

# 10-Year Replacement Plate Guidance

MVD Vehicle Central Programs

## Background

Since April 2, 2012, Iowa DOT replaces license plates every 10 years because license plates commonly lose integrity and reflectivity within 10 years. The Midwest weather also affects license plates by causing bubbling in the license plate sheeting and affecting legibility. The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) recommends a rolling or full replacement cycle of license plates to ensure law enforcement and the traveling public have usable license plates. We understand some customers may not see a visible distinction in their existing plates after 10 years, but research shows the reduced reflectivity and legibility that supports this turnover process.

ARTS is programmed to automatically issue the replacement plates starting every January for all plates due for replacement in that calendar year. The 10-year replacement plate cycle is set up to be issued with registration renewal, but due to vehicle purchases during the tenth year the replacements may be issued during a plate transfer.

## Guidance

The following process is outlined to ensure dealers, counties, and customers are on the same page for issuing the 10-year replacement plates and collecting the necessary fees.

If a trade-in deal or plate transfer comes into the county with the plates transferring to a different vehicle and the system shows that the plates are within the 10-year replacement year:

1. Do not issue the replacement plates if there will still be a registration renewal for the customer in the calendar year for the plates' 10-year replacement cycle. The county will override the 10-year replacement plates, using the *County Work Instruction* below, and issue the replacement plates at registration renewal within that same calendar year (even if the transfer occurs up until the customer's registration renewal month).

Ex 1: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in May and dealer sends in application with prorated registration for May thru July – Do not issue replacement plates because they will be issued upon July renewal.

Ex 2: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in May and dealer sends in application changing customer's reg month to September by paying only the amount to get to that month – Do not issue replacement plates because they will be issued at renewal later that same year.

2. Issue the replacement plates if there will not be a registration renewal for the customer in the calendar year for the plates' 10-year replacement cycle.

Ex 3: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in June and dealer sends in application with full registration for June thru July of the next year - Issue replacement plates because there will not be a renewal in that calendar year.

Ex 4: Reg month is July; customer gets new vehicle in March and dealer sends in application changing customer's reg month to March by paying the full year of registration – Issue replacement plates because there will not be a renewal in that calendar year.

3. Issue the replacement plates if the dealer or customer insists on getting replacement plates because the plates are damaged or otherwise in need of replacement.

### When to Collect Replacement Fee

1. Customer will pay the \$5 plate replacement plate fee:
  - a. If a dealer or customer insists on getting replacement plates, but there will still be a registration renewal in the same calendar year. (#3 above)
  - b. If the transaction occurs before the customer’s registration month and there will be no renewal within the same calendar year, e.g. changing registration renewal month. (Ex 4 above)
  
2. Customer will not pay the \$5 replacement plate fee if the transaction occurs in the month before the customer’s registration month or any time after and there will be no renewal within that same year. (Ex 3 above)

### County Work Instruction

When the plates are due for replacement and you either process an *Update Registration* or a transaction with a plate transfer, the “Replace Plate” message appears in red text by the plate number.

If you are not going to process the plate replacement on a trade-in (T & R), plate transfer, or other, you may auto-approve the discretionary edit (DE 815) to avoid issuing the replacement plates. Situations where this may be necessary is during an *Update Registration* or plate transfer that occurs with a registration renewal remaining in the calendar year. After the transaction is complete, you will want to validate that the “Replace Plate” message is still showing for the vehicle in an *Update Registration*, so that the replacement plates are issued at registration renewal in the same year.

The following example shows an *Update Registration* transaction with plates due for replacement in December 2025.

