

CHAPTER 1

SOVEREIGNTY AND JURISDICTION OF THE STATE

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1.1 State boundaries.

The boundaries of the state are as defined in the preamble of the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

[C51, §1; R60, §1; C73, §1; C97, §1; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.1]

[2009 Acts, ch 41, §1](#)

Referred to in [§1.2](#)

1.2 Sovereignty.

The state possesses sovereignty coextensive with the boundaries referred to in [section 1.1](#), subject to such rights as may at any time exist in the United States in relation to public lands, or to any establishment of the national government.

[C51, §2; R60, §2; C73, §2; C97, §2; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.2]

1.3 Concurrent jurisdiction.

The state has concurrent jurisdiction on the waters of any river or lake which forms a common boundary between this and any other state.

[C51, §3; R60, §3; C73, §3; C97, §3; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §3; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.3]

See Act of Congress, Sess. II, Chapter 48, 5 Stat. 742 (1845); Act of Congress, Sess. I, Chapter 82, 9 Stat. 52 (1846); Act of Congress, Sess. II, Chapter 1, 9 Stat. 117 (1846)

1.4 Acquisition of lands by United States.

1. The United States of America may acquire by condemnation or otherwise for any of its uses or purposes any real estate in this state, and may exercise jurisdiction thereover but not to the extent of limiting the provisions of the laws of this state.

2. This state reserves, when not in conflict with the Constitution of the United States or any law enacted in pursuance thereof, the right of service on real estate held by the United States of any notice or process authorized by its laws; and reserves jurisdiction, except when used for naval or military purposes, over all offenses committed thereon against its laws and regulations and ordinances adopted in pursuance thereof.

3. Such real estate shall be exempt from all taxation, including special assessments, while held by the United States except when taxation of such property is authorized by the United States.

[R60, §2197, 2198; C73, §4; C97, §4; S13, §4-a – 4-d, 2024-c; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §4; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.4]

[2017 Acts, ch 54, §76](#)

Referred to in [§1.8, 1.11](#)

1.5 Federal wildlife and fish refuge.

The state of Iowa hereby consents that the government of the United States may in any manner acquire in this state such areas of land or water or of land and water as said government may deem necessary for the establishment of the “Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge” in accordance with the Act of Congress, approved June 7, 1924, [16 U.S.C. ch 8] provided the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota grant a like consent.

[C27, 31, 35, §4-a1; C39, §4.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.5]

[2017 Acts, ch 54, §1](#)

Referred to in [§1.6, 1.8](#)

1.6 Approval required.

Any acquisition by the government of the United States of land and water, or of land or water, under [section 1.5](#) shall be first approved by the natural resource commission and the director of the department of natural resources of this state.

[C27, 31, 35, §4-a2; C39, §4.2; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.6]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1971](#)

Referred to in [§1.8](#)

1.7 Legislative grant.

There is hereby granted to the government of the United States, so long as it shall use the same as a part and for the purposes of the said “Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge”, all areas of land subject to overflow and not used for agricultural purposes or state fish hatcheries or salvaging stations, owned by this state within the boundaries of the said refuge, as the same may be established from time to time under authority of the said Act of Congress.

[C27, 31, 35, §4-a3; C39, §4.3; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.7]

[2017 Acts, ch 54, §2](#)

Referred to in [§1.8](#)

1.8 Applicability of statute.

[Section 1.4](#) shall apply to all lands acquired under [sections 1.5 through 1.7](#).

[C27, 31, 35, §4-a4; C39, §4.4; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.8]

[2018 Acts, ch 1026, §1](#)

1.9 National forests.

The consent of the state of Iowa is hereby given to the acquisition by the United States, by purchase, gift, or condemnation with adequate compensation, of such lands in Iowa as in the opinion of the federal government may be needed for the establishment, consolidation, and extension of national forests or for the establishment and extension of wildlife, fish, and game refuges and for other conservation uses in the state, and may exercise jurisdiction thereover but not to the extent of limiting the provisions of the laws of this state. [This section](#) shall not, in any manner or to any extent, modify, limit, or affect the title and ownership of the state to all wildlife as provided in [section 481A.2](#); provided, that the state of Iowa shall retain a concurrent jurisdiction with the United States in and over lands so acquired so far that civil process in all cases, and such criminal process as may issue under the authority of the state of Iowa against any persons charged with the commission of any crime without or within said jurisdiction, may be executed thereon in like manner as if this law had not been passed.

