

Motor Vehicle Division Informational Memo #20-10

End of COVID-19 disaster emergency proclamation – effect on driver’s licensing functions – revised

DATE: December 18, 2020

FROM: Melissa Gillett, director, Motor Vehicle Division

TO: All DIS staff, Iowa County Treasurers and County Treasurers’ staff that issue driver’s licenses and non- operator’s identification cards.

SUBJECT

This informational memo explains the end of Governor Reynolds’ COVID-19 proclamation of disaster emergency on January 8, 2021 and its effect on driver’s licensing services.

EXPLANATION

The Governor’s COVID-19 proclamation of disaster emergency contained several temporary provisions related to driver’s license validity and expiration. The original proclamation became effective on March 16, 2020 and was subsequently extended several times to last through January 8, 2021 (please reference MVD IM #20-03 for explanation of the initial proclamation of disaster emergency). However, the most recent version of the proclamation includes warning language that Iowans should not expect this relief to be extended any more, and therefore we should plan on preparing and informing customers as follows.

The following waiver provisions will end on January 8, 2021 at 11:59pm:

- The provision that a driver’s license will not be considered expired if the expiration date is between January 16, 2020 through January 8, 2021.
- The provision that suspends the enforcement of expired driver’s licenses, thus allowing any Iowa driver’s license with an expiration date of January 16, 2020 through January 8, 2021 to be used for driving purposes in Iowa.

Beginning on January 9, 2021 at 12:00am:

- Every noncommercial Iowa driver’s license will be subject to its normal expiration date, even if it expired during the period covered by the disaster emergency; and
- The statutory 60-day grace period will resume as normal. Specifically, driver’s licenses that *expired on or before November 10, 2020* will be immediately invalid for driving purposes on January 9, 2021. Driver’s licenses that *expired on November 11, 2020 or later* will still have some time remaining in their 60-day grace period (as little as one day left).

OUR ACTIONS TO TRANSITION TO NORMAL SERVICES

We understand that the end of the Governor’s proclamation may cause confusion, and we are taking many steps to communicate clearly with customers whose license expired during the period covered by the relief provisions to make sure that our return to normalcy is as smooth as possible. Additionally, we have been in communication with law enforcement to explain our efforts to keep customers valid to drive once the terms of the proclamation end on January 8, 2021. We are asking law enforcement to

consider using discretion for individuals with a license that expired during the relief period.

OTHER INTERNAL ISSUANCE POLICIES

In addition to the relief included in the Governor's proclamation, we have also made changes to internal policies to ensure that our return to normal operations runs smoothly for us and our customers. Specifically, policies that pertain to the resumption of issuance functions as a result of COVID-19 service adjustments include:

- **CDL endorsement late fee waiver:** We will not be assessing the usual CDL endorsement late fees for CDLs that expired between January 16, 2020 and February 28, 2021 (subject to extension if either the governor's proclamation or the FMCSA waiver, explained in MVD IM#20-04, is extended).
- **Waiving testing for reinstating after a 1-year suspension:** *This temporary policy has ended; please see rescinded MVD PM # 20-08 for details.*
- **Waiving expiration of knowledge test results:** Our current internal policy states that noncommercial knowledge test results are valid for 180 days, however, for customers whose services or drive tests were delayed due to COVID-19, please use your discretion to waive the expiration dates of knowledge test results to allow them to proceed with testing or issuance without the need to retake the knowledge test.

DIS programs (including driver's education, driver fitness, and commercial driver's licensing) have also implemented strategies to help staff and customers during this time. If you have questions about these programs, please contact your supervisor or county liaison who can route them to the appropriate DIS administrative program staff.

HELPFUL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Does the end of the governor's proclamation impact CDL and CLP holders?

It depends. If the CDL or CLP expired between January 16 and February 29, 2020, their ability to drive with their current license in Iowa will end with the Governor's proclamation on January 8, 2021.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) extended the expiration dates of CDLs and CLPs that expired on or after March 1, 2020 until February 28, 2021. Accordingly, these drivers may drive on their current CDL or CLP anywhere in the U.S. until February 28, 2021. For more information, see MVD IM # 20-04, "CDL Temporary Guidance for COVID-19." In other words:

- CDL/CLP expired Jan 16 – Feb 29, 2020 = valid for driving in Iowa until January 8, 2021
- CDL/CLP expired March 1, 2020 – Feb 28, 2021 = valid for driving anywhere in the U.S. until February 28, 2021 (and valid for driving in Iowa within the 60-day grace period following expiration)

Do you have an example of how the 6-month extension will work for a noncommercial DL that expired during the proclamation?

Yes, for example, let's say a driver's license expired on March 1, 2020. This means their statutory 60-day grace period was up April 30, 2020. Due to the governor's proclamation, the person is valid to drive through January 8, 2021, but is no longer valid to drive on that license beginning January 9, 2021. The customer can apply for two consecutive 6-month extensions which would be valid until March 1, 2021

(i.e., twelve months after the original March 1, 2020 expiration date). Please see MVD IM # 20-09 for more information about six-month extensions.

Is a customer whose license expired during the proclamation still subject to the one-year retesting requirement in Iowa Code section 321.196(2)?

Yes. Iowa Code section 321.196(2) provides that a driver’s license is renewable without a driving and knowledge test within one year of its expiration, after which both a driving and knowledge test are required. Even if the customer’s license expired during the relief period provided in the proclamation, they are still subject to the requirement to repeat the knowledge and driving tests if it has been more than one year (366 days or more) since the date of expiration of their license, since the governor’s proclamation does not extend the underlying expiration date of the driver’s license. For example, a customer whose license expired on January 16, 2020 is still able to drive in Iowa until January 8, 2021 due to the governor’s proclamation. However, if they do not renew prior to January 16, 2021, they will be subject to full retesting.

How do I waive the CDL endorsement late fee?

In the example below, the only fee required to renew this CDL is the CDL A row for \$64 for an 8-year renewal. The Airbrakes and Tank endorsement fees should be waived. To do so, click Add Adjustment→select Credit Applied→ in the comments, add ‘COVID extension’ and adjust the fees.

Current CDL A; END: N; REST: B; ISS: 02-05-2015; EXP: 01-16-2020
 Previous CDL A; END: N; REST: B; ISS: 06-03-2010; EXP: 01-16-2015

Application Documents Eligibility Qualifications Knowledge Skills Fee Detail

Fee Type	Comment	Annual Fee	Fee Amount	Adjustment	
CDL A	License Fee		\$64.00	\$0.00	Add Adjustment
Lift Airbrake Restriction	L - No Air Brake Equipped CMV		\$10.00	(\$10.00)	Add Adjustment
Adjustment Reason				Comment	Adjustment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Credit Applied					(\$10.00)
N - Tank	Endorsement Fee		\$5.00	(\$5.00)	Add Adjustment
Adjustment Reason				Comment	Adjustment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Credit Applied				Covid extension	(\$5.00)
Total			\$79.00	(\$15.00)	
Amount Due			\$64.00		

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