

**Motor Vehicle Division Policy Memo # 17-01**

***Iowa Department of Public Health-Verification of Birth and Birth Certificates Issued for Government Use Only***

**DATE:** April 3, 2017

**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.

**SUBJECT**

This policy memo explains a new agreement that the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has reached with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding issuance of certified copies of vital records, including birth certificates used by DHS for their foster care program.

**EXPLANATION**

IDPH began issuing "verification of birth documents" to DHS in lieu of issuing a certified copy of the birth certificate for purposes of DHS verifying information on the birth record as required for their foster care program. This initiative by IDPH was to cut down on the amount of certified copies of vital records being issued. DHS will still have the ability to order a certified copy of the birth certificate if it is needed for a child in its custody. Also, IDPH changed the stamp on new certified copies from AGENCY USE ONLY to GOVERNMENT USE ONLY. **This policy went into effect February 1, 2017.**

**HELPFUL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The following questions and answers provide additional information that will be helpful to you and to customers.

**MAY WE ACCEPT VERIFICATION OF BIRTH DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY IDPH IN LIEU OF A CERTIFIED COPY OF A BIRTH CERTIFICATE?**

No. The REAL ID Act (6 C.F.R. 37.11(c)(1)) and Iowa Administrative rule 761 IAC 601.5 require presentation of a certified copy of a birth certificate.

**MAY WE ACCEPT CERTIFIED COPIES OF BIRTH CERTIFICATES MARKED "GOVERNMENT USE ONLY"?**

Yes. Current practice is to accept certified copies of birth certificates marked AGENCY USE ONLY. You may start seeing certified copies of birth certificates marked GOVERNMENT USE ONLY, and you may accept them in the same manner as you have been for birth certificates marked AGENCY USE ONLY. Keep in mind, only DHS officials should possess certified copies of birth certificates that are marked for government use only.