

701—285.7(423) Casual sales.

285.7(1) *Casual sales by persons not retailers or by retailers outside the regular course of business.*

a. Exemptions. Casual sales are exempt from Iowa sales and use taxes except for the casual sale of vehicles subject to registration, aircraft, and other vehicles listed in Iowa Code section 423.3(39) “b.” In order for a casual sale to qualify for exemption under this subrule, two conditions must be present:

(1) The sale of tangible personal property, specified digital products, or taxable services must be of a nonrecurring nature, and

(2) The seller, at the time of the sale, must not be engaged for profit in the business of selling tangible goods or services taxed under Iowa Code section 423.2 or, if so engaged, the sale must be outside the regular course of the seller’s business.

b. Nonrecurring events. Two separate selling events outside the regular course of business within a 12-month period shall be considered nonrecurring. Three such separate selling events within a 12-month period shall be considered as recurring. Tax shall only apply commencing with the third separate selling event. However, in the event that a sale event occurs consistently over a span of years, such sale is recurring and not casual, even though only one sales event occurs each year.

c. Sales of capital assets. Sales of capital assets such as equipment, machinery, and furnishings that are not sold as inventory shall be deemed outside the regular course of business (including sales of capital assets during a retailer’s liquidation) and the casual sales exemption shall apply as long as such sales are nonrecurring. This will include transactions exempted from state and federal income tax under Section 351 of the Internal Revenue Code.

EXAMPLE: Corporation A sells the company copy machine at retail to B. At the time of this sale, Corporation A is engaged in the business for profit of selling clothes at retail. Assuming that the sale of the copy machine constitutes a sale of a nonrecurring nature, there is a casual sale because the sale is outside the regular course of Corporation A’s business.

EXAMPLE: Corporation C is engaged in the business of lending money secured by collateral. In the course of such business, Corporation C must repossess some collateral and sell it at retail for purposes of payment of loans. Such sales recur from time to time. Notwithstanding that Corporation C is presumably not engaged in the business of selling tangible personal property, specified digital products, or services for a profit, since the sales are recurring, there is no casual sale.

EXAMPLE: F, a farmer, does not sell tangible personal property at retail or engage in the performance of any taxable services. F liquidates the farming business and hires a professional auctioneer to auction off many items of tangible personal property. Assuming this liquidation event is casual, all items sold by the auctioneer at retail are casual sales notwithstanding that many different sales to numerous different buyers may occur. More information is contained in rule 701—285.1(423).

EXAMPLE: H, an insurance agency, holds a semiannual event to sell its used office furniture. Even though H does not regularly sell tangible personal property at retail, the casual sale exemption does not apply because the selling events are recurring.

EXAMPLE: I, a corporation, has one sales event every year whereby it auctions off capital assets that it has no use for or desires to replace. This event has been a planned function of I and is conducted regularly and consistently over a span of years. Even though this sale event occurs only once a year, it is of a recurring nature because of the pattern of repetitiveness present and, therefore, the casual sale exemption would not apply, regardless of the number of items sold at the sale event each year.

EXAMPLE: J, a corporation engaged in the sale for resale of tangible personal property, sells three capital assets used in J’s trade or business consisting of a copy machine, a desk, and a computer. Each sale is made to different buyers and is unrelated to the other sales. The three sales occur in January, June, and October of the same year. The sale made in October consists of a desk. J has not established a pattern of recurring sales of capital assets prior to aforementioned sales of capital assets. Under these circumstances, the sale of the desk is not a casual sale, but the sales of the copy machine and the computer are casual and exempt.

EXAMPLE: K, a corporation, is primarily engaged in the business of road construction. From time to time, it sells used capital assets and scrap materials reclaimed from its road construction work to individuals and businesses. It does not advertise itself as a retailer of these assets and materials but sells them as a matter of courtesy to persons who cannot purchase them elsewhere. After 42 years of operation,

it decides to liquidate. Pursuant to that decision, K employs two auctioneers to sell its capital assets and ceases operation after its assets are sold. K had only one capital asset sale during the 12 months immediately preceding each liquidation auction sale. The auction sales are exempt casual sales under this subrule (1) because they are nonrecurring, and (2) because K is not a retailer of the capital assets sold during its liquidation.

EXAMPLE: L, a sole proprietorship, engaged in selling automobile parts at retail, incorporated. The assets of L are sold to the new corporation in exchange for stock and the new corporation now engages in selling automobile parts at retail. The casual sale exemption would apply, but only because of the exemption set out in subrule 285.7(2) *infra*, since the transfer involves a liquidation of L's business and the sale of L's inventory to another person (the corporation), which will continue to engage in a similar trade or business.

The above examples are not the only ones pertaining to the questions of whether a casual sale did or did not occur. However, because of the myriad of factual situations that can and do exist, it is not possible to formulate more detailed rules on this subject matter.

