

CHAPTER 8  
FORMS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
[Prior to 12/17/86, Revenue Department[730]]

**701—8.1(17A) Definitions.** For the purposes of these rules the following definitions apply, unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Communication*” means any method of transfer of data, information, or money by any conduit or mechanism.

“*Department*” means the Iowa department of revenue.

“*Director*” means the director of the department of revenue.

“*Form*” means any overall physical arrangement and general layout of communications, using any method of communication, related to tax or other administration and prescribed by the director or otherwise required by law.

“*Person*” means any individual, corporation, limited liability company, government or governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership or association, or any other legal entity.

“*Return*” means any form required for tax administration from any person to the department.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code paragraph 17A.3(1) “b.”

**701—8.2(17A) Official forms.** The department and the director have developed and provide or prescribe many official forms designed to help persons exercise their rights and discharge their duties under the tax laws and rules, to explain tax laws and rules, to assist in the administration of tax laws and rules, and to assist in general financial administration. Communications with the department, for which official forms have been created, shall be carried out using those forms or approved substitutes. Each direction of every instruction contained within or accompanying official forms shall be followed, and each question within or accompanying every form shall be answered as if the instructions and forms were contained in these rules.

Copies of all official forms, instructions and communication formats may be obtained from the Iowa Department of Revenue, Policy and Communications Division, Hoover State Office Building, P.O. Box 10457, Des Moines, Iowa 50306; by telephoning (800)367-3388 or (515)281-3114 (for large orders of forms: (800)532-1531); by faxing (515)242-6040 or on the department’s Web site at [www.iowa.gov/tax](http://www.iowa.gov/tax).

**8.2(1) Nature of official forms.** Most, but not all, official forms are on paper. As prescribed by the director, communication means other than paper documents may be used for official forms.

**8.2(2) Mailing addresses.** The following post office box numbers should be used when corresponding with the department. All addresses are completed: Des Moines, Iowa 50306.

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Addressee</u>
1792	Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax Returns
9187	Individual Income Tax Returns
10330	Central Collections Unit
10411	Withholding Tax Payments Verified Summary of Payments
10412	Sales and Use Tax Returns and Payments
10413	Franchise Tax Returns and Estimated Payments

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Addressee</u>
10455	Insurance Premiums Tax Household Hazardous Materials Environmental Protection Charge
10456	Tax Management Division, Compliance Services Income Tax
10457	Policy and Communications Division
10459	Property Tax Rent Reimbursement Claims
10460	Internal Services Division Process Improvement and Innovation Division
10465	Tax Management Division, Business and Excise Tax
10466	Individual and Corporation Income Tax Estimated Payments
10467	Fiduciary and Inheritance Tax
10468	Corporation Income Tax Returns
10469	Property Tax
10470	Registration Services
10471	Accounts Receivable
10472	Cigarette and Tobacco Tax
10486	Property Assessment Appeal Board
14454	Tax Management Division, Field Audit
14457	Audit Services Section Hearings Section
14461	Research and Analysis Division

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code paragraph 17A.3(1) "b."  
 [ARC 9875B, IAB 11/30/11, effective 1/4/12; ARC 0398C, IAB 10/17/12, effective 11/21/12; ARC 1303C, IAB 2/5/14, effective 3/12/14]

**701—8.3(17A) Substitution of official forms.** This rule is to provide guidance for the use of other than official forms, whether they are on paper, are computer-generated, or are created using other media for communication. Approval shall be obtained prior to use of computer forms, replacement forms, reproduced forms, facsimile forms, or any other forms not provided by the department. The director reserves the right to make changes to forms when needed without prior notification to users of forms. The director also reserves the right to require use of official forms in communications with the department concerning tax administration or other matters.

**8.3(1) Types of substitute forms.** Many types of forms may, upon approval, be substituted for official forms. Descriptions of a partial list follow.