[C35, §4-f1; C39, §4.5; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.9]

[2017 Acts, ch 54, §3](#)

1.10 Offenses.

Power is hereby conferred upon the Congress of the United States to pass such laws and to make or provide for the making of such rules, of both a civil and criminal nature, and provide punishment therefor, as in its judgment may be necessary for the administration, control and

protection of such lands as may be from time to time acquired by the United States under the provisions of this law.

[C35, §4-f2; C39, §4.6; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.10]

1.11 Keokuk cemetery and Knoxville hospital — assumption of jurisdiction.

At the time of the return of jurisdiction over lands occupied by the veterans administration hospital located in Knoxville, Marion county, Iowa, and the Keokuk National Cemetery at Keokuk located in Lee county, Iowa, by the administrator of veterans affairs to the state of Iowa, the state of Iowa assumes criminal and civil jurisdiction on both grounds in the same manner as provided in [section 1.4](#).

[C77, 79, 81, §1.11]

1.12 Jurisdiction of Indian settlement.

The state of Iowa hereby assumes jurisdiction over civil causes of actions between Indians or other persons or to which Indians or other persons are parties arising within the Sac and Fox Indian settlement in Tama county. The civil laws of this state shall obtain on the settlement and shall be enforced in the same manner as elsewhere throughout the state.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.12]

Referred to in [§1.13](#), [1.14](#)

1.13 Existing trusts not affected.

Nothing in [section 1.12](#), [this section](#), or [section 1.14](#) or [1.15](#) shall authorize the alienation, encumbrance, or taxation of any real or personal property, including water rights, belonging to any Indian or Indian tribe, band, or community that is held in trust by the United States or is subject to a restriction against alienation imposed by the United States; or shall authorize regulation of the use of such property in a manner inconsistent with any federal treaty, agreement, or statute or with any regulation made pursuant thereto; or shall confer jurisdiction upon the state to adjudicate, in probate proceedings or otherwise, the ownership or right to possession of such property or any interest therein.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.13]

[2018 Acts, ch 1026, §2](#)

Referred to in [§1.14](#)

1.14 Tribal ordinances or customs enforced.

Any tribal ordinance or custom adopted by the governing council of the Sac and Fox Indian settlement in Tama county in the exercise of any authority which it may possess shall, if not inconsistent with any applicable civil law of the state, be given full force and effect in the determination of civil causes of action pursuant to [sections 1.12](#), [1.13](#), [this section](#), and [1.15](#).

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.14]

[2018 Acts, ch 1026, §3](#); [2019 Acts, ch 59, §1](#)

Referred to in [§1.13](#)

1.15 Attorney appointed by state in civil actions.

In all civil causes of action where the state of Iowa or any of its subdivisions or departments is a party, and a member of the Sac and Fox Indian settlement is a party, the district court of Iowa shall appoint competent legal counsel at all stages of hearing, appeal, and final determination for any Indian not otherwise represented by legal counsel, in any domestic relations matter, including, but not limited to, matters pertaining to dependency, neglect, delinquency, care, or custody of minors. The court shall fix and allow reasonable compensation for the services of the attorney, costs of transcripts and depositions, and investigative expense, which shall be paid as a claim out of any funds in the state treasury not otherwise appropriated, upon filing the claim with the director of the department of administrative services.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §1.15]

[83 Acts, ch 123, §27, 209](#); [94 Acts, ch 1173, §1](#); [2003 Acts, ch 145, §286](#)

Referred to in [§1.13](#), [1.14](#)

1.15A Criminal jurisdiction — Sac and Fox Indian settlement.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the state of Iowa tenders to the United States any and all criminal jurisdiction which the state of Iowa has over criminal offenses committed by or against Indians on the Sac and Fox Indian settlement in Tama, Iowa, and that as soon as the United States accepts and assumes such criminal jurisdiction previously conferred to the state of Iowa or reserved by the state of Iowa, all criminal jurisdiction on the part of the state of Iowa over criminal offenses committed by or against Indians on the Sac and Fox Indian settlement in Tama, Iowa, shall cease.

