

4VAC15-20-65. Definitions and Miscellaneous: In General; Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing License and Permit Fees.

SUMMARY:

The recommendation is to update certain hunting, fishing, and trapping fees up to the amount allowed by law to offset increased costs associated with managing fish and wildlife populations and the habitats that support them and providing and maintaining access to these resources.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE OF AMENDMENT:

4VAC15-20-65. Hunting, trapping, and fishing license and permit fees.

- 1 In accordance with the authority of the board under subdivision 16 of § 29.1-103 of the Code of
- 2 Virginia, the following fees are established for hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses and
- 3 permits:
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Virginia Resident Licenses to Hunt	
Type license	Fee
One-year Resident License to Hunt, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$22.00 <u>\$27.00</u>
Two-year Resident License to Hunt, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$43.00 <u>\$53.00</u>
Three-year Resident License to Hunt, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$64.00 <u>\$79.00</u>
Four-year Resident License to Hunt, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$85.00 <u>\$105.00</u>
Resident Three-Day Trip License to Hunt	\$11.00 <u>\$16.00</u>
County or City Resident License to Hunt in County or City of Residence Only, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$15.00 <u>\$20.00</u>
Resident Senior Citizen Annual License to Hunt, for licensees 65 years of age or older	\$8.00
Resident Junior License to Hunt, for licensees 12 through 15 years of age, optional for licensees younger than 12 years of age	\$7.50
Resident Youth Combination License to Hunt, and to hunt bear, deer, and turkey, to hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season, and to hunt with muzzleloading guns during muzzleloading hunting season, for licensees younger than 16 years of age	\$15.00
Resident Sportsman License to Hunt and Freshwater Fish, and to hunt bear, deer, and turkey, to hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season, to hunt with muzzleloading guns during muzzleloading hunting season, to fish in designated stocked trout waters (also listed under Virginia Resident Licenses to Fish)	\$99.00 <u>\$129.00</u>
Resident Hunting License for Partially Disabled Veterans	\$11.00
Resident Infant Lifetime License to Hunt	\$130.00
Resident Junior Lifetime License to Hunt, for licensees younger than 12 years of age at the time of purchase	\$260.00
Resident Lifetime License to Hunt, for licensees at the time of purchase:	
through 44 years of age	\$265.00

	\$270.00
45 through 50 years of age	\$215.00 \$220.00

51 through 55 years of age	\$165.00 \$170.00
56 through 60 years of age	\$115.00 \$120.00
61 through 64 years of age	\$65.00 \$70.00
65 years of age and older	\$25.00 \$30.00
Totally and Permanently Disabled Resident Special Lifetime License to Hunt	\$15.00
Service-Connected Totally and Permanently Disabled Veteran Resident Lifetime License to Hunt or Freshwater Fish (also listed under Virginia Resident Licenses to Fish)	no fee

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Virginia Resident Licenses for Additional Hunting Privileges	
Type license or permit	Fee
Resident Deer and Turkey Hunting License, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$22.00 \$27.00
Resident Junior Deer and Turkey Hunting License, for licensees younger than 16 years of age	\$7.50
Resident Archery License to Hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season	\$17.00 \$22.00
Resident Bear Hunting License	\$20.00 \$25.00
Resident Muzzleloading License to Hunt during muzzleloading hunting season	\$17.00 \$22.00
Resident Bonus Deer Permit	\$17.00
Resident Fox Hunting License to hunt foxes on horseback with hounds without firearms (not required of an individual holding a general License to Hunt)	\$22.00
Resident Elk Hunt Lottery Application	\$15.00 \$20.00
Resident Special Elk Hunting License (not required outside of the Elk Management Zone and only awarded to individuals through a department elk license program)	\$40.00
Virginia Nonresident Licenses to Hunt	
Type license	Fee
Nonresident License to Hunt, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$110.00 \$135.00
Nonresident Three-Day Trip License to Hunt	\$59.00 \$74.00
Nonresident Youth License to Hunt, for licensees:	
younger than 12 years of age	\$12.00
12 through 15 years of age	\$15.00

