Disabled Veteran Vehicle Registration: Overview and Q&A for Counties and DVA

Iowa DOT- Motor Vehicle Division

Audience: Internal

Overview:

The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) recently approached DOT about making changes to the disabled veteran license plate. IDVA and DOT collaborated to create a new design for this plate that is similar to other military plates issued by the DOT. The plate text will continue to start with the letters DV followed by 4 numbers. This is the new design:



An eligible veteran who has received financial assistance to purchase a vehicle under U.S. Code Title 38, Chapter 39, is able to register the vehicle with a disabled veteran status upon submission of proof of this eligibility from the IDVA and a DD214.

This registration status only applies to vehicles registered under this criterion. If the owner acquires a different vehicle, the disabled veteran will need to provide documentation that the replacement vehicle was purchased with federal funds at the first registration of the vehicle. As with the initial determination of eligibility, this documentation needs to be provided to DOT to determine whether the status can be applied to the replacement vehicle.

Only DOT can add or remove the disabled veteran designation to a customer's record.

For purposes of the disabled veteran registration, the criterion is the vehicle and not the designation that applies to a person. The disabled veteran registration credit does not carry forward to a vehicle that was purchased without federal funds. The disabled veteran can choose a different military plate at no cost, except for the annual registration fee, which goes to the Veterans License Plate Fund. If the disabled veteran wants a fee-based plate, the costs will need to be paid.
Iowa statute does not cover adaptive equipment unless that equipment is included in the purchase price of the vehicle (Iowa Code 321.105).

A vehicle owned by a disabled veteran that has a DV plate issued to it will be considered the eligible vehicle as of January 1, 2026. After this date, eligibility criteria as outlined above will be applied for any vehicle registrations requesting disabled veteran status.

Disabled Veteran Plate Process

How are DV plates issued?

- County treasurer collects documentation and application from the customer.
- The certification of disability requires additional information from the VA. VA will provide customer a copy of the certification, which will include whether they received a vehicle or money for a vehicle purchase. The vehicle information is needed to qualify for a DV plate.
- County treasurer sends paperwork to Vehicle Services at dot.plates@iowadot.us.
- Vehicle Services reviews documentation. If the customer is eligible, DOT will mark the status on the customer record and order the plate.
- Treasurer issues plate.

What will be the process for the new plate image?

- Any customer who has the old plate image can request the new plate image at no charge.
- Counties need to submit Form 411006: Application for Iowa Replacement Plate to DOT.Plates@iowadot.us, noting that it is for the new plate design.

Q&A

QUESTION	ANSWER
What does disabled veteran status mean?	The status means that the owner is exempt from paying registration fees and is eligible for the disabled veteran plate.
What does the county need to collect for documentation?	The county needs to collect a DD214 and proof from the Department of Veterans Affairs showing federal funds were used to purchase the vehicle. This documentation should be scanned and sent to DOT.Plates@iowadot.us.
Are counties required to accept paperwork?	Yes.
Can these plates be used for PWD parking?	No. For PWD parking, the customer will need a PWD sticker, PWD placard, or both. If traveling out of state, the customer will need to use a placard. There is no fee for these products.
Who determines if the customer is eligible?	DOT will review the documentation provided by the county treasurer office and make the determination. If eligible, DOT will order the plate and add the designation to the customer record. Documentation for a replacement vehicle also needs to be sent to DOT for a determination of eligibility. Only the DOT can make the determination of eligibility and add or remove designations on the customer's record.
Can the customer keep their DV status if they get a different vehicle?	Yes, if the owner provides documentation that this vehicle has federal funds used in the purchase. If this documentation is not provided, the owner will need to select a different plate for the vehicle.
How does the customer get a DV plate?	MVD Vehicle Services will review the submitted documentation and order the plate if the customer is eligible. The plate will be sent to the county for issuance. The usual time period is 3 – 6 weeks.
Does the customer need to return their current DV plate if no longer eligible?	Yes. DOT practice is that any plate that was issued by DOT that is no longer valid must be surrendered to the county.
Can current customers who have a DV plate get the new DV plate with the flag?	Yes. Form 411006: Application for Iowa Replacement Plate needs to be sent to DOT.Plates@iowadot.us by the county treasurer staff. There is no fee for the new DV plate.DOT.Plates@iowadot.us by the county treasurer staff. There is no fee for the new DV plate.