

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 91

(Senator Bailey)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Environment and Transportation

Natural Resources – Apprentice Hunting License – Alterations

This bill authorizes the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to issue an apprentice hunting license to a person younger than age 17 who has previously been issued an apprentice hunting license. DNR must require an applicant for a second or subsequent apprentice hunting license to repeat the required DNR-approved short online or electronic course of instruction in competency in firearms and hunter safety. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect State operations or finances. Any potential impact on hunting license fee revenue is anticipated to be minimal. DNR can update regulations as necessary using existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law:

Apprentice Hunting Licenses

There is a one-time, nonrenewable, apprentice hunting license that allows the purchaser to hunt all legal game birds and mammals in a single season without the purchase of additional stamps (unless the purchaser is hunting migratory game birds or deer during bow and arrow

or black powder season). An apprentice hunting license may not be issued to a person who has previously been issued any hunting license in Maryland.

Prior to obtaining an apprentice hunting license, a person must satisfactorily complete a short online or electronic course of instruction in competency in firearms and hunter safety that is approved by DNR. A person may only hunt under the apprentice license if (1) accompanied and directly supervised by a person who is at least age 18 and has a valid resident nonapprentice hunting license and (2) the person accompanying the apprentice hunter maintains close visual and verbal contact with, provides adequate direction to, and is in a position to immediately assume control of the firearm of the apprentice hunting licensee. However, if an apprentice hunting licensee has completed the full hunter safety course and obtained a certificate of competency in firearms and hunter safety, the licensee may hunt without supervision (unless the licensee is participating in a DNR-approved junior hunt).

The fee for a resident apprentice hunting license is \$10.00, and the fee for a nonresident apprentice hunting license is \$20.00.

Hunting Licenses, Generally

With certain exceptions, a person may not hunt or attempt to hunt during open season and in any permitted manner any game birds and mammals in the State without a resident or nonresident hunter's license. Resident and nonresident hunting licenses enable the purchaser to hunt all legal game birds and mammals during any appropriate season without the purchase of additional stamps, unless the purchaser is hunting migratory game birds, wild waterfowl, or deer during bow and arrow season or black powder season, in which case specified stamps are required. In general, unless grandfathered by having obtained a license prior to July 1, 1977, or hunting with supervision under an apprentice hunting license, all hunters must obtain a certificate of competency in firearms and hunter safety in order to be eligible for a hunting license.

Varying fees apply for hunting licenses and stamps. A resident hunting license is \$24.50, a resident senior hunting license is \$5.00, and a resident junior hunting license is \$10.50. A nonresident hunting license is \$130.00, and a nonresident three-day hunting license is \$45.00. Although not specified in statute, DNR charges a fee of \$65.00 for a nonresident senior hunting license and \$32.50 for a nonresident junior hunting license.

Junior Hunt Days

DNR establishes junior hunt days just for hunters age 16 and younger to hunt accompanied by a mentor. All young hunters participating in the junior hunt days must (1) have

completed a hunter education course; (2) possess a valid hunting license (or be exempt from the license requirements); and (3) be accompanied in the field by an individual who:

- is at least age 21;
- possesses a valid Maryland hunting license, or is exempt from the license requirements; and
- is unarmed.

Hunters participating in the junior waterfowl hunt days must possess the printed receipt showing proof of purchase of the Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: HB 683 (Delegate T. Morgan, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 17, 2023
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