

# HB4621



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

**HB4621**

Introduced 2/3/2026, by Rep. Dave Severin

### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

520 ILCS 5/2.26

from Ch. 61, par. 2.26

Amends the Wildlife Code. Provides that there shall be no fee for one Deer Hunting Permit to take one deer in one season with either bow and arrow or gun for a resident of the State who receives assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program.

LRB104 18462 BDA 31904 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning wildlife.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Wildlife Code is amended by changing  
5 Section 2.26 as follows:

6 (520 ILCS 5/2.26) (from Ch. 61, par. 2.26)

7 Sec. 2.26. Deer hunting permits. Any person attempting to  
8 take deer shall first obtain a "Deer Hunting Permit" issued by  
9 the Department in accordance with its administrative rules.  
10 Those rules must provide for the issuance of the following  
11 types of resident deer archery permits: (i) a combination  
12 permit, consisting of one either-sex permit and one  
13 antlerless-only permit, (ii) a single antlerless-only permit,  
14 and (iii) a single either-sex permit. The fee for a Deer  
15 Hunting Permit to take deer with either bow and arrow or gun  
16 shall not exceed \$25 for residents of the State. There shall be  
17 no fee for one Deer Hunting Permit to take one deer in one  
18 season with either bow and arrow or gun for a resident of the  
19 State who receives assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition  
20 Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp  
21 Program. The Department may by administrative rule provide for  
22 non-resident deer hunting permits for which the fee will not  
23 exceed \$300 in 2005, \$350 in 2006, and \$400 in 2007 and

1 thereafter except as provided below for non-resident  
2 landowners and non-resident archery hunters. The Department  
3 may by administrative rule provide for a non-resident archery  
4 deer permit consisting of not more than 2 harvest tags at a  
5 total cost not to exceed \$325 in 2005, \$375 in 2006, and \$425  
6 in 2007 and thereafter. The fees for a youth resident and  
7 non-resident archery deer permit shall be the same.

8 The Department shall create a pilot program during the  
9 special 3-day, youth-only deer hunting season to allow for  
10 youth deer hunting permits that are valid statewide, excluding  
11 those counties or portions of counties closed to firearm deer  
12 hunting. The Department shall adopt rules to implement the  
13 pilot program. Hunters qualifying to participate in a  
14 youth-only deer season shall be eligible for one either-sex  
15 permit and one antlerless-only permit. Nothing in this  
16 paragraph shall be construed to prohibit the Department from  
17 issuing Special Hunt Area Permits for the youth-only deer  
18 hunting season or establishing, through administrative rule,  
19 additional requirements pertaining to the youth-only deer  
20 hunting season on Department-owned or Department-managed  
21 sites, including site-specific quotas or drawings. The  
22 provisions of this paragraph are inoperative on and after  
23 January 1, 2023.

24 The standards and specifications for use of guns and bow  
25 and arrow for deer hunting shall be established by  
26 administrative rule.

1           No person may have in his or her possession any firearm not  
2 authorized by administrative rule for a specific hunting  
3 season when taking deer unless in accordance with the Firearm  
4 Concealed Carry Act.

5           Persons having a firearm deer hunting permit shall be  
6 permitted to take deer only during the period from 1/2 hour  
7 before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset, and only during those  
8 days for which an open season is established for the taking of  
9 deer by use of shotgun, handgun, rifle, or muzzle loading  
10 rifle.

11           Persons having an archery deer hunting permit shall be  
12 permitted to take deer only during the period from 1/2 hour  
13 before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset, and only during those  
14 days for which an open season is established for the taking of  
15 deer by use of bow and arrow.

16           It shall be unlawful for any person to take deer by use of  
17 dogs, horses, automobiles, aircraft, or other vehicles, or by  
18 the use or aid of bait or baiting of any kind. For the purposes  
19 of this Section, "bait" means any material, whether liquid or  
20 solid, including food, salt, minerals, and other products,  
21 except pure water, that can be ingested, placed, or scattered  
22 in such a manner as to attract or lure white-tailed deer.  
23 "Baiting" means the placement or scattering of bait to attract  
24 deer. An area is considered as baited during the presence of  
25 and for 10 consecutive days following the removal of bait.  
26 Nothing in this Section shall prohibit the use of a dog to

1 track wounded deer. Any person using a dog for tracking  
2 wounded deer must maintain physical control of the dog at all  
3 times by means of a maximum 50-foot lead attached to the dog's  
4 collar or harness. Tracking wounded deer is permissible at  
5 night, but at no time outside of legal deer hunting hours or  
6 seasons shall any person handling or accompanying a dog being  
7 used for tracking wounded deer be in possession of any firearm  
8 or archery device. Persons tracking wounded deer with a dog  
9 during the firearm deer seasons shall wear blaze orange or  
10 solid blaze pink color as required. Dog handlers tracking  
11 wounded deer with a dog are exempt from hunting license and  
12 deer permit requirements so long as they are accompanied by  
13 the licensed deer hunter who wounded the deer.

14 It shall be unlawful to possess or transport any wild deer  
15 which has been injured or killed in any manner upon a public  
16 highway or public right-of-way of this State unless exempted  
17 by administrative rule.

18 Persons hunting deer must have the gun unloaded and no bow  
19 and arrow device shall be carried with the arrow in the nocked  
20 position during hours when deer hunting is unlawful.

21 It shall be unlawful for any person, having taken the  
22 legal limit of deer by gun, to further participate with a gun  
23 in any deer hunting party.

24 It shall be unlawful for any person, having taken the  
25 legal limit of deer by bow and arrow, to further participate  
26 with bow and arrow in any deer hunting party.

1           The Department may prohibit upland game hunting during the  
2 gun deer season by administrative rule.

3           The Department shall not limit the number of non-resident,  
4 either-sex archery deer hunting permits to less than 20,000.

5           Any person who violates any of the provisions of this  
6 Section, including administrative rules, shall be guilty of a  
7 Class B misdemeanor.

8           For the purposes of calculating acreage under this  
9 Section, the Department shall, after determining the total  
10 acreage of the applicable tract or tracts of land, round  
11 remaining fractional portions of an acre greater than or equal  
12 to half of an acre up to the next whole acre.

13           For the purposes of taking white-tailed deer, nothing in  
14 this Section shall be construed to prevent the manipulation,  
15 including mowing or cutting, of standing crops as a normal  
16 agricultural or soil stabilization practice, food plots, or  
17 normal agricultural practices, including planting, harvesting,  
18 and maintenance such as cultivating or the use of products  
19 designed for scent only and not capable of ingestion, solid or  
20 liquid, placed or scattered, in such a manner as to attract or  
21 lure deer. Such manipulation for the purpose of taking  
22 white-tailed deer may be further modified by administrative  
23 rule.

24           (Source: P.A. 104-361, eff. 1-1-26; 104-417, eff. 8-15-25.)