

## **421.17 Powers and duties of director.**

In addition to the powers and duties transferred to the director of revenue, the director shall have and assume the following powers and duties:

1. To have and exercise general supervision over the administration of the assessment and tax laws of the state, over boards of supervisors and all other officers or boards in the performance of their official duties in all matters relating to assessments and taxation, to the end that all assessments of property and taxes levied on the property be made relatively just and uniform in substantial compliance with the law.
2. To supervise the activity of all assessors and boards of review in the state of Iowa; to cooperate with them in bringing about a uniform and legal assessment of property as prescribed by law.

The director may order the reassessment of all or part of the property in any assessing jurisdiction in any year. Such reassessment shall be made by the local assessor according to law under the direction of the director and the cost of making the assessment shall be paid in the same manner as the cost of making an original assessment.

The director shall determine the degree of uniformity of valuation as between the various assessing jurisdictions of the state and shall have the authority to employ competent personnel for the purpose of performing this duty.

For the purpose of bringing about uniformity and equalization of assessments throughout the state of Iowa, the director shall prescribe rules relating to the standards of value to be used by assessing authorities in the determination, assessment and equalization of actual value for assessment purposes of all property subject to taxation in the state, and such rules shall be adhered to and followed by all assessing authorities.

3. To prescribe and promulgate all forms of books and forms to be used in the listing and assessment of property, and on or before November 1 of each year shall furnish to the county auditor of each county such prescribed forms of assessment rolls and other forms to properly list and assess all property subject to taxation in each county. The department of revenue shall also from time to time prepare and furnish in like manner forms for any and all other blanks, memoranda or instructions which the director deems necessary or expedient for the use or guidance of any of the officers over which the director is authorized by law to exercise supervision.
4. To confer with, advise, and direct boards of supervisors, boards of review, and others obligated by law to make levies and assessments, as to their duties under the laws.
5. To direct proceedings, actions, and prosecutions to be instituted for the enforcement of the laws relating to the penalties, liabilities, and punishment of public officers, and officers or agents of corporations, and other persons or corporations, for failure or neglect to comply with the provisions of the statutes governing the return, assessment and taxation of property; to make or cause to be made complaints against members of boards of review, boards of supervisors or other assessing, reviewing, or taxing officers for official misconduct or neglect of duty. Employees of the department of revenue shall not during their regular hours of employment engage in the preparation of tax returns, except in connection with a regular audit of a tax return or in connection with assistance requested by the taxpayer.
6. To require city, township, school districts, county, state, or other public officers to report information as to the assessment of property and collection of taxes and such other information as may be needful or desirable in the work of the department in such form and upon such blanks as the director may prescribe.

The director shall require all city and county assessors to prepare a quarterly report in the manner and form to be prescribed by the director showing for each warranty deed or contract of sale of real estate, divided

between rural and urban, during the last completed quarter the amount of real property transfer tax, the sale price or consideration, and the equalized value at which that property was assessed that year. This report with further information required by the director shall be submitted to the department within sixty days after the end of each quarter. The department shall prepare annual summaries of the records of the ratio of assessments to actual sales prices for all counties, and for cities having city assessors, and the information for the preceding year shall be available for public inspection by May 1.

7. To hold public hearings either at the seat of government or elsewhere in the state, and tax the costs thereof; to summon and compel witnesses to appear and give testimony, to administer oaths to said witnesses, and to compel said witnesses to produce for examination records, books, papers, and documents relating to any matter which the director shall have the authority to investigate or determine. Provided, however, that no bank or trust company or its officers or employees shall be required to divulge knowledge concerning the property of any person when such knowledge was obtained through information imparted as a part of a business transaction with or for such person and in the usual and ordinary course of business of said bank or trust company, and was necessary and proper to the discharge of the duty of said bank or trust company in relation to such business transaction. This proviso shall be additional to other provisions of the law relating to confidential and privileged communications.

8. To cause the depositions of witnesses residing within or without the state, or absent therefrom, to be taken either on written or oral interrogatories, and the clerk of the district court of any county shall upon the order of the director issue a commission for the taking of such depositions. The proceedings therefor shall be the same as the proceedings for the taking of depositions in the district court so far as applicable.

