

Motor Vehicle Division Information Memo # 24-04

Personalized license plates for firefighters and emergency medical services (EMS)

DATE: May 6, 2024

FROM: Kathleen Meradith-Eyers, MVD Deputy Director

TO: All Motor Vehicle Division staff, and all county treasurer staff

SUBJECT

This informational memo explains a bill that passed during the 2024 legislative session concerning the personalization of firefighter and EMS specialty license plates.

SUMMARY

HF 2579, passed during the legislative session, amends Iowa Code section 321.34 to allow firefighter and emergency medical services (EMS) specialty license plates to be personalized. Under current law, these license plates are only available with the standard letter-number designation.



Under the law, the specialty plate fees for the firefighter and EMS plates will remain the same (\$25 for initial issuance; no renewal fee). However, there will be an additional \$25 initial fee for personalizing the plates and an annual \$5 renewal fee. Plate text must have a minimum of two and five characters.

The bill becomes effective on July 1, 2024.

LINK TO BILL

HF 2579 - <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=90&ba=hf2579>

CURRENT

Firefighter and EMS plates cannot be personalized (apart from certain grandfathered firefighter plates).

NEW

As of July 1, 2024, firefighter and EMS license plates can be personalized.

Individuals who currently have a generic letter-number firefighter or EMS plate and who wish to exchange it for a personalized plate will need to apply to MVD for the new plates and pay the appropriate fees.

BUSINESS IMPACT

Process. The process for ordering firefighter and EMS license plates will remain exactly the same – namely, the applicant must submit certain documentation to demonstrate they are eligible for the plate, and must submit the required fee to the Vehicle Services team. These plates cannot be ordered on myMVD.

Website. MVD is working to update the DOT website to incorporate these changes. On July 1, 2024, the following websites will be updated to reflect the option to personalize these license plates:

- <https://iowadot.gov/mvd/vehicleregistration/vehicleregistration/plates/firefighter>
- <https://iowadot.gov/mvd/vehicleregistration/vehicleregistration/plates/emergency>

Applications. The firefighter license plate application form used by fire departments and the EMS plate application maintained on the DOT's website will be updated to reflect the personalization option for these plates beginning July 1.

Administrative rules. Additionally, MVD will be revising administrative rule chapter 401 (specialty license plates) to incorporate this legislative change as part of the existing review of the chapter under Executive Order 10.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

DOES THIS CHANGE AFFECT THE "PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTER" LICENSE PLATES?

No. The professional firefighter license plate is separate from the statutory firefighter license plate. The professional firefighter license plate can already be personalized under existing law and this bill does not effect that plate.