**Update Registration**

VIN: 1F1RF3B12F6C13079

Vehicle: 2015 Ford F350 Super Duty    Veh Type: Truck    Location: OVMCS - Primary

Reg: 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025    Usage/Tons: Business Trade / 6    Set: <New Set>

Application: Fee Detail    Mailing: Documents

Received Date: 3/5/2025    Renewal Customer: [Redacted]    Reason: Updated    ADS Capable:    Tracking #:    Subject To Reg: 3/5/2025    Request Refund:

Registration

Exp Date: Dec 2025    Reg Interval: Annual    Renewal Pref: Postcard    Weight: 6,900    List Price: \$34,800.00    Color: Gray    Color 2:    Sq Footage:    ADS Restriction:    Damage:

Start / End	Usage	Tonnage	Plate Type	Veh Type	Fee Description	Annual Fee	Fee Amount
3/1/2025 / 12/31/2025	Business Trade	6	County Std	Truck	Owner Reg Fee, 10 Mon	\$195.00	\$162.00

Replace Plate Fee     Impound Fee

Customer

Customer ID	ID Type	Legal Name	Print Name	Residency Address	Date
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

Plate Changes

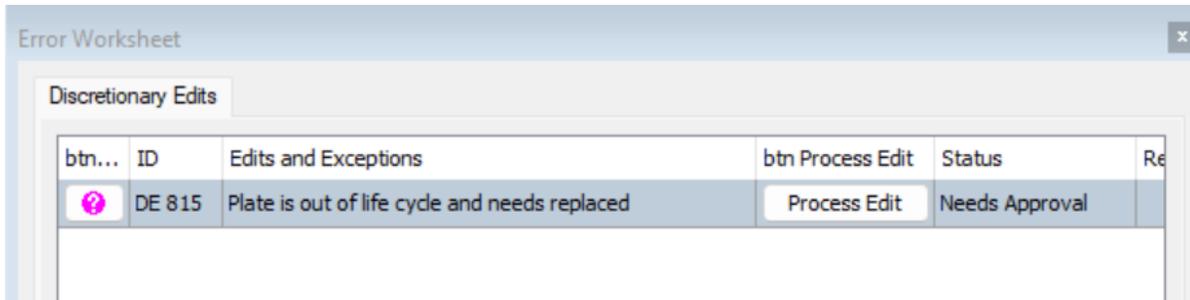
Current Plate:    Plate Disposition:    Plate Type: County Std    Plate #: CZZ976 \*Replace Plate

New Plate:    Plate Type: County Std    AutoAssign    Get Plate

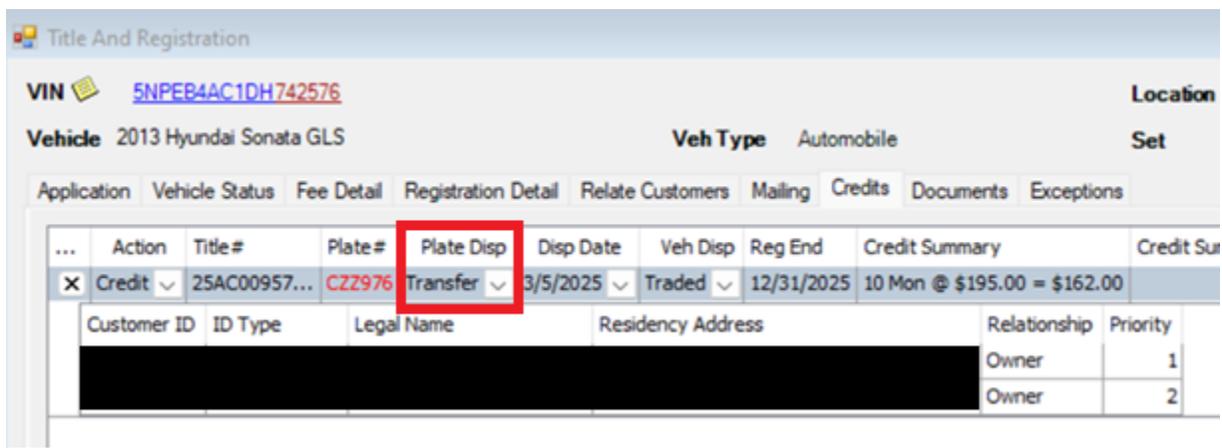
Grandfather Eligible

Transaction Fees	Fee	Penalty
Registration Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
EV Reg Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00
Plate Fees	\$0.00	

