

**871—23.17 (96) Group accounts.**

**23.17(1)** Reimbursable employers who desire to form a group account or reimbursable employers who wish to be added to an existing group account shall apply on Form 68-0534, Application for a Group Account.

*a. New group accounts.* The application shall list each proposed member and must be signed by each proposed member and shall appoint one member as the agent for the group for all dealings with the department.

*b. Adding a member or members to an already existing group.* The application shall list all members of the group including the new member(s) and shall be signed by all members of the group including the new member(s). The application shall set out one member as agent for the group, or an authorized agent of the group, with respect to all dealings with the workforce development department.

**23.17(2)** A government entity shall not be allowed to form a group with a nonprofit organization(s).

**23.17(3)** No application for a group account shall be approved if any member of the group is delinquent in the payment of contributions, interest or penalty, or in the filing of reports, or in the payment of reimbursable benefits.

**23.17(4)** If the application is denied by the department, a notice stating the reasons for denial will be sent to the agent for the group. A new application may be submitted by the group at any time.

**23.17(5)** If the application is approved by the department, a notice will be sent to the agent for the group. Such approval shall be effective with the first day of the quarter in which the application is received.

**23.17(6)** Such group account shall continue for a minimum period of one year from the first day of the quarter in which the application for a group account was received and no member may leave the group during such year except that withdrawal shall be allowed where the member's liability has terminated under Iowa Code section 96.8(2) or 96.8(4).

*a.* If a new member(s) is added to the group during the first year of the group's existence, the group shall continue for one year from the first day of the quarter in which the application to add the member is received and no member may leave the group during such year except where the member's liability has terminated under Iowa Code section 96.8(2) or 96.8(4).

*b.* If a new member(s) is added to the group after the group has been in existence for one year, only the new member(s) shall be obligated to remain with the group for an additional one-year period from the first day of the quarter in which such member joined the group.

**23.17(7)** After the group has been in existence for one year, unless provided for differently in 23.17(6) "a" or 23.17(6) "b," any member may withdraw by providing the agent for the group and the department with notice of the withdrawal in writing. Such withdrawal shall become effective with the first day of the quarter following the quarter in which notice is received by the department. For the withdrawal to be effective with the first day of the quarter immediately following the first year of the group's existence, notice of withdrawal must be filed during the last three months of the first year of the group's existence.

**23.17(8)** Rescinded IAB 5/14/03, effective 6/18/03.

**23.17(9)** Should a government group or any group member default with respect to any payments due the department, the amount of such delinquency shall be deducted from any further moneys due to the members of the group by the state as provided in Iowa Code section 96.14(2).

**23.17(10)** Each member of a group shall be jointly and severably liable for any defaults by any members of the group with respect to unpaid reimbursable benefit charges and any interest and penalty. All charges to the members of a group shall be in accordance with the provisions of Iowa Code section 96.7(13).

**23.17(11)** Upon the formation of a group, all benefits paid after the effective date of the group based upon wages paid by any member(s) of the group shall be charged to the group regardless of when the wages upon which such benefits were earned except those benefits based upon wages paid when the member(s) was a nonprofit contributory employer. Benefits based on wages paid when a member(s) was

a government contributory employer that are paid after the effective date of the group will be charged to the group.

**23.17(12)** Upon the occasion of a member withdrawing from a group and the member continues to be a liable employer, such member shall be liable for the payment of all benefits paid after the date of withdrawal and attributable to employment with such member regardless of when the wages upon which the benefits are based were earned.

**23.17(13)** Liability for benefits upon termination of a group or withdrawal of a defaulting or no longer liable member.

*a.* Notwithstanding subrules 23.17(1) to 23.17(12), when a group is terminated upon the application of all members or under subrule 23.17(7) where there are only two members, liability for any reimbursable benefits which the department concludes are not collectible from a defaulting ex-member(s) of the group and said benefits are based upon wages paid prior to or while the group was in existence shall lie with each of the former members of the group jointly and severably.

*b.* Notwithstanding subrule 23.17(12) when an ex-member of a group is in default at the time of withdrawal from the group or withdraws under subrule 23.17(7) and it is determined that the benefits are not collectible from such member, the group has remained in existence, and the benefits so paid are based upon wages paid prior to or while the ex-member was a member of the group, the group shall be held liable for the payment of such benefits.

**23.17(14)** Agent's responsibilities.

*a.* The agent for a group shall be responsible, on behalf of the group members, for all the duties of an employer as set out in the Iowa Code and these rules. Specifically such agent shall be responsible for the pro-rata apportioning of benefit charges to each member of the group as set out in Iowa Code section 96.7(10) or be based on an experience rating system approved by the department and shall accept all legal services and notices on behalf of all members of the group.

*b.* All correspondence on behalf of the group shall be between the agent for the group and the department.

*c.* Each member of a group may submit quarterly wage information and labor market information for the member's reporting unit electronically or each member of a group shall submit a quarterly payroll report to the group's agent who shall combine such reports into one report for all reporting units on Form 65-5300, Employer's Contribution & Payroll Report, and shall submit such combined report to the department on or before the delinquent date for such quarter.

*d.* Submittal of the quarterly report electronically by worksite reporting unit will eliminate the requirement to submit the multiple worksite report.

*e.* Should an agent member withdraw from a group, or resign as agent, it shall immediately advise the department of its intent in writing. Such notice must be made at least 90 days prior to the date of withdrawal. The department shall notify the remaining members of the group of the withdrawal and shall request that the group elect a new agent. Such election must be held and the department notified of the result within 30 days of the notice of the withdrawal from the department. Failure to notify the department within 30 days of the new agent shall result in the termination of the group by the department.

**23.17(15)** Transfers and successorships.

*a.* If a member of a group sells or otherwise transfers its business to a nonmember and the acquiring employer has made or, at the time of acquisition is eligible to and makes an election to make payments in lieu of contributions, the successor shall assume the position of the predecessor in the group as of the date of acquisition.

*b.* If a member of a group sells or otherwise transfers a substantial portion of its business to a nonmember and the predecessor is a nonprofit organization and the successor is a governmental entity, the successor shall not acquire membership in the group.

*c.* If a member of a group sells or otherwise transfers a substantial portion of its business to a nonmember and the predecessor is a government entity and the successor is a nonprofit organization, the successor shall not acquire membership in the group.

*d.* If a member of a group sells or otherwise transfers a substantial portion of its business to an organization or other entity not eligible to make an election to make payments in lieu of contributions, the successor shall not acquire membership in the group.

*e.* A member of a group may become a successor to any other organization and remain in the group so long as the member remains a nonprofit organization or governmental entity.

*f.* Successors which are not permitted to enter a group under 23.17(15)“*b*” to 23.17(15)“*d*” shall be held liable for benefits which are based upon wages paid by the predecessor the same as provided in subrule 23.17(12) for members withdrawing from a group.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 96.7(10).

[ARC 8711B, IAB 5/5/10, effective 6/9/10]