



IOWA TITLE GUARANTY  
A DIVISION OF IOWA FINANCE AUTHORITY

March 18, 2020

## COVID-19 Response and Information

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As Iowa Title Guaranty (ITG) navigates the unprecedented and ever-evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the health and wellbeing of our participants, partners, employees and Iowa communities remains our top priority.

To minimize disruption to Iowa's real estate industry, ITG has implemented remote work options for the ITG team to ensure continuous service to our participants and partners.

Effective immediately, we have restricted all nonessential travel. However, ITG will remain fully operational as we have deployed Microsoft Teams which allows remote workers to answer Help Desk calls and conduct virtual meetings and trainings with industry partners across the state. Despite the volatility of the situation, the ITG team will remain measured, adaptable and resilient.

Effective immediately, ITG is imposing the following directives related to the issuance of commitments, closing protection letters and certificates:

### **1. IMPACT OF RECORDER CLOSURES ON ISSUANCE OF ITG COVERAGE PRODUCTS**

As the impact of COVID-19 unfolds, ITG will continue to monitor closures of recorders' offices and other potential disruptions that may affect the ability to obtain ITG coverage. However, due to the rapid and ever-changing nature of local business closures, participants must contact local recorder's offices to obtain up-to-date closure information. Participants may also reference the closure list posted on the [Iowa Land Records' website](#).

For the purpose of this e-bulletin, ITG has identified two types of recorders' office closures:

**a) Limited Closure** – a closure in which the recorder's office is closed to the public or limiting public interaction, but the office continues to process filings, including but not limited to, e-filings, mail and drop-boxes, with no significant disruption to filing procedures. A Limited Closure does not disrupt an abstractor's ability to perform proper searches of the public record, nor does it disrupt a closer's ability to promptly record transfer documents.

**b) Complete Closure** – a closure in which the recorder's office is closed entirely and is not processing any filings, including but not limited to, e-filings, mail and drop-boxes. A Complete Closure results in the abstractor's inability to perform proper searches and/or the closer's inability to promptly record transfer documents. Please be advised that in the event of a Complete Closure, submitting electronic documents through Iowa Land Records or another e-filing platform does not effectively file the documents.

**Please be advised that in the event of a Complete Closure, ITG has imposed the**

**following closing directives:**

**(1) CPL or GAP:** If a closing protection letter (“CPL”) or GAP Coverage Endorsement (“GAP”) has been or will be issued, the **closer may NOT close** unless and until the recorder’s office has reopened for business and is accepting and timely filing documents.

**(2) No CPL or GAP:** If no CPL and no GAP has been or will be issued, ITG will permit closing. However, the final certificate shall not be issued unless and until the abstractor has performed the proper final searches good through the date guaranteed mortgage filing and the examining attorney has confirmed proper title vesting, clear title and desired lien priority in his or her final title opinion. While ITG may permit closing in this instance, ITG strongly cautions against closing under these circumstances, as the closer will assume any and all liability for matters revealed in the gap.

**2. REQUIRED COVID-19 COMMITMENT EXCEPTION**

Effective immediately and until further notice, the following exception must be added to Schedule B, Part II on all ITG commitments:

*“Iowa Title Guaranty reserves the right to raise exceptions or requirements or determine that a certificate may not be issued due to any changes, disruptions or delays in recording and abstractor title search capabilities resulting from COVID-19 outbreak and global pandemic and/or the implementation of Iowa’s State Disaster Emergency Plan in response thereof.”*

**3. APPLICATIONS FOR DIVISION-ISSUED COMMITMENTS AND CERTIFICATES**

Effective immediately, ITG will no longer be accepting paper applications for division-issued commitments and certificates. All applications for division-issued commitments and certificates must be submitted electronically on our [Resource Desk](#) or by [emailing](#) the necessary documentation. The electronic application will not only reduce the spread of COVID-19 by limiting distribution of physical paper, but it will also allow the remote ITG team to promptly process applications.

**4. E-PAYMENT REQUIREMENT**

Effective immediately, all ITG premiums must be paid via e-payment through our online portal by clicking the “Pay My Premium” link located in the right column of our [Resource Desk](#). E-payments will not only reduce the spread of COVID-19 by limiting the transmission of physical paper checks, but it will also prevent a delay in payment application due to ITG’s remote work operations. If you are unable to immediately comply with this requirement, please contact ITG to implement a transition strategy.

ITG will provide participants and industry partners with further updates as the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve. ITG recognizes the historically unique difficulties currently facing each of our individual and corporate partners, colleagues, and friends. As we overcome these obstacles together, please know that ITG is committed to doing its part to safely steward our state’s real estate industry through the tumultuous days, weeks, and months that lie ahead.

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the [Iowa Title Guaranty team](#).