*a. Reproduced forms.* Reproduction (photocopy reprinting) of Iowa tax forms may be accomplished without prior approval of the department provided the following conditions are met:

(1) There is no variation from the official copy or format provided by the department, including reduction and enlargement or other format specification.

(2) Reprinting, copying, or reproduction of the form is not prohibited by another rule within this chapter.

(3) Reprinting or reproduction of the form does not vary from criteria stated elsewhere in this chapter.

*b. Replacement forms.* Replacement forms are forms which are produced by imagery or otherwise replicated using the department official form as a model. These forms may include facsimiles of department forms that have been modified by the addition of line enlargements, copy deletion, or any other modifications.

*c. Computer-generated forms.* Computer-generated forms are forms that are created in their entirety, including layout, by the computer. These forms must be a facsimile of the official form that it is meant to replace.

*d. Federal forms.* Federal forms, or their alternates, do not require prior approval for use provided the form is approved for federal use and Iowa tax instructions or other administrative instructions authorize or require the use of federal forms in lieu of official Iowa forms.

*e. Removable media and electronic reporting.* Any removable media, such as compact discs, or any electronic transmission in other than official form requires prior approval of the department. No prior approval is necessary for submission of compact discs for certain information reporting when they are submitted in accordance with the department policy. To obtain additional information regarding the submitting of magnetic tapes, diskettes or other electronic reporting, please contact the Technology and Information Management Division, P.O. Box 10460, Des Moines, Iowa 50306.

**8.3(2) Approval of substitute forms.** Prior approval of substitute forms may be obtained by writing Iowa Department of Revenue, Substitute Forms, 1305 East Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, or by a PDF submission via e-mail to [IDRSubForms@iowa.gov](mailto:IDRSubForms@iowa.gov). PDF submissions via e-mail to the department of approval requests are acceptable in limited circumstances. Normally, approval will be granted for use of substitute forms for one year only. Those forms listed on the substitute forms checklist should be submitted for approval. If doubt exists about the need for approval of a particular substitute form, the form should be submitted for consideration.

**8.3(3) Failure to obtain required approval.** Forms filed with the department that are not official or approved may be returned at the discretion of the director.

**8.3(4) Forms that may not be reproduced.** Certain forms supplied by the department shall not be duplicated or reproduced because of special processing requirements for the forms. These forms will normally have an optical scan line with special characters or print to ensure that automated processing equipment accurately credits the proper accounts. Exceptions to allow reproduction may occur on a limited basis with the consent of the department. The requestor must demonstrate compatibility with and meet all requirements and standards of the department to ensure proper and accurate processing of the form by the department. The department, at its option, may provide an explanation as to why a form is not acceptable, but is not required to do so. Forms that may not be reproduced, except as provided for above, include department-generated accounts receivable notices.

**8.3(5) General information.** The following general information is applicable to all reproduced, replacement, or computer-generated forms:

*a. Paper.* Paper must be of at least equal quality to stock used by the department for official forms. Carbon-bonded paper is prohibited for all forms. Colored paper should be used for all forms substituting for official paper forms unless paper used is of the identical color of an official paper form.

*b. Ink and imaging material.* Black ink or black imaging material should be used in the printing or duplication of all substitute forms on paper.

*c. Size.* Paper forms must be the same size as the official form.

*d. Legibility.* All forms must have a high standard of legibility.

*e. Distinctive markings and symbols.* Some official forms contain distinctive symbols. These symbols must be reproduced on other than official forms.

*f. Labels.* Preprinted labels furnished by the department should be affixed to returns submitted to the department.

*g. Accuracy of reproduction.* Forms submitted for approval should be a facsimile of the official form. No variation from the official form will be allowed for forms which are identified as returns.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code paragraph 17A.3(1) "b."  
[ARC 9875B, IAB 11/30/11, effective 1/4/12; ARC 0398C, IAB 10/17/12, effective 11/21/12]

**701—8.4(17A) Description of forms.** Forms prescribed by the director can be divided into those required for the administration of various taxes and those required for administrative systems other than tax-related.

