

Motor Vehicle Division Administrative Memo # 17-03

Guide to Understanding Memos

DATE: October 6, 2017

FROM: Melissa Spiegel, Director, Motor Vehicle Division

TO: All MVD staff, and Iowa County Treasurers

SUBJECT

This administrative memo explains the memos you have seen distributed by Motor Vehicle Division management, what their purpose is, where they are stored, and how they can be accessed.

EXPLANATION

You've likely seen a shift in the way we present certain information, specifically information labeled as 'Memos.' You may have also noticed, the types of memos we send vary, as does the sponsored author, and the type of information addressed in each type. The following information provides guidance on how we present, store and access memos, as well as their intended purpose.

WHAT'S THE REASON FOR THE CHANGE IN THE WAY WE PRESENT & RECEIVE INFORMATION?

The primary purpose for the new memos is to provide a single repository of information that clearly explains new information or a new procedure that is required due to a policy change and most importantly, explains why that change is occurring or will occur. It helps us, as a team, stay on the same page when we all receive the same information and are able to relay that information to our customers in a consistent manner. Moreover, with a more defined structure, we are better able to revise that information most effectively when needed, and easily access the information by having it stored in a central location. Most importantly, the intention is to get information that impacts our business operations or could trigger questions from customers out to our teams quickly and in a manner that is clear and understandable. Our intention is to deliver relevant information to all of our teams in direct, conversational tone so that we can easily explain the information to our customers and each other.

WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEMOS? WHAT FUNCTION DOES EACH SERVE?

We have created a structured system that includes three different types of memos. The type of memo used depends on the nature of the information as explained in the following descriptions:

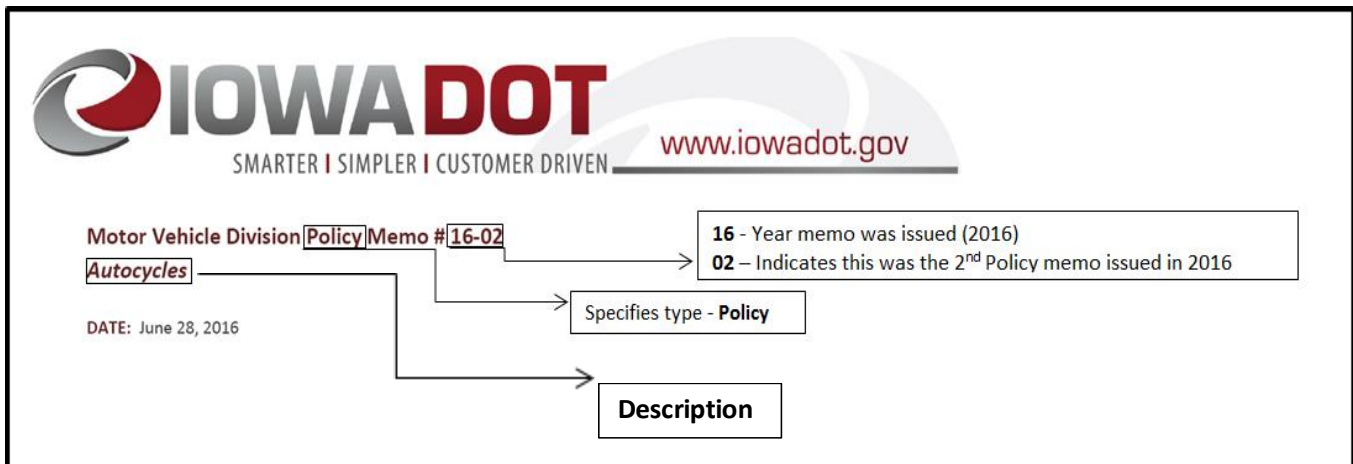
- **ADMINISTRATIVE:** Administrative memos (such as this one) are unique in that they generally address internal processes that shape everyday work life and how we function. These memos generally explain internal informational and policy changes, rather than external or legislative changes. Some examples of MVD administrative memos include dress code and the vacation policy for customer-facing Driver &

Identification service centers. All of these memos share a common thread in that they help define work expectations and guidance.

