



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB5597

Introduced 2/13/2026, by Rep. Wayne A. Rosenthal

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

515 ILCS 5/20-45  
520 ILCS 5/3.2

from Ch. 56, par. 20-45  
from Ch. 61, par. 3.2

Amends the Fish and Aquatic Life Code and the Wildlife Code. Provides that the fee for an annual or a 3-year fishing or hunting license is \$5 for resident veterans of the United States Armed Forces after returning from service abroad or mobilization by the President of the United States as an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United States Armed Forces.

LRB104 18407 BDA 31849 b

1 AN ACT concerning fees.

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

4 Section 5. The Fish and Aquatic Life Code is amended by  
5 changing Section 20-45 as follows:

6 (515 ILCS 5/20-45) (from Ch. 56, par. 20-45)

7 Sec. 20-45. License fees for residents. Fees for licenses  
8 for residents of the State of Illinois shall be as follows:

9 (a) Except as otherwise provided in this Section, for  
10 sport fishing devices as defined in Section 10-95 or  
11 spearing devices as defined in Section 10-110, the fee is  
12 \$14.50 for individuals 16 to 64 years old, one-half of the  
13 current fishing license fee for individuals age 65 or  
14 older, and, on and after the effective date of this  
15 amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly, the fee is  
16 \$5 commencing with the 2012 license year, one half of the  
17 current fishing license fee for resident veterans of the  
18 United States Armed Forces after returning from service  
19 abroad or mobilization by the President of the United  
20 States as an active duty member of the United States Armed  
21 Forces, the Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of  
22 the United States Armed Forces. Veterans must provide to  
23 the Department acceptable verification of their service.

1           The Department shall establish by administrative rule the  
2           procedure by which such verification of service shall be  
3           made to the Department for the purpose of issuing fishing  
4           licenses to resident veterans at a reduced fee.

5           (a-3) Except as otherwise provided in this Section,  
6           for sport fishing devices as defined in Section 10-95 or  
7           spearing devices as defined in Section 10-110, residents  
8           of this State may obtain a 3-year fishing license. The fee  
9           for a 3-year fishing license is 3 times the annual fee. For  
10          residents age 65 or older, the fee is one half of the fee  
11          charged for a 3-year fishing license. For resident  
12          veterans of the United States Armed Forces after returning  
13          from service abroad or mobilization by the President of  
14          the United States, the fee is \$5 ~~one half of the fee~~  
15          ~~charged for a 3 year fishing license~~. Veterans must  
16          provide to the Department, per administrative rule,  
17          verification of their service. The Department shall  
18          establish what constitutes suitable verification of  
19          service for the purpose of issuing 3-year fishing licenses  
20          to resident veterans at a reduced fee.

21          (a-5) The fee for all sport fishing licenses shall be  
22          \$1 for an annual license and 3 times the annual fee for a  
23          3-year license for residents over 75 years of age.

24          (b) All residents before using any commercial fishing  
25          device shall obtain a commercial fishing license, the fee  
26          for which shall be \$60<sub>+</sub> and a resident fishing license,

1 the fee for which is \$14.50. Each and every commercial  
2 device used shall be licensed by a resident commercial  
3 fisherman as follows:

4 (1) For each 100 lineal yards, or fraction  
5 thereof, of seine the fee is \$18. For each minnow  
6 seine, minnow trap, or net for commercial purposes the  
7 fee is \$20.

8 (2) For each device to fish with a 100 hook trot  
9 line device, basket trap, hoop net, or dip net the fee  
10 is \$3.

11 (3) When used in the waters of Lake Michigan, for  
12 the first 2000 lineal feet, or fraction thereof, of  
13 gill net the fee is \$10; and for each 1000 additional  
14 lineal feet, or fraction thereof, the fee is \$10.  
15 These fees shall apply to all gill nets in use in the  
16 water or on drying reels on the shore.

17 (4) For each 100 lineal yards, or fraction  
18 thereof, of gill net or trammel net the fee is \$18.

19 (c) Residents of this State may obtain a sportsmen's  
20 combination license that shall entitle the holder to the  
21 same non-commercial fishing privileges as residents  
22 holding a license as described in subsection (a) of this  
23 Section and to the same hunting privileges as residents  
24 holding a license to hunt all species as described in  
25 Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code. No sportsmen's  
26 combination license shall be issued to any individual who

1 would be ineligible for either the fishing or hunting  
2 license separately. The sportsmen's combination license  
3 fee shall be \$25.50. For residents age 65 or older, the fee  
4 is one-half of the fee charged for a sportsmen's  
5 combination license. For resident veterans of the United  
6 States Armed Forces after returning from service abroad or  
7 mobilization by the President of the United States as an  
8 active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the  
9 Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United  
10 States Armed Forces, the fee, commencing with the 2012  
11 license year, is one-half of the fee charged for a  
12 sportsmen's combination license. Veterans must provide to  
13 the Department acceptable verification of their service.  
14 The Department shall establish by administrative rule the  
15 procedure by which such verification of service shall be  
16 made to the Department for the purpose of issuing  
17 sportsmen's combination licenses to resident veterans at a  
18 reduced fee.

