



Motor Vehicle Division Policy Memo # 20-09

DEFINITION OF PRINTED NAME ON PHYSICAL DOCUMENTS

DATE: June 10, 2020

FROM: Angel Robinson, Director
Vehicle & Motor Carrier Services Bureau

TO: Iowa County Treasurers
Iowa DOT Vehicle & Motor Carrier Services personnel
Iowa Automotive Dealers Association
Iowa Independent Automobile Dealers Association

SUBJECT

This policy memo establishes that a “printed name” for any Iowa DOT vehicle transactions using a physical form may include a hand-printed, device-printed or electronically-printed name, as per new federal definitions. Note that this memo is not intended to change the ink signature requirement on an odometer statement. NHTSA still requires ink signature on a paper odometer statement even though it allows for printed name to be affixed by mechanical or electronic means.

EXPLANATION

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) adopted new regulations concerning odometer disclosure requirements for transfer of vehicle ownership. Among the changes, NHTSA adopted new definitions for “printed name” that are codified in 49 CFR 580.3 and went into effect on December 31, 2019:

Printed Name means either:

(a) for a physical title or physical power of attorney, the clear and legible name applied to the physical document of the signatory.

(b) [inapplicable to this memo]

Iowa DOT has previously issued guidance to counties that hand-printed names were required for physical odometer disclosure forms and certain other forms. However, based on the new federal definition that the name only needs to be “applied” to the document, we are now allowing that a printed name on a physical form may be hand-printed, device-printed or electronically-printed. This would include, but is not limited to, the following accepted examples:

- A hand printed name using ink
- A printed name applied directly to a form by an ink stamp
- A printed name applied directly to a form by a computer printer

EXCEPTIONS

There are two known exceptions to this rule:

- A printed name may not be applied to a form by adding a label, even if the label is see-through. This would be considered an alteration of the form and is not allowed.
- Other states may still require a hand printed name on forms. If a form originates in another state and the form clearly states that a hand printed name is required, then we must honor the form requirements of the originating state.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHY IS CLARIFICATION BEING PROVIDED?

We are issuing this policy change in response to NHTSA's change to 49 CFR 580.3. We also believe this change will make it easier for dealers, customers and others to complete Iowa DOT physical forms using whatever means is most convenient.

DOES THIS MEMO REPLACE POLICY MEMO 19-07 ENTITLED "ACCEPTANCE OF ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE"?

No. Policy Memo 19-07 clarified acceptance of documents and forms affixed with electronic signatures. The purpose of that memo continues to be to provide guidance to confirm that VMCS documents and forms that may be signed with an ink signature may also be accepted and transacted with an electronic signature. In contrast, this memo addresses printed name and what qualifies as a printed name.

In particular, NHTSA still requires ink signature on a paper odometer statement even though it allows for printed name to be affixed by mechanical or electronic means. Therefore, the printed name requirements do not change any requirements or allowances in Policy Memo 19-07.

IS THIS RELATED TO THE ODOMETER MODEL YEAR PROVISION OR E-SIGNATURE?

The NHTSA change to the printed name definition was in the same rule-making that updated the odometer disclosure model year requirements and which address e-signature systems for odometer disclosure. However, this section of the rule-making refers to the definition of printed names on physical forms, so it is not impacted by the other two changes.

HOW WILL DEALERS BE IMPACTED?

Dealers may use a variety of methods to directly apply the printed name of the dealer or representative to odometer disclosure and all other vehicle forms. This should lead to more efficient processes and clearer identification of names.

HOW WILL INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMERS BE IMPACTED?

Customers may use a variety of methods to directly apply their printed names to odometer disclosure and all other vehicle forms. This should lead to more efficient processes and clearer identification of names.

HOW WILL COUNTY TREASURER OFFICES BE IMPACTED?

The change should lead to clearer identification of names on forms if they do not need to be hand printed. This should also lead to fewer rejections for forms that were previously denied because a name was not hand printed.

If all aspects of a transaction are accurate and if there are no anomalies, then the transaction should not be questioned solely based on concern over the printed name. However, if there are inaccuracies with the transaction, if completed forms are inconsistent, or if there are other suspicious circumstances regarding the transaction, that may be grounds to request any party to verify the printed name.

A county may still reject a form that originated in another state if that form clearly states that a hand printed name is required and was not properly applied.

WHO WILL BE THE BEST CONTACT PERSON REGARDING QUESTIONS?

Daniel Yeh, Vehicle Services Manager

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