9. To investigate the work and methods of boards of review, boards of supervisors, or other public officers, in the assessment, equalization, and taxation of all kinds of property, and for that purpose the director or employees of the department may visit the counties or localities when deemed necessary so to do.

10. To require any board of review at any time after its adjournment to reconvene and to make such orders as the director shall determine are just and necessary; to direct and order any board of review to raise or lower the valuation of the property, real or personal, in any township, city, or taxing district, to order and direct any board of review to raise or lower the valuation of any class or classes of property in any township, city, or taxing district, and generally to make any order or direction to any board of review as to the valuation of any property, or any class of property, in any township, city, county, or taxing district, which in the judgment of the director may seem just and necessary, to the end that all property shall be valued and assessed in the manner and according to the real intent of the law. For the purpose of this paragraph the words "*taxing district*" include drainage districts and levee districts.

The director may correct obvious errors or obvious injustices in the assessment of any individual property, but the director shall not reduce the valuation of any individual property except upon the recommendation of the local board of review and an order of the director affecting any valuation shall not be retroactive as to any reduction or increase in taxes payable prior to January 1 of the year in which that order is issued, or prior to September 1 of the preceding year in cities under special charter which collect their own municipal levies. The director shall not correct errors or injustices under the authority of this paragraph if that correction would involve the exercise of judgment. Judicial review of the actions of the director may be sought in accordance with the terms of the Iowa administrative procedure Act, chapter 17A.

The director may order made effective reassessments or revaluations in any taxing district for any taxing year or years and the director may in any year order uniform increases or decreases in valuation of all property or upon any class of property within any taxing district or any area within such taxing district, such orders to be effective in the year specified by the director. For the purpose of this paragraph the words "*taxing district*" include drainage districts and levee districts.

11. To carefully examine into all cases where evasion or violation of the law for assessment and taxation of

property is alleged, complained of, or discovered, and to ascertain wherein existing laws are defective or are improperly or negligently administered, and cause to be instituted such proceedings as will remedy improper or negligent administration of the laws relating to the assessment or taxation of property.

12. To make a summary of the tax situation in the state, setting out the amount of moneys raised by both direct and indirect taxation; and also to formulate and recommend legislation for the better administration of the fiscal laws so as to secure just and equal taxation. To recommend such additions to and changes in the present system of taxation that in the director's judgment are for the best interest of the state and will eliminate the necessity of any levy for state purposes.

13. To transmit biennially to the governor and to each member and member-elect of the legislature, thirty days before the meeting of the legislature, the report of the director, covering the subject of assessment and taxation, the result of the investigation of the director, recommendations for improvement in the system of taxation in the state, together with such measures as may be formulated for the consideration of the legislature.

14. To publish in pamphlet form the revenue laws of the state and distribute them to the county auditors, assessors, and boards of review.

15. The director may establish criteria allowing for the use of electronic filing or the use of alternative filing methods of any return, deposit, or document required to be filed for taxes administered by the department. The director may also establish criteria allowing for payment of taxes, penalty, interest, and fees by electronic funds transfer or other alternative methods.

The director shall adopt rules setting forth procedures for use in electronic filing and electronic funds transfer or other alternative methods and standards that provide for acceptance of a signature in a form other than the handwriting of a person. The rules shall also take into consideration any undue hardship electronic filing or electronic funds transfer or other alternative methods create for filers.

16. To call upon a state agency or institution for technical advice and data which may be of value in connection with the work of the department.

17. To prepare and issue a state appraisal manual which each county and city assessor shall use in assessing and valuing all classes of property in the state. The appraisal manual shall be continuously revised and the manual and revisions shall be issued to the county and city assessors in such form and manner as prescribed by the director.

18. To issue rules as are necessary, subject to the provisions of chapter 17A, to provide for the uniform application of the exemptions provided in section 427.1 in all assessor jurisdictions in the state.