19 (c-5) Residents of this State may obtain a 3-year  
20 sportsmen's combination license that shall entitle the  
21 holder to the same non-commercial fishing privileges as  
22 residents holding a license as described in subsection  
23 (a-3) and to the same hunting privileges as residents  
24 holding a license to hunt all species as described in  
25 Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code. A 3-year sportsmen's  
26 combination license shall not be issued to any individual

1 who would be ineligible for either the fishing or hunting  
2 license separately. The 3-year sportsmen's combination  
3 license fee shall be 3 times the annual fee. For residents  
4 age 65 or older, the fee is one-half of the fee charged for  
5 a 3-year sportsmen's combination license. For resident  
6 veterans of the United States Armed Forces after returning  
7 from service abroad or mobilization by the President of  
8 the United States, the fee is one-half of the fee charged  
9 for a 3-year sportsmen's combination license. Veterans  
10 must provide to the Department, per administrative rule,  
11 verification of their service. The Department shall  
12 establish what constitutes suitable verification of  
13 service for the purpose of issuing 3-year sportsmen's  
14 combination licenses to resident veterans at a reduced  
15 fee.

16 (d) For 24 hours of fishing by sport fishing devices  
17 as defined in Section 10-95 or by spearing devices as  
18 defined in Section 10-110 the fee is \$5. This license does  
19 not exempt the licensee from the requirement for a salmon  
20 or inland trout stamp. The licenses provided for by this  
21 subsection are not required for residents of the State of  
22 Illinois who have obtained the license provided for in  
23 subsection (a) or (a-3) of this Section.

24 (e) All residents before using any commercial mussel  
25 device shall obtain a commercial mussel license, the fee  
26 for which shall be \$50.

1 (f) Residents of this State, upon establishing  
2 residency as required by the Department, may obtain a  
3 lifetime hunting or fishing license or lifetime  
4 sportsmen's combination license which shall entitle the  
5 holder to the same non-commercial fishing privileges as  
6 residents holding a license as described in subsection  
7 ~~paragraph~~ (a) of this Section and to the same hunting  
8 privileges as residents holding a license to hunt all  
9 species as described in Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code.  
10 No lifetime sportsmen's combination license shall be  
11 issued to or retained by any individual who would be  
12 ineligible for either the fishing or hunting license  
13 separately, either upon issuance, or in any year a  
14 violation would subject an individual to have either or  
15 both fishing or hunting privileges rescinded. The lifetime  
16 hunting and fishing license fees shall be as follows:

17 (1) Lifetime fishing: 30 x the current fishing  
18 license fee.

19 (2) Lifetime hunting: 30 x the current hunting  
20 license fee.

21 (3) Lifetime sportsmen's combination license: 30 x  
22 the current sportsmen's combination license fee.

23 Lifetime licenses shall not be refundable. A \$10 fee shall  
24 be charged for reissuing any lifetime license. The Department  
25 may establish rules and regulations for the issuance and use  
26 of lifetime licenses and may suspend or revoke any lifetime

1 license issued under this Section for violations of those  
2 rules or regulations or other provisions under this Code or  
3 the Wildlife Code, or a violation of the United States Code  
4 that involves the taking, possessing, killing, harvesting,  
5 transportation, selling, exporting, or importing any fish or  
6 aquatic life protected by this Code or the taking, possessing,  
7 killing, harvesting, transportation, selling, exporting, or  
8 importing any fauna protected by the Wildlife Code when any  
9 part of the United States Code violation occurred in Illinois.  
10 Individuals under 16 years of age who possess a lifetime  
11 hunting or sportsmen's combination license shall have in their  
12 possession, while in the field, a certificate of competency as  
13 required under Section 3.2 of the Wildlife Code. Any lifetime  
14 license issued under this Section shall not exempt individuals  
15 from obtaining additional stamps or permits required under the  
16 provisions of this Code or the Wildlife Code. Individuals  
17 required to purchase additional stamps shall sign the stamps  
18 and have them in their possession while fishing or hunting  
19 with a lifetime license. All fees received from the issuance  
20 of lifetime licenses shall be deposited in the Fish and  
21 Wildlife Endowment Fund.

22 Except for licenses issued under subsection (e) of this  
23 Section, all licenses provided for in this Section shall  
24 expire on March 31 of each year, except that the license  
25 provided for in subsection (d) of this Section shall expire 24  
26 hours after the effective date and time listed on the face of

1 the license. Licenses issued under subsection (a-3) or (c-5)  
2 shall expire on March 31 of the 2nd year after the year in  
3 which the license is issued.

4 The Department shall by administrative rule provide for  
5 the automatic renewal of a fishing license upon the request of  
6 the applicant.

7 All individuals required to have and failing to have the  
8 license provided for in subsection (a), (a-3), or (d) of this  
9 Section shall be fined according to the provisions of Section  
10 20-35 of this Code.

11 All individuals required to have and failing to have the  
12 licenses provided for in subsections (b) and (e) of this  
13 Section shall be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor.