[2016 Acts, ch 1050, §1](#)

1.16 Concurrent jurisdiction over lands and waters dedicated to national park purposes.

1. Concurrent legislative jurisdiction over crimes and offenses under the laws of the state of Iowa is ceded to the United States over and within all lands and waters within the state dedicated to national park purposes.

2. The concurrent jurisdiction ceded by [subsection 1](#) is vested upon acceptance by the United States by and through its appropriate officials and shall continue so long as the lands and waters within the designated areas are dedicated to national park purposes.

3. The governor of the state of Iowa is authorized and empowered to execute all proper conveyances in the cession granted by [this section](#), upon request of the United States by and through its appropriate officials.

4. The state of Iowa retains concurrent jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, with the United States over all lands and waters affected by [this section](#).

[84 Acts, ch 1024, §1](#)

1.17 Cession or retrocession of federal jurisdiction.

By appropriate executive order, the governor may accept on behalf of the state full or partial cession or retrocession of federal jurisdiction, criminal or civil, over any lands, except Indian lands, in federal enclaves within the state where such cession or retrocession has been offered by appropriate federal authority. An executive order accepting a cession or retrocession of jurisdiction shall be filed in the office of the secretary of state and in the office of the recorder of the county in which the affected real estate is located.

[90 Acts, ch 1146, §1](#)

1.18 Iowa English language reaffirmation.

1. The general assembly of the state of Iowa finds and declares the following:

a. The state of Iowa is comprised of individuals from different ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. The state of Iowa encourages the assimilation of Iowans into Iowa's rich culture.

b. Throughout the history of Iowa and of the United States, the common thread binding individuals of differing backgrounds together has been the English language.

c. Among the powers reserved to each state is the power to establish the English language as the official language of the state, and otherwise to promote the English language within the state, subject to the prohibitions enumerated in the Constitution of the United States and in laws of the state.

2. In order to encourage every citizen of this state to become more proficient in the English language, thereby facilitating participation in the economic, political, and cultural activities of this state and of the United States, the English language is hereby declared to be the official language of the state of Iowa.

3. Except as otherwise provided for in [subsections 5 and 6](#), the English language shall be the language of government in Iowa. All official documents, regulations, orders, transactions, proceedings, programs, meetings, publications, or actions taken or issued, which are conducted or regulated by, or on behalf of, or representing the state and all of its political subdivisions shall be in the English language.

4. For the purposes of [this section](#), "official action" means any action taken by the government in Iowa or by an authorized officer or agent of the government in Iowa that does any of the following:

- a. Binds the government.
- b. Is required by law.
- c. Is otherwise subject to scrutiny by either the press or the public.
5. [This section](#) shall not apply to:
 - a. The teaching of languages.
 - b. Requirements under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
 - c. Actions, documents, or policies necessary for trade, tourism, or commerce.
 - d. Actions or documents that protect the public health and safety.
 - e. Actions or documents that facilitate activities pertaining to compiling any census of populations.
 - f. Actions or documents that protect the rights of victims of crimes or criminal defendants.
 - g. Use of proper names, terms of art, or phrases from languages other than English.
 - h. Any language usage required by or necessary to secure the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America or the Constitution of the State of Iowa.
 - i. Any oral or written communications, examinations, or publications produced or utilized by a driver's license station, provided public safety is not jeopardized.
6. Nothing in [this section](#) shall be construed to do any of the following:
 - a. Prohibit an individual member of the general assembly or officer of state government, while performing official business, from communicating through any medium with another person in a language other than English, if that member or officer deems it necessary or desirable to do so.
 - b. Limit the preservation or use of Native American languages, as defined in the federal Native American Languages Act of 1992.
 - c. Disparage any language other than English or discourage any person from learning or using a language other than English.

[2002 Acts, ch 1007, §1](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1032, §109](#)