

CHAPTER 589

REAL PROPERTY

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589.1 Acknowledgments — seal not affixed.

All deeds, mortgages, or other instruments in writing for the conveyance of lands which have been made and executed more than ten years earlier, and the officer taking the acknowledgment has not affixed the officer's seal to the acknowledgment; the acknowledgment is, nevertheless, good and valid in law and equity, any other provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding.

[S13, §2942-h; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10384; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.1]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §1](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §11](#)

589.2 Conveyances by county.

All deeds executed more than ten years earlier, by a court or the chairperson of the board of supervisors of a county, and to which the officer executing the deed has failed or omitted to affix the county seal, and all deeds where the clerk has failed or omitted to countersign when required so to do, are legalized and valid as though the law had in all respects been fully complied with.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10385; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.2]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §2](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §12](#)

589.3 Absence of or defective acknowledgments.

Any instrument in writing affecting the title to real estate within the state of Iowa, to which is attached no certificate of acknowledgment, or to which is attached a defective certificate of acknowledgment, which was, more than ten years earlier, recorded or spread upon the records in the office of the recorder of the county in which the real estate described in the instrument is located, is, together with the recording and the record of the recording, valid, legal, and binding as if the instrument had been properly acknowledged and legally recorded.

[S13, SS15, §2963-a; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10386; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.3]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §3](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §13](#)

589.4 Acknowledgments by corporation officers.

The acknowledgments of all deeds, mortgages, or other instruments in writing taken or certified more than ten years earlier, which instruments have been recorded in the recorder's office of any county of this state, including acknowledgments of instruments made by a corporation, or to which the corporation was a party, or under which the corporation was a beneficiary, and which have been acknowledged before or certified by a notarial officer as provided in [chapter 9B](#) who was at the time of the acknowledgment or certifying a stockholder or officer in the corporation, are legal and valid official acts of the notarial officers, and entitle the instruments to be recorded, anything in the laws of the state of Iowa in regard to acknowledgments to the contrary notwithstanding. [This section](#) does not affect pending litigation.

[C39, §[10387.1](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.4]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §4](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §14](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1050, §51, 60](#); [2013 Acts, ch 140, §100](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1092, §130](#)

589.5 Acknowledgments by stockholders.

All deeds and conveyances of lands within this state executed more than ten years earlier, but which have been acknowledged or proved according to and in compliance with the laws of this state before a notarial officer as provided in [chapter 9B](#) who was, at the time of the acknowledgment, an officer or stockholder of a corporation interested in the deed or conveyance, or otherwise interested in the deeds or conveyances, are, if otherwise valid, valid in law as though acknowledged or proved before an officer not interested in the deeds or conveyances; and if recorded more than ten years earlier, in the respective counties in which the lands are, the records are valid in law as though the deeds and conveyances, so acknowledged or proved and recorded, had, prior to being recorded, been acknowledged or proved before a notarial officer having no interest in the deeds or conveyances.

[S13, §2942-d; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §[10388](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.5]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §5](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §15](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1050, §52, 60](#); [2013 Acts, ch 140, §101](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1092, §131](#)

589.6 Instruments affecting real estate.

All instruments in writing executed by a corporation before July 1, 1996, which are more than one year old, conveying, encumbering, or affecting real estate, including releases or satisfactions of mortgages, judgments, or any other liens by entry of the release or satisfaction upon the page where the lien appears recorded or entered, where the corporate seal of the corporation has not been affixed or attached, and which are otherwise legally and properly executed, are legal, valid, and binding as though the corporate seal had been attached or affixed.

[S13, §3068-a; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §[10389](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.6]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §6](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §16](#); [96 Acts, ch 1154, §9](#); [97 Acts, ch 23, §74](#)

589.7 Reserved.**589.8 Mortgages, trust deeds and realty liens — releases.**

A release or satisfaction of a mortgage or trust deed, or of an instrument in writing creating a lien upon real estate where the release or satisfaction has been recorded in the recorder's office of the county in this state, or upon the margin of the record, where the original instrument was recorded and which release or satisfaction was made by an individual, association, partnership, assignee, corporation, attorney in fact, or by a resident or foreign executor, administrator, referee, receiver, trustee, guardian, or commissioner, and which release or satisfaction was executed, filed, and recorded more than ten years earlier,

is valid, legal and binding, any defects in the execution, acknowledgment, recording, filing, or otherwise of the releases or satisfactions to the contrary notwithstanding.