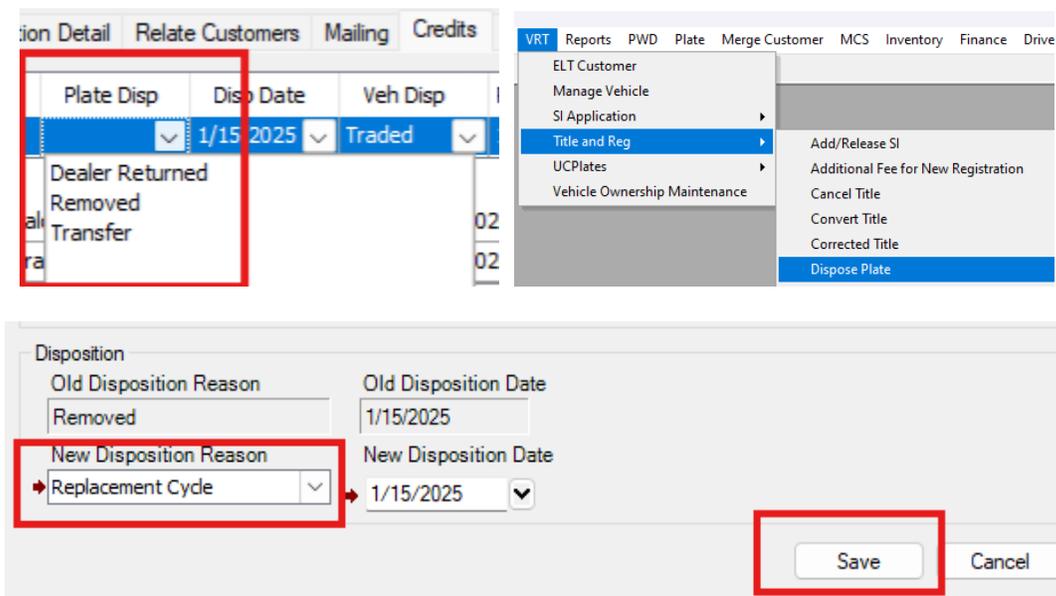
Following is the DE for auto-approval:



The following example shows a title and registration transaction from a trade-in where the replacement plates do not need to be processed (#1 above). In this case, change the drop-down under the *Plate Disposition* column to "Transfer" and you may auto-approve DE 815.



If you are going to process the plate replacement because they are due under the guidelines above, deals coming through ERT will need to be treated differently. In the *Credits* tab, select "Removed" in the drop-down under the *Plate Disposition* column because there is not a choice for the replacement cycle. Then, go under Dispose Plate to change that plate to "Replacement Cycle" instead of "Removed."



**Dealer Research**

The dealer should conduct a search in the Dealer Inquiry under *Vehicle Inquiry* to know if the plates are due for the 10-year replacement. Within the *Plate* section, it will be noted that the plates are “Due for Replacement on Renewal Date.”

**Vehicle Inquiry**

See Also:

Vehicle			
<b>VIN</b>	1FTRF3BT3FEC13079	<b>Type</b>	Truck
<b>Vehicle</b>	2015 Ford F350 Super Duty PK	<b>Colors</b>	Gray
<b>Weight</b>	6900	<b>GVWR</b>	11500
<b>Cylinders</b>	8	<b>List Price</b>	\$34,800.00
<b>Odometer</b>	380 Miles - Actual	<b>Cuml. Damage</b>	
<b>Sq. Footage</b>		<b>ADS Capable</b>	
<b>Designations</b>			

Title			
<b>Title Number</b>	25AC00957	<b>Title Type</b>	Regular
<b>Title Status</b>	Active	<b>Status since</b>	1/30/2015
<b>Security Interests Exists</b>	No	<b>Electronic</b>	No

Plate			
<b>Plate #</b>	CZZ976	<b>Plate Type</b>	County Std
<b>Assignment Date</b>	1/30/2015	<b>Personalized</b>	No
<b>Issued Date</b>	2/4/2015	<b>Due for Replacement on Renewal Date</b>	Yes

**Registration**

StartDate	EndDate	RegistrationStatus	ADS Restricted	AnnualFee	Tonnage	Usage	Plate	PlateType
1/1/2025	12/31/2025			\$195.00	6	Business Trade	CZZ976	County Std