

MOTOR VEHICLE NEWSLETTER

November 2023

Iowa DOT Central Programs Bureau

Monthly updates on vehicle program, policy, and process issues.

Bureau of Investigations & Identity Protection (BIIP) Items

MN Auto Auctions of Minnesota

There is a growing situation coming out of Minnesota, the MN Dept. of Public Safety (DPS) is actively working on a case that involves a business called MN Auto Auctions. MN Auto Auctions is no longer licensed to sell vehicles. However, it has been found that they're selling vehicles without producing the titles to the buyers. Most of the victims are from outside of MN. If a County Treasurer's office comes across a title transfer that involves MN Auto Auctions but doesn't include a title or gets contacted by a consumer stating they purchased a vehicle from MN Auto Auctions and did not receive a title, MN DPS is requesting complaints be sent to dvs.dealerquestion@state.mn.us and Patrol.vcu@state.mn.us

Please include the following information with the consumer complaint:

Owner's contact information (email and phone number)

Vehicle Information (year, make, model)

Attach any pertinent purchase documents

Washington Dealer Fraud

The state of Washington no longer issues wholesale dealer licenses due to all the fraudulent activity happening in Washington. Currently, WA only has vehicle dealers licenses, similar to what we have here in Iowa. WA requires the dealers to maintain hours and have a physical lot etc. However, due to staffing issues, WA DMV issues these dealer licenses based on the honor system and are not requiring photos or inspections to verify their dealers are meeting the required specifications.

This came to our attention when one of our counties received title work from Gradient Fleet out of WA. This WA dealer wasn't in ARTS so the county started adding the dealer record into the system then decided to Google the dealership. Google stated the dealership was temporarily closed which prompted the county to reach out to their BIIP investigator. Upon further digging and BIIP reaching out to WA, it was found that the dealership doesn't have a working email or phone number and doesn't have a car lot therefore can't legally be selling vehicles as a licensed dealer.

Policy Update

Mailing Fee Increase to \$5 for License Plates Mailed Under Iowa Code 321.105

Customers with January 2024 registration renewals or who purchase vehicles on or after January 1, 2024 will see a new mailing fee of \$5 for license plates mailed under Iowa Code 321.105. The mailing fee has been \$3 for many years and is no longer sufficient to cover actual mailing costs. For more information about this policy change, please see Policy Memo #23-09 here: [PM-23-09.pdf \(iowadot.gov\)](#)

Tips, Tricks & Reminders

ERT Transaction Counts Now Available in Reports

We are pleased to report that ARTS has now been updated to provide counties with a count of the ERT transactions conducted in a given time period. The path is ARTS > Reports > Management Reports > Transaction Summary (you may need to drag the bottom of the window down to display the option). A county should ensure that the Location Profile is set to their county or office, and then choose a date range not to exceed one month. The resulting report will include a list of all Title/Registrations issued by ERT as well as by paper application, along with all other types of transactions in the county for that time period. Statewide, there were 14,042 ERT transactions processed in October 2023, which represents almost 19% of all title/registration transactions.

VRT: Store Vehicle	126
VRT: Title And Registration - ERT	2190
VRT: Title And Registration - Paper	8761
VRT: Update Registration	1318

Printers, Inventory & Iowa Prison Industries (IPI)

Updated Title Stock

Upon review of the new title stock with bill of sale included, counties and MVD found a few minor improvements to be made to signature lines and spacing. A newer version of title certification stock will be in circulation starting in early 2024. On the newest version of the title (2024), the dealer reassignment areas also look a little different, but do not change in process. Some spacing was adjusted to allow for more room for signatures and printed information. Dealers and users should be aware of the visual change, but do not need to change their processes for completing dealer reassignments.

Please see the updated flyer attached. Upon further review among DOR, MVD, and IADA, the following key process change has been added to the flyer.

Q: Does the purchase price on the title need to be filled out by a person when trading the vehicle into a dealer as a trade-in or selling the vehicle to a dealer?

A: No. The purchase price or bill of sale is not necessary when the dealer is taking the vehicle into dealer inventory for resale because the dealer is claiming the resale exemption. From there, the dealer would either get a dealer title or reassign the title and the purchase price on the assignment area is irrelevant to the subsequent resale.

Printer Supplies

With this being the busy season for mailing and shipping items, you may experience a small lag in receiving your toner cartridges. The auto-order refill system is designed to kick in when the cartridge has 15% - 20%

toner remaining. A low-toner message takes into consideration how many prints that printer makes. Please reach out to Rhonda.Fowler@iowadot.us if you would like to check on the status of your toner shipment.

The Iowa DOT contract with Marco Technologies does not include overnight shipping options. If you reach out to Marco regarding supplies, it is OK for them to process your order but please do not authorize overnight shipping. The customer service representatives may not be familiar with the contract terms and may ask how you want the toner shipped. Overnight shipping is not an option from Marco, even if they offer it.

Staffing

Retirement Celebration

Sandy Clayton, County Liaison, is retiring at the end of December after 29 years with the DOT and over 35 years of public service. Please congratulate Sandy when you can or join us for her open house celebration. Details attached. We will miss you, Sandy!