[S13, §2938-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10391; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.8]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §7](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §17](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1032, §106](#)

589.9 Marginal releases of school-fund mortgages.

The release or satisfaction of a school-fund mortgage entered on the margin of the record of the mortgage by the auditor of the county more than ten years earlier, is legalized as though the auditor had, at the time of entering the release or satisfaction, the same power thereafter conferred upon the auditor by [1894 Iowa Acts, ch 53](#).

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10392; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.9]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §8](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §18](#); [2005 Acts, ch 3, §99](#)

589.10 Marginal assignment of mortgage or lien.

If an assignment of a mortgage or other recorded lien on real estate has been executed more than ten years earlier, by written assignment on the margin of the record where the mortgage or other lien is recorded or entered, the assignment passed all the right, title, and interest in the real estate, which the assignor at the time had, with like force and effect as if the assignment had been made by separate instrument duly acknowledged and recorded; and an assignment or a duly authenticated copy of an assignment when accompanied by a duly authenticated copy of the record of the instrument or lien it purports to assign, is admissible in evidence as provided by law for the admission of the records of deeds and mortgages.

[SS15, §2963-x2; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10393; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.10]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §9](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §19](#)

589.11 Conveyances by fiduciaries.

If an executor, administrator, trustee, guardian, assignee, receiver, referee, or commissioner, acting in that capacity in this or any state, has conveyed in the trust capacity real estate lying in this state and the conveyance has been of record for more than ten years, in the county where the real estate so conveyed is located and which conveyance purports to sustain the title in the present record owner, the conveyance is not void or insufficient because due and legal notice of all proceedings with reference to the making of the conveyance was not served upon all interested or necessary parties, or that the executor, administrator, trustee, guardian, assignee, receiver, referee, or commissioner is not shown to have been duly authorized by an order of court to make and execute the conveyance, that a bond was not given, or that a report of the sale was not made; or the sale or deed of conveyance was not approved by order of court, or a foreign executor, administrator, trustee, guardian, assignee, receiver, referee, or commissioner was not appointed or qualified in the state of Iowa prior to the making of the conveyance, or the record fails to disclose compliance with any law, and all such conveyances are valid, legal, and binding. Allotments by referees in partition are conveyances within the meaning of [this section](#).

[S13, SS15, §2963-l; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10394; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.11]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §10](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §20](#)

589.12 Sheriffs' deeds.

A sheriff's deed executed more than ten years earlier which purports to sustain the record title is not ineffectual on account of the failure of the record to show that any of the steps in obtaining the judgment or in the sale of the property were complied with. The proceedings are legalized as if the record showed that the law has been complied with.

[S13, §2963-c; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10396; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.12]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §11](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §21](#)

589.13 Sheriff's deed executed by deputy.

All conveyances of land in this state, executed in this state by a deputy sheriff, and properly recorded in the office of the county recorder of the county where the land is located, more than ten years earlier, have the same force and effect as though the conveyance had been executed by the sheriff.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10397; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.13]
[84 Acts, ch 1090, §12](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §22](#)

589.14 Defective tax deeds.

A tax deed executed more than ten years earlier which purports to sustain the record title, is not ineffectual because of the failure of the record to show that any of the steps in the sale and deeding of the property were complied with and these proceedings are legalized and valid as if the record showed that the law had been complied with.

[S13, §2963-o; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10398; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.14]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §13](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §23](#)

589.15 Tax deeds legalized.

That in all instances where tax deeds have been issued by county treasurers in the absence of the report and entry required by section 7283, Code 1939, or corresponding sections of earlier Codes relating to collection of costs of serving notices, such tax deeds shall not by reason of omission to make such report and entry be held invalid, but are hereby legalized. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as curing any other defect in tax deeds than that herein specifically described. Nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to affect pending litigation.

[C35, §10398-g1; C39, §10398.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.15]

589.16 Tax sales legalized.

In all instances where a county treasurer heretofore conducted a tax sale at the time provided in [section 7259, Code 1935](#), or [section 7262, Code 1935](#), sales made at such tax sale or any adjournment thereof shall not be held invalid by reason of the failure of the county treasurer to have brought forward the delinquent tax of prior years upon the current tax lists in use by the said county treasurer at the time of conducting the sale, or by reason of the failure of the county treasurer to have offered all the property unsold before each adjournment of said sale and said tax sales are hereby legalized and declared valid notwithstanding the provisions of [section 7193, Code 1935](#), and [section 7259, Code 1935](#), provided the delinquent taxes for which the said real estate was sold had been brought forward upon the current tax list of the year preceding the year in which the said tax sale was conducted. Provided, however, that no tax sale so legalized and validated shall affect a special assessment if the same continues to remain a lien notwithstanding a tax deed now or hereafter issued pursuant to such tax sale.

