

701—8.3(421) Substitute forms.

8.3(1) *Generally.* A substitute form may be in electronic format, on paper, or created using other media for communication. Approval shall be obtained prior to the use of any substitute form, unless otherwise noted in this rule. The director may change any department form without providing notice to users of any substitute form. The director may require use of department forms in communications with the department concerning tax administration or other matters.

8.3(2) *Types of substitute forms.* Many types of forms may, upon approval when necessary, be substituted for department forms. Descriptions of a partial list follow.

a. Reproduced forms. A reproduced form is a legible photocopy or an exact copy of a department form. A reproduced form may be used without prior approval of the department if the reproduced form meets the following conditions:

(1) The reproduced form does not vary from the department form in size or any other format specification.

(2) No rule prohibits the reproduction of the department form.

(3) The reproduced form does not vary from criteria stated elsewhere in this chapter.

b. Replacement forms. A replacement form is produced by imagery or otherwise replicated using the department form as a model, but it is not an exact copy of a department form. A form that is created in its entirety, including layout, by computer is a replacement form. A replacement form may include modifications, such as line enlargement or copy deletion. A replacement form must receive department approval prior to use.

c. Federal forms. A federal form is a form that is distributed by the IRS. A federal form, or its alternate, may be used without department approval if the form is approved for federal use and Iowa tax instructions or other administrative instructions authorize or require the use of the federal form in lieu of a department form.

8.3(3) *Registration and approval of substitute forms.*

a. Registration. A developer of a substitute form must register with the department by submitting the Registration for Substitute Forms and Barcode Approval. Each registration is valid for one tax year only. Failure to register with the department may, at the discretion of the director, result in the rejection of the developer's forms and all information contained therein.

b. Approval. Once registered, the developer of a substitute form must request department approval of the form, unless approval is not necessary. The developer may request department approval by submitting a PDF of the form to IDRSubForms@iowa.gov. Those forms listed on the Iowa Substitute Forms Checklist, which is provided with the Registration for Substitute Forms and Barcode Approval, 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. Attempting to file an unapproved substitute form with the department may, at the discretion of the director, result in the rejection of the form and all information contained therein.

8.3(4) *Quality of substitute forms.*

a. General information. All substitute forms must, to the extent practicable, reflect the same size, color, content, design, and legibility as department forms posted on the department's website at revenue.iowa.gov.

b. Printed substitute forms. When printed on paper, a substitute form must use only black ink or black imaging material, unless the corresponding department form indicates otherwise. A printed substitute form generally must be printed on 20-pound white paper stock with a brightness rating of at least 92 on the TAPPI scale.

c. Distinctive markings and symbols. A department form may contain distinctive symbols. These symbols must be reproduced on any substitute forms.

8.3(5) *Filing substitute forms.* A substitute form may be filed with the department as directed on the corresponding department form or instructions or by any other method approved by the department. Attempting to file a substitute form with the department using an unapproved method may, at the discretion of the director, result in the rejection of the form and all information contained therein.

8.3(6) *Removable media and electronic reporting.* Submitting a substitute form on removable media, such as compact disc, requires prior approval from the department. No prior approval is necessary for

electronic reporting when the reporting is in accordance with department policy. Any electronic reporting of a substitute form requires department approval, unless otherwise authorized. Additional information regarding electronic reporting is available at Processing Services, P.O. Box 10413, Des Moines, Iowa 50306; or by email at IDRSubForms@iowa.gov.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 421.14.

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