
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

March 26, 2020



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY — COVID-19 RESPONSE

Continuous Operations. On March 24, 2020, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) released a statement confirming that the Department will remain fully operational by providing traffic enforcement, investigative assistance, and administrative support operations. In addition, the Department encourages the public and law enforcement agencies to utilize a wide variety of remote services that are available on a newly launched website, dps.iowa.gov/services.

Remote Services. The Department's new website provides the public and law enforcement with a variety of options for services, including checking road crash reports, the status of licensing and permit applications, and updates to the State's Sex Offender Registry. The website provides links to the following DPS service areas:

- Criminal History Record Checks
- Crash Data
- Iowa State Patrol District Office Contact Information
- Breath Alcohol Information
- Missing Persons Information Clearinghouse
- State Fire Marshal Licensing, Certification, and Registration
- Licensing Applications for Private Investigative, Private Security, and Bail Enforcement Agencies
- Weapons Permit Applications
- Sex Offender Registry

COVID-19 and Cybersecurity. The DPS has also provided additional information on how Iowans can protect themselves from cybercrime as they work to protect their mental and physical health. According to the Department, cybercriminals often exploit times of public health concern by luring individuals into sharing sensitive and personal information. Cybercriminals may access information by distributing malicious email attachments, providing fake links to fraudulent websites that feature protective services and products, and soliciting donations to fraudulent charities or organizations claiming to assist national and international relief causes. The DPS, in coordination with the United States Department of Homeland Security and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), is encouraging Iowans to exercise caution when they receive any email with a subject line, attachment, or hyperlink related to COVID-19. Additionally, Iowans are warned to be wary of social media pleas, texts, and phone calls claiming to be related to COVID-19 relief efforts.

State and federal officials have provided the following suggestions to the public to protect themselves from malicious online activity:

- **Keep personal information out of emails, especially financial information.** Do not respond to email solicitations asking for such information. *Additional resources are available at the CISA's Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing Attacks [website](#).*
- **Use extreme caution with email attachments.** Avoid opening email attachments, even if they are from a familiar person or trusted individual. *Additional information is available at the CISA's Using Caution with Email Attachments [website](#).*
- **Access only trusted national online medical resources.** Check web addresses to ensure only legitimate government websites are being used as resources for the most current and fact-based data related to COVID-19. Be wary of emails claiming to be generated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or from experts purporting to have helpful information related to the virus. *Suggested websites include the official CDC website at www.cdc.gov and the coalition of World Health Organization websites that can be accessed at www.who.int.*
- Visit official State of Iowa agency websites and social media pages.
 - The [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) is the leading source for Iowa guidelines, testing, and reported case-related information.
 - [Governor Kim Reynolds' Office](#) is providing daily statewide COVID-19 status updates.
 - The [Department of Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management](#) coordinates the State of Iowa's collaborative response to COVID-19.
 - The [Iowa Attorney General's Office](#) cautions Iowans about COVID-19-related price gouging and fraud with an important set of alerts and recommendations.
 - The [Iowa Department on Aging](#) is sharing recommendations and resources for protecting yourself and loved ones in long-term care facilities.
- **Verify a charity's authenticity prior to donating.** *Additional information is available on the Federal Trade Commission's Before Giving to a Charity [website](#).*
- **Stay aware of United States cyber threats to mitigate business risk.** *Additional information is available on the CISA's Risk Management for COVID-19 [website](#), which is updated continuously as threats emerge.*

Individuals who believe they have been scammed are encouraged to report incidents to the following agencies:

- **To report a scam:**
 - Office of the Attorney General of Iowa
 - Consumer Protection Division
 - Hoover State Office Building
 - 1305 E. Walnut Street
 - Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0106
 - Email: consumer@ag.iowa.gov
 - Phone: 515.281.5926 or 888.777.4590 (outside of the Des Moines metro area)
 - Fax: 515.281.6771
 - Website: www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov

- **To report identity theft:**
Iowa Department of Revenue
1305 E Walnut Street Fourth Floor, 0107
Des Moines 50319
Phone: 515.281.3114
Online Report Form: tax.iowa.gov/report-fraud-and-identity-theft
- **To report crimes against children:**
Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation
Cyber Crime Unit
Iowa ICAC Task Force
2006 S. Ankeny Blvd.
Building 3-W
Ankeny, Iowa 50023
Phone: 515.965.7400
Email: info@iaicac.org
Website: www.iaicac.org

LSA Staff Contact: Christin Mechler (515.250.0458) christin.mechler@legis.iowa.gov

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