19. To subpoena from property owners and taxpayers any and all records and documents necessary to assist the department in the determination of the fair market value of industrial real estate. The burden of showing reasonable cause to believe that the documents or records sought by the subpoena are necessary to assist the department under this subsection shall be upon the director.

The provisions of sections 17A.10 to 17A.18A relating to contested cases shall not apply to any matters involving the equalization of valuations of classes of property as authorized by this chapter and chapter 441. This exemption shall not apply to a hearing before the state board of tax review.

20. To cooperate with the child support recovery unit created in chapter 252B to establish and maintain a process to implement the provisions of section 252B.5, subsection 8. The department of revenue shall

forward to individuals meeting the criteria under section 252B.5, subsection 8, paragraph "a", a notice by first-class mail that the individual is obligated to file a state estimated tax form and to remit a separate child support payment.

*a.* Individuals notified shall submit a state estimated tax form on a quarterly basis.

*b.* The individual shall pay monthly, the lesser of the total delinquency or one hundred fifty percent of the current or most recent monthly obligation.

*c.* The individual shall remit the payment to the department of revenue separate from any tax liability payments, identify the payment as a support payment, and make the payment payable to the collection services center. The department shall forward all payments received pursuant to this section to the collection services center established pursuant to chapter 252B, for processing and disbursement. The department of revenue may establish a process for the child support recovery unit or collection services center to directly receive the payments. For purposes of crediting the support payments pursuant to sections 252B.14 and 598.22, payments received by the department of revenue and forwarded to the collection services center shall be credited as if received directly by the collection services center.

*d.* The notice shall provide that, as an alternative to the provisions of paragraph "b", the individual may contact the child support recovery unit to formalize a repayment plan and obtain an exemption from the quarterly filing requirement when payments are made pursuant to the repayment plan or to contest the balance due listed in the notice.

*e.* The department of revenue, in cooperation with the child support recovery unit, may adopt rules, if necessary, to implement this subsection.

21. To provide information contained in state individual tax returns to the child support recovery unit for the purposes of establishment or enforcement of support obligations. The department of revenue and child support recovery unit may exchange information in a manual or automated fashion. The department of revenue, in cooperation with the child support recovery unit, may adopt rules, if necessary, to implement this subsection.

22. To employ collection agencies, within or without the state, to collect delinquent taxes, including penalties and interest, administered by the department or delinquent accounts, charges, loans, fees or other indebtedness due the state or any state agency, that have formal agreements with the department for central debt collection where the director finds that departmental personnel are unable to collect the delinquent accounts, charges, loans, fees, or other indebtedness because of a debtor's location outside the state or for any other reason. Fees for services, reimbursement, or other remuneration, including attorney fees, paid to collection agencies shall be based upon the amount of tax, penalty, and interest or debt actually collected and shall be paid only after the amount of tax, penalty, and interest or debt is collected. All funds collected must be remitted in full to the department within thirty days from the date of collection from a debtor or in a lesser time as the director prescribes. The funds shall be applied toward the debtor's account and handled as are funds received by other means. An amount is appropriated from the amount of tax, penalty, and interest, delinquent accounts, charges, loans, fees, or other indebtedness actually collected by the collection agency sufficient to pay all fees for services, reimbursement, or other remuneration pursuant to a contract with a collection agency under this subsection. A collection agency entering into a contract with the department for the collection of delinquent taxes, penalties, and interests, delinquent accounts, charges, loans, fees, or other indebtedness pursuant to this subsection is subject to the requirements and penalties of the confidentiality laws of this state regarding tax or indebtedness information.

23. To develop, modify, or contract with vendors to create or administer systems or programs which identify nonfilers of returns or nonpayers of taxes administered by the department. Fees for services, reimbursements, costs incurred by the department, or other remuneration may be funded from the amount of tax, penalty, or

interest actually collected and shall be paid only after the amount is collected. An amount is appropriated from the amount of tax, penalty, and interest actually collected, not to exceed the amount collected, which is sufficient to pay for services, reimbursement, costs incurred by the department, or other remuneration pursuant to this subsection. Vendors entering into a contract with the department pursuant to this subsection are subject to the requirements and penalties of the confidentiality laws of this state regarding tax information. The director shall report annually to the legislative services agency and the chairpersons and ranking members of the ways and means committees on the amount of costs incurred and paid during the previous fiscal year pursuant to this subsection.