Nonresident Youth Combination License to Hunt, and to hunt bear, deer, and turkey, to hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season, and to hunt with muzzleloading guns during muzzleloading hunting season, for licensees younger than 16 years of age	\$30.00
Nonresident Annual Hunting License for Partially Disabled Veterans	\$55.00
Nonresident Annual Hunting License for Totally and Permanently Disabled Veterans	\$27.50
Nonresident Infant Lifetime License to Hunt	\$275.00
Nonresident Lifetime License to Hunt	\$580.00 <u>\$630.00</u>
Virginia Nonresident Licenses for Additional Hunting Privileges	

Type license or permit	Fee
Nonresident Deer and Turkey Hunting License, for licensees:	
16 years of age or older	\$85.00 <u>\$135.00</u>
12 through 15 years of age	\$15.00
younger than 12 years of age	\$12.00
Nonresident Bear Hunting License	\$150.00 <u>\$175.00</u>
Nonresident Archery License to Hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season	\$30.00 <u>\$45.00</u>
Nonresident Muzzleloading License to Hunt during muzzleloading hunting season	\$30.00 <u>\$45.00</u>
Nonresident Shooting Preserve License to Hunt within the boundaries of a licensed shooting preserve	\$22.00 <u>\$27.00</u>
Nonresident Bonus Deer Permit	\$30.00
Nonresident Fox Hunting License to hunt foxes on horseback with hounds without firearms (not required of an individual holding a general License to Hunt)	\$110.00
Nonresident Elk Hunt Lottery Application	\$20.00 <u>\$25.00</u>
Nonresident Special Elk Hunting License (not required outside of the Elk Management Zone and only awarded to individuals through a department elk license program)	\$400.00
Miscellaneous Licenses or Permits to Hunt	
Type license or permit	Fee
Waterfowl Hunting Stationary Blind in Public Waters License	\$22.50 <u>\$27.50</u>
Waterfowl Hunting Floating Blind in Public Waters License	\$40.00 <u>\$45.00</u>
Foxhound Training Preserve License	\$17.00
Public Access Lands for Sportsmen Permit to Hunt, Trap, or Fish on Designated Lands (also listed under Miscellaneous Licenses or Permits to Fish)	\$17.00 <u>\$22.00</u>
<u>Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp</u>	<u>\$14.00</u>
Virginia Resident and Nonresident Licenses to Trap	

Type license	Fee
One-year Resident License to Trap, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$45.00 <u>\$50.00</u>
Two-year Resident License to Trap, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$89.00 <u>\$99.00</u>
Three-year Resident License to Trap, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$133.00 <u>\$148.00</u>
Four-year Resident License to Trap, for licensees 16 years of age or older	\$177.00 <u>\$197.00</u>
County or City Resident License to Trap in County or City of Residence Only	\$20.00 <u>\$25.00</u>
Resident Junior License to Trap, for licensees younger than 16 years of age	\$10.00
Resident Senior Citizen License to Trap, for licensees 65 years of age or older	\$8.00
Resident Senior Citizen Lifetime License to Trap, for licensees 65 years of age or older	\$25.00 <u>\$30.00</u>
Totally and Permanently Disabled Resident Special Lifetime License to Trap	\$15.00
Service-Connected Totally and Permanently Disabled Veteran Resident Lifetime License to Trap	\$15.00
Nonresident License to Trap	\$205.00 <u>\$255.00</u>
Virginia Resident Licenses to Fish	