[C39, §10398.2; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.16]
[2014 Acts, ch 1026, §124](#)

589.16A Defect in tax sale proceeding.

An action shall not be commenced after July 1, 1987, which asserts a claim against any real estate sold at a tax sale, based upon any defect in the tax sale proceeding, including the inadequacy of the notice of tax sale or the inadequacy of the notice of the expiration of the redemption period, where the tax sale was made prior to July 1, 1986.

[86 Acts, ch 1139, §10](#)

589.17 Conveyances by spouse under power.

A conveyance of real estate executed more than ten years earlier, in which the husband or wife conveyed or contracted to convey the inchoate right of dower through the other spouse, acting as the attorney in fact, by virtue of a power of attorney executed by the spouse, the

power of attorney not having been executed as a part of a contract of separation, are not invalid.

[S'02, §2942-f; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10399; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.17]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §14](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §24](#)

589.18 Conveyances by foreign executors.

All conveyances of real property executed more than ten years earlier, by executors or trustees under foreign wills and prior to the date upon which the will was admitted to probate in Iowa or prior to the expiration of three months after the recording of a duly authenticated copy of the will, original record of appointment, qualification, and bond, and in which the will was, subsequent to the conveyance, probated in Iowa, and in which a duly authenticated copy of the will, original record of appointment, qualification, and bond was, subsequent to the conveyance, made a matter of record as provided in those sections, are legalized and valid in law and in equity as though the will had been probated in Iowa prior to the conveyance. However, [this section](#) does not affect pending litigation.

[S13, §3295-c; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10401; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.18]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §15](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §25](#)

589.19 Conveyances under school-fund foreclosures.

If the title to real estate has been conveyed more than ten years earlier, by the sheriff of a county pursuant to sheriff's sale under the foreclosure of permanent school-fund mortgages to the state, or to the state for the use of the school fund, or to the county for the school fund; and the land has been sold under authority of the board of supervisors of the county and conveyed under its authority, more than ten years earlier, and the full purchase price paid and credited to, and used by, the county for the permanent school fund of the county, all right, title, or interest of the state in and to the real estate is relinquished and quitclaimed to the purchaser or the purchaser's grantees forever, and the title confirmed in the purchaser, or the purchaser's grantees insofar as the erroneous conveyance is concerned.

[C31, 35, §10401-c1; C39, §10401.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.19]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §16](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §26](#)

589.20 Reserved.

589.21 Releases and discharges.

All releases and discharges of judgments, mortgages, or deeds of trust affecting property in this state executed more than ten years earlier, by administrators, executors, or guardians appointed by the court of any other state or country are legalized, valid and effective in law and in equity. However, [this section](#) does not affect pending litigation.

[S13, §3308-a; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10403; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.21]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §17](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §27](#)

589.22 Certain loans, contracts, and mortgages.

All loans, contracts, and mortgages which are affected by the repeal of [1898 Iowa Acts, ch. 48](#), are hereby legalized so far as to permit recovery to be had thereon for interest at the rate of eight percent per annum, but at no greater rate, and nothing contained in such contracts shall be construed to be usurious so as to work a forfeiture of any penalty to the school fund.

[S13, §1898-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10404; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.22]

[2005 Acts, ch 3, §100](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1026, §143](#)

589.23 Descriptions referring to defective plats.

The description of land in all instruments, conveyances, and encumbrances describing lots in or referring to plats of survey or to plats made by a county auditor, or by a county surveyor

for the owner, and placed of record by a county recorder more than ten years earlier, are legalized, valid and binding.

[S13, §924-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10405; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.23]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §18](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §28](#)

589.24 Defective instruments.

A deed of conveyance, or other instrument purporting to convey real estate within the state, where the deed or instrument has been recorded in the office of the recorder of any county in which the real estate is situated, and the deed or instrument was executed by a county treasurer under a tax sale, a sheriff under execution sale, or by a resident or foreign executor, administrator, referee, receiver, trustee, guardian, commissioner, individual, partnership, association, or corporation, and was executed and recorded more than ten years earlier, and if the grantee named in the deed or conveyance, or other instrument, or the grantee's heirs or devisees, by direct line of title or conveyance have been in the actual, open, adverse possession of the premises since that date, is legalized, valid, and binding, notwithstanding defects in the execution of the deed or instrument.