- **INFORMATIONAL:** Informational memos are something in the nature of a “heads-up” that a change is coming or has happened that relates to our business but does not require an immediate change in our procedures. These memos include an informal explanation, may predict future policy guidance, or a manual change or a rule change to come. They may also just confirm that nothing has changed or that a legislative or other action has no impact or effect on what we are doing. Some examples of MVD informational memos include memos that share when administrative rules have been changed but do not require a change to our procedures, such as salvage theft examination, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) memos. All of these memos share information and may advise that more specific policy, manual or rule changes may come.
- **POLICY:** Policy memos contain specific information and language on how to implement a change. These memos are more formal in nature and will likely reiterate some information presented in a corresponding informational memo but will be more specific and technical, with guidance on what procedures or processes need to change and an explanation of why, and they may predict changes in manuals or rules. Some examples of MVD policy memos include autocycle, veteran designation, and minor school license memos.

WHY DOES EACH MEMO HAVE A TYPE, NUMBER & DESCRIPTION?

In an effort to keep the memos organized and easily referenced back to, we developed a structure for naming and numbering them. By using the naming and numbering system, a user will be able to search for a memo in a number of ways: a keyword search, name, or by memo number. Included below is an explanation of the naming and numbering system.



Additionally, you’ll notice each memo has a “DATE”, “FROM”, “TO”, and potentially a “DATE LAST UPDATED” field. A quick description for each filed is provided below:

DATE: This field and corresponding date is when the memo was first issued;

FROM: This field indicates who is responsible for the memo;

TO: This field specifies the intended audience;

DATE LAST UPDATED: If you see this field, it indicates that a revision was issued. The reason for issuing a revision may include technical changes, changes due to legislation, clarification which includes additional questions and answers, and other changes or actions that require clarification.

Example:

DATE: July 19, 2016
DATE LAST UPDATED: July 29, 2016
FROM: Melissa Spiegel, Director, Office of Driver Services
TO: All Driver's Services staff, Iowa County Treasurers and County Treasurers' staff that issue driver's licenses.

WHERE WILL THE MEMOS BE STORED?

Memos will be stored in two places:

1. On the Iowa DOT W Drive within the Motor Vehicle Division folder. This allows internal users to search and access memo(s) in an efficient and easy manner while providing a structured and consistent way for accessing information. No longer will you need to create multiple inbox folders and search through hundreds of e-mails.
 - a. W:\MotorVehicle\Memorandums
2. On the County Treasurers website. This allows external users, such as the County Treasurers to access the memos; although, not all memos will be posted here. For example, the DIS Vacation Policy Memo likely does not need to be communicated to the county treasurers.
3. <https://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/ovs/ctmanual/>

IS IT OKAY TO DISTRIBUTE MEMOS TO CUSTOMERS?

Unless a memo is marked "CONFIDENTIAL," it is absolutely okay to share them with our customers. The memos represent our position on various subjects and we should be comfortable sharing them with any customer or constituent. If you have cause for hesitation, please feel free to contact your immediate supervisor.

WHAT ABOUT OUR POLICY MANUALS AND GUIDES THAT ALREADY EXIST?

It's important to share that these memos are **not** intended to replace existing manuals or guides. Our intention is to review all memos on a regular basis and to decide if manuals or other existing internal guides need to be updated and to make sure that regular review is occurring to update information consistently. There may also be times where it is appropriate to provide a hyperlink within a manual back to a policy or informational memo as a reference. Typically, a memo will be the first time new information or new policy is announced and will serve as a way for our teams to become familiar with what is changing, and most importantly a clear explanation of **why** something is changing, and soon after, the appropriate places in our manuals or other materials will also be updated if necessary.

CONCLUSION

As with any new process, there may be questions on how to navigate the new system and a time curve to become comfortable with accessing information in a new way. We hope you find this information helpful in explaining why we created a structure for how we present, access, and store memos.

Thanks!