957	Title Type	Regular
Title Status	Active	Status since	1/30/2015
Security Interests Exists	No	Electronic	No
Plate			
Plate #	CZZ976	Plate Type	County Std
Assignment Date	1/30/2015	Personalized	No
Issued Date	2/4/2015	Due for Replacement on Renewal Date	Yes

Registration

StartDate	EndDate	RegistrationStatus	ADS Restricted	AnnualFee	Tonnage	Usage	Plate	PlateType
1/1/2025	12/31/2025			\$195.00	6	Business Trade	CZZ976	County Std