Type license	Fee
One-year Resident License to Freshwater Fish	\$22.00 <u>\$27.00</u>
Two-year Resident License to Freshwater Fish	\$43.00 <u>\$53.00</u>
Three-year Resident License to Freshwater Fish	\$64.00 <u>\$79.00</u>
Four-year Resident License to Freshwater Fish	\$85.00 <u>\$105.00</u>
County or City Resident License to Freshwater Fish in County or City of Residence Only	\$15.00 <u>\$20.00</u>
Resident License to Freshwater Fish, for licensees 65 years of age or older	\$8.00
Resident License to Fish in Designated Stocked Trout Waters	\$22.00 <u>\$27.00</u>
Resident License to Freshwater and Saltwater Fish	\$38.50 <u>\$43.50</u>
Resident License to Freshwater Fish for Five Consecutive Days	\$13.00 <u>\$18.00</u>
Resident License to Freshwater and Saltwater Fish for Five Consecutive Days	\$23.00 <u>\$27.00</u>
Resident Sportsman License to Hunt and Freshwater Fish, and to hunt bear, deer, and turkey, to hunt with archery equipment during archery hunting season, to hunt with muzzleloading guns during muzzleloading hunting season, to fish in designated stocked trout waters (also listed under Virginia Resident Licenses to Hunt)	\$99.00 <u>\$129.00</u>
Resident Fishing License for Partially Disabled Veterans	\$11.00
Resident Infant Lifetime License to Fish	\$130.00
Resident Special Lifetime License to Freshwater Fish, for licensees at the time of purchase:	
through 44 years of age	<u>\$265.00</u>

	\$270.00
45 through 50 years of age	\$215.00 \$220.00
51 through 55 years of age	\$165.00 \$170.00
56 through 60 years of age	\$115.00 \$120.00
61 through 64 years of age	\$65.00 \$70.00
65 years of age and older	\$25.00 \$30.00
Resident Special Lifetime License to Fish in Designated Stocked Trout Waters, for licensees at the time of purchase:	
through 44 years of age	\$265.00 \$270.00
45 through 50 years of age	\$215.00 \$220.00
51 through 55 years of age	\$165.00 \$170.00
56 through 60 years of age	\$115.00 \$120.00
61 through 64 years of age	\$65.00 \$70.00
65 years of age and older	\$25.00 \$30.00
Totally and Permanently Disabled Resident Special Lifetime License to Freshwater Fish	\$15.00
Service-Connected Totally and Permanently Disabled Veteran Resident Lifetime License to Hunt and Freshwater Fish (also listed under Virginia Resident Licenses to Hunt)	no fee
Virginia Nonresident Licenses to Fish	
Type license	Fee
Nonresident License to Freshwater Fish	\$46.00 \$71.00
Nonresident License to Freshwater Fish in Designated Stocked Trout Waters	\$22.00 \$47.00
Nonresident License to Freshwater and Saltwater Fish	\$70.00 \$95.00

Nonresident Fishing License for Partially Disabled Veterans	\$23.00
Nonresident Annual Fishing License for Totally and Permanently Disabled Veterans	\$11.50
Nonresident License to Freshwater Fish for One Day	\$7.00 \$19.00
Nonresident License to Freshwater Fish for Five Consecutive Days	\$20.00 \$35.00
Nonresident License to Freshwater and Saltwater Fish for Five Consecutive Days	\$30.00 \$45.00
Nonresident Infant Lifetime License to Fish	\$275.00
Nonresident Special Lifetime License to Freshwater Fish	\$580.00 \$630.00

Nonresident Special Lifetime License to in Fish in Designated Stocked Trout Waters	\$580.00
Miscellaneous Licenses or Permits to Fish	
Type license or permit	Fee
Permit to Fish for One Day at Board-Designated Stocked Trout Fishing Areas with Daily Use Fees	\$7.00 <u>\$12.00</u>
Public Access Lands for Sportsmen Permit to Hunt, Trap, or Fish on Designated Lands (also listed under Miscellaneous Licenses or Permits to Hunt)	\$17.00 <u>\$22.00</u>
Special Guest Fishing License	\$60.00

RATIONALE:

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources administers numerous programs that support the management of fish and wildlife populations, as well as lands and waters, throughout the state; public access to these resources; enforcement of fish and wildlife laws and regulations; hunter and angler safety training; and public awareness. These services are paid for, in part by fees paid to hunt, fish, and trap in Virginia. In 2025, the DWR issued over 198,000 hunting licenses to individuals; 305,000 individual fishing licenses (including 55,000+ trout licenses); 63,000 sportsman’s licenses; more than 1,500 trapping licenses; 22,000 fee fishing area licenses; 96,000 freshwater/saltwater fishing licenses; 26,000 Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamps; and 5,400 waterfowl blind licenses. In that same period, the agency also issued nearly 24,000 lifetime licenses (hunting, freshwater fishing, trout, and trapping). Except for lifetime licenses, most licenses sold are valid for not more than a year.