24. To enter into agreements or compacts with remote sellers, retailers, or third-party providers for the voluntary collection of Iowa sales or use taxes attributable to sales into Iowa. The director has the authority to enter into and perform all duties required of the office of director by multistate agreements or compacts that provide for the collection of sales and use taxes, including joint audits with other states or audits on behalf of other states. The agreements or compacts shall generally conform to the provisions of Iowa sales and use tax statutes. All fees for services, reimbursements, remuneration, incentives, and costs incurred by the department associated with these agreements or compacts may be paid or reimbursed from the additional revenue generated. An amount is appropriated from amounts generated to pay or reimburse all costs associated with this subsection. Persons entering into an agreement or compact with the department pursuant to this subsection are subject to the requirements and penalties of the confidentiality laws of this state regarding tax information. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the contract, agreement, or compact shall provide for the registration, collection, report, and verification of amounts subject to this subsection.

25. At the director's discretion, accept payment of taxes, penalties, interest, and fees, or any portion thereof, by credit card. The director may adjust the payable amount to reflect the costs of processing the payment as determined by the treasurer of state and the payment by credit card shall include, in addition to all other charges, any discount charged by the credit card issuer.

26. To ensure that persons employed under contract, other than officers or employees of the state, who provide assistance in administration of tax laws and who are directly under contract or who are involved in any way with work under the contract and who have access to confidential information are subject to applicable requirements and penalties of tax information confidentiality laws of the state regarding all tax return, return information, or investigative or audit information that may be required to be divulged in order to carry out the duties specified under the contract.

27. *a.* To establish, administer, and make available a centralized debt collection capability and procedure for the use by any state agency as defined in former subsection 29\* to collect delinquent accounts, charges, fees, loans, taxes, or other indebtedness owed to or being collected by the state. The department's collection facilities shall only be available for use by other state agencies for their discretionary use when resources are available to the director and subject to the director's determination that use of the procedure is feasible. The director shall prescribe the appropriate form and manner in which this information is to be submitted to the office of the department. The obligations or indebtedness must be delinquent and not subject to litigation, claim, appeal, or review pursuant to the appropriate remedies of each state agency.

*b.* The director shall establish, as provided in this section, a centralized computer data bank to compile the information provided and shall establish in the centralized data bank all information provided from all sources within the state concerning addresses, financial records, and other information useful in assisting the department in collection services.

*c.* The director shall establish a formal debt collection policy for use by state agencies which have not established their own policy. Other state agencies may use the collection facilities of the department pursuant to formal agreement with the department. The agreement shall provide that the information provided to the department shall be sufficient to establish the obligation in a court of law and to render it as a legal judgment on behalf of the state. After transferring the file to the department for collection, an individual state agency

shall terminate all collection procedures and be available to provide assistance to the department. Upon receipt of the file, the department shall assume all liability for its actions without recourse to the agency, and shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws governing collection of the debt. The department may use a participating agency's statutory collection authority to collect the participating agency's delinquent accounts, charges, fees, loans, taxes, or other indebtedness owed to or being collected by the state. The department has the powers granted in this section regarding setoff from income tax refunds or other accounts payable by the state for any of the obligations transferred by state agencies.

*d.* The department's existing right to credit against tax due shall not be impaired by any right granted to, or duty imposed upon, the department or other state agency by this section.

*e.* All state agencies shall be given access, at the discretion of the director, to the centralized computer data bank and, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, may deny, revoke, or suspend any license or deny any renewal authorized by the laws of this state to any person who has defaulted on an obligation owed to or collected by the state. The confidentiality provisions of sections 422.20 and 422.72 do not apply to tax information contained in the centralized computer data bank. State agencies shall endeavor to obtain the applicant's social security or federal tax identification number, or state driver's license number from all applicants.