**8.4(1) Tax forms.** Taxes administered by the department that require forms are listed in the following lettered paragraphs:

*a.* Corporate income return systems include forms designed by the department as well as forms used in federal tax administration. Approved substitute forms may be used for returns.

*b.* Corporate income tax field and office audit systems, related field collections systems, and the corporate tax error resolution system have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*c.* Franchise tax returns include forms designed by the department as well as forms used in federal tax administration. Approved substitute forms may be used for returns.

*d.* Franchise audit and collection systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*e.* Corporate and franchise estimated tax systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*f.* Individual and fiduciary income returns include forms designed by the department as well as forms used in federal tax administration. Approved substitute forms may be used for returns.

*g.* Individual and fiduciary income tax field and office audit systems and related field collections systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitutes may be used.

*h.* New jobs tax credit system has forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*i.* Individual income tax withholding payment voucher systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*j.* IA-W4 system, declaration of estimated tax, and withholding penalty waiver systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitutes may be used.

*k.* Sales and use tax returns and payment voucher systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used in limited situations.

*l.* Local option sales and services tax and hotel/motel tax systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used in limited situations.

*m.* Field and office audit and collections systems for sales and use tax, sales tax refund examination system, industrial machinery, equipment, and computer refund systems, and sales and use tax penalty waiver systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*n.* Motor fuel tax returns systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*o.* Special fuel tax returns systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*p.* Motor fuel tax and special fuel tax error resolution systems and related field and office audit and collection systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*q.* Inheritance and qualified use inheritance tax returns systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

*r.* Inheritance and qualified use inheritance tax field and office audit systems and related field collections systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

s. Cigarette and tobacco tax systems with related office and field audit and field collection systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

t. Property assessor and deputy assessor examination records systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

u. Central property tax assessments system has forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

v. Elderly credit mobile home, Iowa disabled and senior citizen property tax, and special assessment credit systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

w. Environmental protection charge systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

x. Excise tax on unlawful dealing in certain substances system has forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

y. Taxpayer contact systems have forms designed by the department. Approved substitute forms may be used.

z. Federal and state exchange of information systems have forms designed by the department as well as others. Approved substitute forms may be used.

aa. Accounts receivable notices system has forms designed by the department. No substitute forms may be used.

bb. The department shall provide the taxpayer a statement of the rights of a taxpayer and obligations of the department during an audit, procedures by which a taxpayer may appeal an adverse decision of the department, and procedures which the department uses to enforce the tax laws. No substitute form may be used.

**8.4(2) Other forms.** Rescinded IAB 4/14/04, effective 5/19/04.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code paragraph 17A.3(1) “b” and sections 421.7 and 422.21. [ARC 9875B, IAB 11/30/11, effective 1/4/12; ARC 1545C, IAB 7/23/14, effective 8/27/14]

**701—8.5(422) Electronic filing of Iowa income tax returns.** Electronic filing allows individuals and businesses that meet department criteria to file their Iowa income tax returns electronically. All information is electronically transmitted. Nothing is submitted on paper unless specifically requested by the department. A taxpayer’s electronic Iowa return will include the same information as if the taxpayer had filed a paper return.

There is no statutory requirement that taxpayers file their Iowa income tax returns electronically. Taxpayers also have the option to file by paper.

**8.5(1) Definitions.** For the purpose of this rule, the following definitions apply, unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Acknowledgment*” means a report generated by the department and sent electronically to a transmitter via the IRS indicating the department’s acceptance or rejection of an electronic submission.

“*Declaration for e-File Return form*” means a taxpayer declaration form that authenticates the electronic tax return, authorizes its transmission, and consents to the financial transaction order as designated using the financial institution information provided.

“*Department*” means the Iowa department of revenue.