Under its authorities outlined in the Code of Virginia (§29.1-103.16), the Board of Wildlife Resources may, by regulation, adopt revisions to fees charged for all hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses authorized under Articles 1 (§ [29.1-300 et seq.](#)) and 2 (§ [29.1-340 et seq.](#)) of Chapter 3 of Title 29.1. These fees may not be raised or lowered more than once every three years and by not more than \$5 at any one time for resident licenses or \$50 at any one time for nonresident licenses. The Board of Wildlife Resources last implemented broad scale fee changes to fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses in 2011.

Since the Board’s last broad scale action on license fees, prices in the U.S. have increased by roughly 43.8%, representing an average annual inflation rate of 2.63%. The value of the dollar has also decreased, with \$1 in 2012 having the purchasing power of 70 cents in 2026. Equally dramatic changes have occurred in construction costs, with cumulative increases of more than 40% just between 2020 and 2026. Over the past six years, personnel costs have risen by nearly 25%, in large part due to annual salary increases included in the state budgets. The agency has received no new state funding to support those salary increases. Accordingly, the organization’s annual operating budgets have moved from 60% personnel, 40% non-personnel to nearly 80% personnel, 20% non-personnel. Over this same period, DWR revenues have remained generally static. Those trends, coupled with unpredictable changes (such as tariffs and volatile gasoline costs), have placed the agency in an unsustainable financial position. Such a situation is untenable over time due to needs to replace equipment, ensure employee safety, and implement priority programs. The DWR’s operating budget for fiscal year 2012 was approximately \$55.2 million, which would equate to a comparable budget of just over \$79.5 million in fiscal year

2027 (beginning July 1, 2026). The agency's proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2027 is approximately \$65 million.

During this same period (2012-2026), demands on the agency have increased substantially, with little additional revenue to offset the resulting costs. Public expectation of timely and in-person responsiveness to human-wildlife conflict resolution has significantly changed how conservation police officers and wildlife biologists spend their time. A growing, diverse population presents both challenges and opportunities for increasing outdoor recreation participation. Increasing demand for public access to lands and waters is well-documented not only in the DWR's management plans, but also in the updated Virginia Outdoors Plan, where access to natural areas and water continue to be two of the top 10 most desired outdoor recreation opportunities. Capital maintenance of DWR facilities (hatcheries, dams, boating access, WMA infrastructure) needed to provide safe and meaningful access has not kept pace with use, with an estimated current infrastructure liability of more than \$275 million.

While the DWR has made great strides finding efficiencies in programs, including an overall reduction in employee numbers, the agency is struggling to maintain the level of service to which the public has grown accustomed. Enforcement of laws and regulations that protect the recreating public, providing access, and managing Virginia's fish and wildlife populations, as well as the habitats that support them, remain top priorities. The proposed updated fees would help offset increased costs across all program areas, allowing the agency to better address the needs of hunters, anglers, and recreationists across Virginia's lands and waters. Accounting for a relatively minor churn rate of 3%, the agency expects these increases to generate approximately \$6.39 million in additional annual revenue. This additional revenue will help to support the economic impact of fishing, hunting, and boating, which are estimated to contribute \$3.2 billion, \$1.2 billion, and \$4.4 billion, respectively, to the Virginia economy. With the exception of non-resident fishing licenses, the proposed increases keep the license fee schedule generally in line with fees charged by adjacent states.