*f.* At the director's discretion, the department may accept payment of debts, interest, and fees, or any portion by credit card. The director may adjust the payable amount to reflect the costs of processing the payment as determined by the treasurer of state and the payment by credit card shall include, in addition to all other charges, any discount charge by the credit card issuer.

*g.* The director shall adopt administrative rules to implement this section, including, but not limited to, rules necessary to prevent conflict with federal laws and regulations or the loss of federal funds, to establish procedures necessary to guarantee due process of law, and to provide for reimbursement of the department by other state agencies for the department's costs related to debt collection.

*h.* The director shall report quarterly to the legislative fiscal committee, the legislative services agency, and the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint administration appropriations subcommittee concerning the implementation of the centralized debt collection program, the number of departmental collection programs initiated, the amount of debts collected, and an estimate of future costs and benefits which may be associated with the collection program. It is the intent of the general assembly that the centralized debt collection program will result in the collection of at least two dollars of indebtedness for every dollar expended in administering the collection program during a fiscal year. It is also the intent of the general assembly that the centralized debt collection program be administered without the anticipation of future additional commitments of computer equipment and personnel.

*i.* The director may distribute to credit reporting entities and for publication the names, addresses, and amounts of indebtedness owed to or being collected by the state if the indebtedness is subject to the centralized debt collection procedure established in this subsection. The director shall adopt rules to administer this paragraph, and the rules shall provide guidelines by which the director shall determine which names, addresses, and amounts of indebtedness may be distributed for publication. The director may distribute information for publication pursuant to this paragraph, notwithstanding sections 422.20, 422.72, and 423.42, or any other provision of state law to the contrary pertaining to confidentiality of information.

28. To place on the department's official website the official electronic state of Iowa voter registration form and a link to the Iowa secretary of state's official website.

29. To administer the county endowment fund created in section 15E.311.

C46, § 420.209, 420.210, 421.17; C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, § 421.17; 82 Acts, ch 1057, § 24, ch 1216, § 1]

83 Acts, ch 96, § 157, 159, 160; 83 Acts, ch 153, § 20, 21; 85 Acts, ch 197, § 8, 9; 86 Acts, ch 1091, § 4; 86 Acts, ch 1237, § 24; 86 Acts, ch 1245, § 422; 87 Acts, ch 199, § 4, 5; 88 Acts, ch 1109, § 25, 26; 89 Acts, ch 250, § 2, 3; 90 Acts, ch 1232, § 4; 90 Acts, ch 1253, § 122; 91 Acts, ch 159, §3; 91 Acts, ch 268, § 127; 92 Acts, ch 1195, § 208, 507; 92 Acts, ch 1242, § 32, 33; 92 Acts, ch 1243, § 31; 93 Acts, ch 79, §34; 93 Acts, ch 97, §40; 93 Acts, ch 110, §5, 6; 94 Acts, ch 1107, §2224; 94 Acts, ch 1142, §1; 94 Acts, ch 1165, §46; 94 Acts, ch 1171, §39; 95 Acts, ch 169, §4, 5; 95 Acts, ch 194, §79; 96 Acts, ch 1167, §1; 97 Acts, ch 153, § 3; 97 Acts, ch 158, §59; 97 Acts, ch 175, § 231; 98 Acts, ch 1047, §30, 68; 98 Acts, ch 1115, §46; 98 Acts, ch 1202, §41, 46; 99 Acts, ch 152, §1, 40; 2000 Acts, ch 1195, §1, 7; 2001 Acts, ch 116, §3, 4; 2003 Acts, ch 35, §45, 49; 2003 Acts, ch 44, §114; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §254, 286; 2003 Acts, ch 178, §110, 121; 2003 Acts, ch 179, §142; 2003 Acts, 1st Ex, ch 2, § 178, 180, 205; 2004 Acts, ch 1073, § 4; 2004 Acts, ch 1136, § 56

\*Former subsection 29 was stricken by 2003 Acts, ch 145, §254; §8A.504 probably intended; corrective legislation is pending