



**Secondary Roads Department**  
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## ACCESS POLICY

### Title

The efficiency and safety of a highway depend to a large extent upon the amount and character of interruptions to the movement of traffic. The primary cause of these interruptions is vehicular movements to and from businesses, residences, and other developments along the roadway. Regulation and overall control of roadway access are necessary to provide efficient and safe highway operation.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish Jones County's rules for control of access to secondary roads throughout the county. This policy was developed to formalize Jones County's requirements for the location and establishment of driveways, field accesses and farm entrances requested by county property owners.

### Application Process

Section 318 of the Iowa code restricts a person from excavating, placing fill, or making a physical change within the right-of-way (ROW) of a public road without obtaining a permit from the highway authority. A person or business desiring to install a new entrance shall file an Application for Access (Application) with the Jones County Secondary Road Department (SRD), identifying the road and location where it is proposed. A County representative, in response to an Application, will do one of the following:

- Approve the Application,
- Approve the Application with conditions, or
- Deny the Application.

Approval shall be determined by considering safety to the traveling public, topography, geometric limitations and compliance with construction requirements set forth in this policy.

### General Requirements

A person shall not modify an existing or construct a new access to a County secondary roadway where access rights have not been acquired. An Application shall be submitted to the Jones County Engineer's Office on a form prescribed by the SRD. The Application shall be signed by the owner or owners of record.

### Sight Distance

Sight distance is the length of the roadway ahead that is visible to the driver. The available sight distance on a roadway should be sufficiently long to enable a vehicle traveling at or near the design speed to stop before reaching a stationary object or point of access in its path. An access location shall not be approved unless the following is met:

- Four hundred (400) feet of sight distance on a gravel surfaced roadway.
- Six hundred (600) feet of sight distance on a paved surfaced roadway.

### Construction

All accesses shall be constructed in accordance with the current 'Jones County Entrance Detail Sheet' and as follows:

- The minimum allowable top width is twenty (20) feet (width is measured at the culvert installation line and/or toe of backslope).
- The maximum allowable top width is fifty (50) feet.
- Accesses shall be crowned to shed water into the road ditches.
- The access angle shall be established as near to ninety degrees to the centerline of the roadway as site conditions will allow.
- The finished, surface elevation of an access over a culvert, or the location where a culvert would normally be placed (toe of backslope), should be six (6) inches lower than the roadway shoulder. This prevents surface water from draining onto the roadway. The shoulder grade should be extended onto the access at a distance sufficient to provide a safe platform for a vehicle to stop before entering the roadway.
- Access side slopes shall be no steeper than 3:1 on gravel roadway or 8:1 on paved roadways (10:1 on paved roadways that do not require drainage pipe).
- The dirt fill used in the access shall not contain boulders, slabs, metal objects or wooden objects.
- Accesses must be offset at least two hundred fifty (250) feet from intersecting roads on the same side on paved roads and shall be offset at least one hundred fifty (150) feet for all other roads. The offset distance shall be measured from center of access to center of intersection. Accesses must be located at least one hundred (100) feet from ends of bridges (end of bridge is considered end of bridge guardrail when applicable) or culverts.
- Culverts in series that are near each other shall only be permitted when the slope between the culverts are generally flat. This helps avoid erosion between the culverts.

### **Drainage Structures**

Accesses shall not adversely affect roadway drainage or drainage of the adjacent property. The drainage and the stability of the roadway subgrade must not be impaired by access construction or roadside development. An access shall not cause water to flow across the roadway surface or to pond on the shoulders or in the ditch, or result in erosion within the roadway ROW. When an access necessitates crossing a roadway ditch that has been constructed to carry drainage, a drainage structure shall be installed in the ditch by the applicant at the applicant's expense. The low point of the ditch shall dictate the location for culvert placement unless otherwise specified by the SRD. The SRD's staff will determine the size and length of culvert. A culvert shall be of adequate size to handle drainage (10-year flood), but in most situations the culvert shall not be less than eighteen (18) inches in diameter. Culvert pipe shall be provided and may be delivered by the SRD upon Application approval and receipt of payment.

### **Construction Costs**

Construction costs, including any costs incurred for modifying the existing roadway as may be required by the Application, shall be the responsibility of the applicant. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fill material,
- Culvert materials, hardware, delivery costs, and
- Surfacing material.

### **Maintenance**

Property owners having access to a roadway are responsible for the maintenance of their access as follows:

- For an access that does not have a paved surface, the property owner is responsible for maintaining the access from the outer shoulder line of the roadway to the ROW line and
- For an access that has a paved surface, the property owner is responsible for maintaining the access from the paved edge of the roadway to the ROW line.

Access drainage structures located within the roadway ROW shall be maintained by the SRD after construction in conformance with this policy and an approved Application.

### **Application Fees**

The County Board of Supervisors shall, by resolution, establish Application fees chargeable to applicants.

### **Accesses Constructed without an Application**

If a person excavates, fills, or makes a physical change within the County ROW without obtaining an Application the person shall be notified and asked to restore and reseed the slopes and ditch if an Application is not completed. If after twenty days the changes have not been made, the SRD may restore the affected area and immediately send a statement of the cost to the responsible person. If within thirty days after sending the statement the cost is not paid, the SRD may institute proceedings in the district court to collect the cost of correction.