“*Direct debit*” means an order for electronic withdrawal of funds from a taxpayer’s financial institution account for payment to the Iowa department of revenue.

“*Direct deposit*” means an order for electronic transfer of a refund into a taxpayer’s financial institution account.

“*E-file provider*” means a firm that is assigned an Electronic Filing Identification Number (EFIN) by the IRS to assume any one or more of the following IRS e-file provider roles: electronic return originator, intermediate service provider, transmitter, software developer, or reporting agent.

“*Electronic filing*” means a paperless filing of the Iowa income tax return, order for financial transaction, or both by way of the IRS e-file program, also known as federal/state electronic filing (ELF/MeF).

*“Electronic return originator (ERO)”* means an authorized IRS e-file provider that originates the electronic submission by any one of the following methods: electronically sending an electronic tax return to a Transmitter that will transmit the electronic tax return to the IRS, directly transmitting the electronic tax return to the IRS, or providing the electronic tax return to an Intermediate Service Provider for processing prior to transmission to the IRS.

*“Intermediate service provider”* means the firm that assists with processing submission information between the ERO (or the taxpayer in the case of online filing) and a Transmitter.

*“Online filing”* means the process for taxpayers to self-prepare returns by entering return data directly into commercially available software, software downloaded from an Internet site and prepared off-line, or through an online Internet site.

*“Origination of an electronic return”* means the action by an ERO of electronically sending the return directly to an Intermediate Service Provider, a Transmitter, or the IRS.

*“Reporting agent”* means a firm that originates the electronic submission of certain returns for its clients or transmits the returns to the IRS in accordance with the IRS electronic filing procedures, or both.

*“Self-select PIN signature alternative”* means the taxpayer electronically signs the return with a personal identification number (PIN). The PIN is any five numbers (except all zeros) that taxpayers choose to enter as their electronic signature.

*“Software developer”* means an approved IRS e-file provider that develops software according to IRS and Iowa specifications for the purposes of formatting electronic returns, transmitting electronic returns directly to the IRS, or both. A software developer may sell its software.

*“Stockpiling”* means collecting returns from taxpayers or from other e-file providers and waiting more than three calendar days after receiving the information necessary for transmission to transmit the returns to the department.

*“Transmitter”* means a firm that transmits electronic tax return information directly to the IRS and routes electronic acknowledgments from the IRS (and the states) to the firm originating the electronic return.

**8.5(2) Completion and documentation of the electronic return.**

*a.* All monetary amounts on the prepared return must be in whole dollars. The electronic submission must match the prepared return. The taxpayer(s) must declare the authenticity of the electronic return before it is transmitted. The department has adopted the self-select PIN signature alternative as implemented by the IRS. If the ERO elects not to use the taxpayer self-select PIN signature alternative, the Declaration for e-File Return form must be completed and signed by the preparer, ERO, and taxpayer(s). If the ERO makes changes to the electronic return after the Declaration for e-File Return form has been signed by the taxpayer(s), a new Declaration for e-File Return form must be completed and signed by the taxpayer(s) before the return is transmitted.

*b.* The ERO must provide the taxpayer a copy of all information to be filed. The taxpayer and ERO must retain all tax documentation for three years. The Declaration for e-File Return form and accompanying schedules are to be furnished to the department only when specifically requested.

**8.5(3) Direct deposit and direct debit.**

*a.* Taxpayers designating direct deposit of the Iowa refund or direct debit of payment remitted to the department on electronically filed returns must provide proof of account ownership to the ERO. The department is not responsible for the misapplication of a direct deposit refund or direct debit payment caused by error, negligence, or wrongdoing on the part of the taxpayer, e-file provider, financial institution or any agent of the above.

*b.* Once the return has been transmitted, the financial order may not be altered. The department may, when processing procedures allow, grant a taxpayer’s timely request to revoke the financial order. A direct deposit or direct debit order will be disregarded by the department if the electronic submission is rejected for any reason as indicated in the acknowledgment.