285.7(2) *Special rules for casual sales involving the liquidation of a trade or business.* When retailers sell all or substantially all of the tangible personal property held or used in the course of the trade or business for which retailers are required to hold a sales tax permit, the casual sale exemption will apply to exempt those sales only when the following circumstances exist: (1) the trade or business must be transferred to another person, and (2) the transferee must engage in a similar trade or business. The trade or business transferred refers to the place where the business is located since each taxable retail business must have a sales tax permit at each location. For purposes of this casual sale circumstance, it is irrelevant whether the retailer actually has a sales tax permit or not; rather, the relevant circumstance is that the retailer was required to have a sales tax permit. One effect of this is that a retailer who is closing as opposed to transferring a business and is selling inventory in the process of this closing is not entitled to claim the casual sale exemption under this subrule, but see subrule 285.7(1), and the resale exemption is always potentially applicable to sales of inventory. The examples below contain further explanation.

EXAMPLE: L, a hardware store, desires to liquidate the business. L had been selling tangible personal property at retail and was required to have an Iowa retail sales tax permit. L hires a professional auctioneer and all items of inventory, equipment, and fixtures are sold to various purchasers. These items consist of all or substantially all of the tangible personal property held or used by L in the course of the business for which a sales tax permit was required to be held. L, however, does not transfer the trade or business to anyone else. Under these circumstances, the casual sales exemption does not apply to the sale of the inventory, but see subrule 285.7(1) for criteria that determine whether the casual sales exemption applies to the equipment and fixtures.

EXAMPLE: The facts are the same as those in the previous example, except that L is liquidating its business because it attempted to build a new store and its entire inventory was destroyed by fire while in storage. An auctioneer sells L's equipment and trade fixtures to various purchasers. The auctioneer's sale of the equipment and trade fixtures is an exempt casual sale of the type described in subrule 285.7(2) because (1) it is nonrecurring, and (2) it is outside the usual course of L's business.

EXAMPLE: M, a sole proprietorship, incorporated. The assets of M are sold to the new corporation for stock. The new corporation engaged in a similar business. The casual sale exemption would apply.

EXAMPLE: N, an oil company, sells all or substantially all of the tangible personal property of ten company-owned service stations that were held or used in the course of its business, for which N was required to hold a sales tax permit, by bulk sales or otherwise. The sales were made to O, P, and Q and occurred at different times during the same year, each sale being unrelated. N was required to have a sales tax permit for each service station. N transferred its trade or business (each service station) to O, P, and Q, each of whom will engage in the same business N did, i.e., operation of service stations. Even though under these circumstances, the sales by N are recurring, the casual sales exemption would apply since each trade or business was transferred to another person who did engage in a similar trade or business.

EXAMPLE: R, an operator of a restaurant, auctions off to various purchasers who are not engaged in the restaurant business all or substantially all of the tangible personal property held or used in the business for which R was required to hold a retail sales tax permit. R transfers the trade or business to S who then

operates a restaurant at the same location R did. Even if S did not purchase any of the tangible personal property, under these circumstances, the casual sales exemption applies. The tangible personal property held or used in the trade or business need not be sold to the same person to whom the trade or business is sold for the exemption to apply.

EXAMPLE: T, a restaurant, sells all of its tangible personal property held or used in the course of its business for which it was required to hold a sales tax permit to U. T also sells its trade or business to U. U engages in the business of operation of a dance hall and does not continue to operate the restaurant. This subrule's casual sales exemption will not apply, but see subrule 285.7(1) for the criteria of a casual sale exemption that could apply.

The above examples are not the only ones pertaining to the question of whether a casual sale did or did not occur. However, because of the myriad of factual situations that can and do exist, it is not possible to formulate more detailed rules on this subject matter.

285.7(3) *Casual sales of services.* The “casual sale” of an enumerated service has occurred if the following circumstances exist:

a. The service was rendered, furnished, or performed on a nonrecurring basis by a seller who, at the time of the sale of the service, is not engaged for profit in the business of selling tangible goods or services taxed under Iowa Code section 423.2 or, if so engaged, the sale was outside the regular course of the seller's business; or

b. The sales of all, or substantially all of the services held or used by a retailer in the course of the retailer's trade or business for which the retailer is required to hold a sales tax permit, if the retailer sells or otherwise transfers the trade or business to another person who engages in a similar trade or business.

EXAMPLE: V ordinarily engages in janitorial and building maintenance or cleaning, which are taxable services. Once, as a favor to customer W, V cut customer W's lawn and otherwise performed the taxable service of “lawn care” for customer W. Since this performance of lawn care was not “within V's regular course of business” and was not “recurring,” the sales price from the lawn care is not subject to tax.

EXAMPLE: Corporation X rents a piece of equipment from Y. Y does not otherwise rent equipment and does not engage in the business for profit of selling tangible personal property, specified digital products, or taxable enumerated services. A casual sale qualifying for the exemption exists.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 423.3(39).

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