[S13, §2963-c; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §10406; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.24]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §19](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §29](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1032, §106](#)

589.25 Sales of real estate by school district.

All deeds and conveyances of land executed by or purporting to be executed by a school district or by the board of directors of a school district, and placed of record more than ten years earlier, which deeds or conveyances purport to sustain the record title, are legalized and valid, even though the record fails to show that all necessary steps in the sale and deeding of the property were complied with. The deeds and conveyances are legalized and valid as if the record showed that the law had been complied with, and that the sales had been duly authorized by the electors of the school district.

[C58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.25]

[84 Acts, ch 1090, §20](#); [91 Acts, ch 183, §30](#)

589.26 Land transfers by the department of health and human services legalized.

Every deed, release, or other instrument in writing purporting to transfer any interest in land held or claimed by the department of health and human services or a predecessor agency, which is signed by a departmental official, and which was filed of record more than ten years earlier, in the office of the auditor or recorder or clerk of the district court of any county is legalized and shall be good and valid in law and in equity as fully as if the record expressly showed that it in all respects complied with and was fully authorized as provided in any statute pertaining to such instrument, any other provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding.

[C62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.26]

[91 Acts, ch 183, §31](#); [2023 Acts, ch 19, §1230](#)

Section amended

589.27 Condemnation by department of transportation.

1. In any condemnation proceedings instituted by the state department of transportation and pending on or filed subsequent to January 1, 1968, in any court of the state, under [chapter 6B](#), wherein the property owner has served a proper notice of appeal on the applicant for condemnation within the statutory period, but has failed to serve notice of appeal on a lienholder within the statutory period as required by [section 6B.18](#), such failure shall not deprive the court of jurisdiction insofar as the property owner is concerned, unless a lienholder can show prejudice thereby, and in such instances the appeal, as it affects the property owner, is legalized and validated.

2. Any award of damages and judgment for costs, in any such proceeding, which has been set aside or vacated, by reason of the failure of the property owner to serve notice of appeal on a lienholder within the statutory period required under [section 6B.18](#), shall be reinstated by

the court where such award and judgment was entered after notice and hearing, as prescribed by the court, and after a finding that such lienholder will not be prejudiced thereby.

[C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §589.27]

[2021 Acts, ch 76, §150](#)

589.28 County surplus property — sale legalized.

All proceedings taken by the board of supervisors of any county pertaining to the sale of any property which was no longer needed for the purpose for which it was acquired or any other county purpose and sold pursuant to [section 331.361](#), where the board failed to offer such property for sale at a public auction on or after June 30, 1974 and on or before July 1, 1975 are validated, legalized, and confirmed and shall constitute a valid, legal, and binding sale of such property sold on or after June 30, 1974 and on or before July 1, 1975 by the board of supervisors of any county.

[C81, §589.28]

589.29 Permission to lay water mains.

The provisions of [section 320.4](#), relating to the laying of water mains apply to all permits or permissions granted by a county board of supervisors or the state department of transportation and its predecessors before July 1, 1979 and are retroactive to that extent.

[[82 Acts, ch 1165, §1](#)]

589.30 Establishment of ancient county roads.

Effective January 1, 1993, the establishment of a county road pursuant to proceedings by a board of supervisors, in which the proceedings, plans, or plats were on file or recorded with the county auditor or county recorder prior to January 1, 1920, are not ineffectual because of the failure of the board of supervisors to comply with any of the steps necessary for the establishment of the road, and these proceedings are legalized and valid as if the record showed that the law had been complied with, unless the adjacent property owner, or an attorney, agent, guardian, conservator, trustee, or parent of a minor adjacent property owner, files in the office of the county recorder in the county where the property is located, a statement in writing, which is duly acknowledged, and which specifically describes the property involved, the nature and extent of the right of the interest claimed, and the nature of the alleged failure to comply with any of the steps necessary for the establishment of the road, on or before December 31, 1992.

[92 Acts, ch 1169, §1](#)

589.31 City and county deeds.

All deeds and conveyances of land executed by or purporting to be executed by the governing body of a city or county, and placed of record more than ten years earlier, which deeds or conveyances purport to sustain the record title, are legalized and valid, even though the record fails to show that all necessary steps in the conveyance and deeding of the property were complied with. The deeds and conveyances are legalized and valid as if the record showed that the law had been complied with, and that the conveyances and deeding had been duly authorized by the governing body of the city or county.

[97 Acts, ch 156, §1](#)