*c.* The department may, when processing procedures require, convert a direct deposit order to a paper check. If a refund is deposited into an incorrect bank account, the department will issue a paper refund check once the funds are returned by the financial institution.

*d.* Funds will be withdrawn from the account specified in the direct debit order no sooner than the date specified by the taxpayer. This date must occur no later than the due date when the due date has not yet elapsed. This date must specify immediate payment when the due date has already elapsed. This date will be superseded by the electronic postmark date when the date occurs prior to the electronic postmark date. The direct debit payment within the electronic submission accepted by the department that is postmarked on or before the payment due date is considered timely, provided that the direct debit payment is honored by the financial institution.

**8.5(4) *Software approval.*** Software developers that want to develop electronic submission formatting software for e-filing Iowa returns shall register their respective software products annually with the department. The department publishes specifications, test packages, and testing procedures. Software must pass transmission tests before the department will approve it for electronic filing of Iowa income tax returns. The department will define the test period annually.

**8.5(5) *ERO acceptance to participate.*** Once accepted by the IRS as an ERO for a specific tax type, the ERO is automatically accepted to e-file Iowa returns of that tax type, provided that the department offers the tax type for e-file.

**8.5(6) *Suspension of an e-file provider from participation in the Iowa electronic filing program.***

*a.* The department may immediately suspend, without notice, an e-file provider from the Iowa electronic filing program. In most cases, a suspension is effective as of the date of the letter informing the e-file provider of the suspension. Before suspending an e-file provider, the department may issue a warning letter describing specific corrective action required to correct deviations set forth in paragraph 8.5(6) "*b.*" An e-file provider will be automatically prohibited from participating in the Iowa electronic filing program if denied participation in, or suspended from, the federal electronic filing program.

*b.* An e-file provider that is eligible to participate in the federal electronic filing program may be suspended from the Iowa electronic filing program if any of the following conditions occur. The list is for illustrative purposes only and is not deemed to be all-inclusive.

- (1) Deterioration in the format of electronic returns transmitted.
- (2) Unacceptable cumulative error or rejection rate or failure to correct errors resulting from the transmission of electronic returns.
- (3) Untimely received, illegible, incomplete, missing, or unapproved substitute Declaration for e-File Return forms when requested by the department.
- (4) Stockpiling returns at any time while participating in the Iowa electronic filing program.
- (5) Failure on the part of the transmitter to retrieve acknowledgments within two working days of the department's providing them.
- (6) Failure on the part of the transmitter to initiate the communication of acknowledgments to the ERO within two working days of the department's providing them.
- (7) Significant complaints about the e-file provider.
- (8) Failure on the part of the e-file provider to cooperate with the department's efforts to monitor e-file providers, investigate electronic filing abuse, and investigate the possible filing of fraudulent returns.
- (9) Submitting the electronic return with information that is not identical to information on the Declaration for e-File Return form.
- (10) Transmitting the electronic return with software not approved by the department for use in the Iowa electronic filing program for the given tax type and tax period.
- (11) Failure on the part of the e-file provider to provide W-2s, 1099s, or out-of-state tax returns when requested by the department.

**8.5(7) *Administrative procedure for denial of participation or suspension of participation.***

*a.* When a firm has requested participation in the Iowa electronic filing program but there is reason to deny the request, the department shall send a letter to the firm advising that entry into the program has been denied. When an e-file provider is a participant in the Iowa electronic filing program but is to be suspended from the program for any condition described in subrule 8.5(6), the department will send a letter to notify the e-file provider about its suspension from the program.

b. When the firm either disagrees with the denial of participation letter or the suspension from participation letter, the firm must file a written protest to the department within 60 days of the date of the denial letter or the suspension letter. The written protest must be filed pursuant to rule 701—7.8(17A). During the administrative review process, the denial of the firm’s participation in or the suspension of the firm from the Iowa electronic filing program shall remain in effect.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 422.21 and 422.68.

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