14 (g) For the purposes of this Section, "acceptable  
15 verification" means official documentation from the Department  
16 of Defense or the appropriate Major Command showing  
17 mobilization dates or service abroad dates, including: (i) a  
18 DD-214, (ii) a letter from the Illinois Department of Military  
19 Affairs for members of the Illinois National Guard, (iii) a  
20 letter from the Regional Reserve Command for members of the  
21 Armed Forces Reserve, (iv) a letter from the Major Command  
22 covering Illinois for active duty members, (v) personnel  
23 records for mobilized State employees, and (vi) any other  
24 documentation that the Department, by administrative rule,  
25 deems acceptable to establish dates of mobilization or service  
26 abroad.

1 For the purposes of this Section, the term "service  
2 abroad" means active duty service outside of the 50 United  
3 States and the District of Columbia, and includes all active  
4 duty service in territories and possessions of the United  
5 States.

6 (Source: P.A. 102-780, eff. 5-13-22; 102-837, eff. 5-13-22;  
7 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-456, eff. 1-1-24; revised 7-3-25.)

8 Section 10. The Wildlife Code is amended by changing  
9 Section 3.2 as follows:

10 (520 ILCS 5/3.2) (from Ch. 61, par. 3.2)

11 Sec. 3.2. Hunting license; application; instruction.  
12 Before the Department or any county, city, village, township,  
13 incorporated town clerk or the clerk's duly designated agent  
14 or any other person authorized or designated by the Department  
15 to issue hunting licenses shall issue a hunting license to any  
16 person, the person shall file the person's application with  
17 the Department or other party authorized to issue licenses on  
18 a form provided by the Department and further give definite  
19 proof of identity and place of legal residence. Each clerk  
20 designating agents to issue licenses and stamps shall furnish  
21 the Department, within 10 days following the appointment, the  
22 names and mailing addresses of the agents. Each clerk or the  
23 clerk's duly designated agent shall be authorized to sell  
24 licenses and stamps only within the territorial area for which

1 the clerk was elected or appointed. No duly designated agent  
2 is authorized to furnish licenses or stamps for issuance by  
3 any other business establishment. Each application shall be  
4 executed and sworn to and shall set forth the name and  
5 description of the applicant and place of residence.

6 No hunting license shall be issued to any person born on or  
7 after January 1, 1980 unless that person presents the person  
8 who is authorized to issue the license evidence that the  
9 person seeking the license has held a hunting license issued  
10 by the State of Illinois in a prior year, or a certificate of  
11 competency as provided in this Section. Persons under 18 years  
12 of age may be issued a Lifetime Hunting or Sportsmen's  
13 Combination License as provided under Section 20-45 of the  
14 Fish and Aquatic Life Code but shall not be entitled to hunt  
15 alone, without the supervision of an adult age 21 or older,  
16 unless they have a certificate of competency as provided in  
17 this Section and the certificate is in their possession while  
18 hunting.

19 The Department of Natural Resources shall authorize  
20 personnel of the Department or certified volunteer instructors  
21 to conduct courses, of not less than 10 hours in length, in  
22 firearms and hunter safety, which may include training in bow  
23 and arrow safety, at regularly specified intervals throughout  
24 the State. Persons successfully completing the course shall  
25 receive a certificate of competency. The Department of Natural  
26 Resources may further cooperate with any reputable association

1 or organization in establishing courses if the organization  
2 has as one of its objectives the promotion of safety in the  
3 handling of firearms or bow and arrow.

4 The Department of Natural Resources shall designate any  
5 person found by it to be competent to give instruction in the  
6 handling of firearms, hunter safety, and bow and arrow. The  
7 persons so appointed shall give the course of instruction and  
8 upon the successful completion shall issue to the person  
9 instructed a certificate of competency in the safe handling of  
10 firearms, hunter safety, and bow and arrow. No charge shall be  
11 made for any course of instruction except for materials or  
12 ammunition consumed. The Department of Natural Resources shall  
13 furnish information on the requirements of hunter safety  
14 education programs to be distributed free of charge to  
15 applicants for hunting licenses by the persons appointed and  
16 authorized to issue licenses. Funds for the conducting of  
17 firearms and hunter safety courses shall be taken from the fee  
18 charged for the Firearm Owners Identification Card.

19 The fee for a hunting license to hunt all species for a  
20 resident of Illinois is \$12. For residents age 65 or older,  
21 ~~and, commencing with the 2012 license year, resident veterans~~  
22 ~~of the United States Armed Forces after returning from service~~  
23 ~~abroad or mobilization by the President of the United States~~  
24 ~~as an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the~~  
25 ~~Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United States~~  
26 ~~Armed Forces,~~ the fee is one-half of the fee charged for a

1 hunting license to hunt all species for a resident of  
2 Illinois. On and after the effective date of this amendatory  
3 Act of the 104th General Assembly, the fee for a hunting  
4 license to hunt all species is \$5 for resident veterans of the  
5 United States Armed Forces after returning from service abroad  
6 or mobilization by the President of the United States as an  
7 active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the  
8 Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United States  
9 Armed Forces. Veterans must provide to the Department  
10 acceptable verification of their service. The Department shall  
11 establish by administrative rule the procedure by which such  
12 verification of service shall be made to the Department for  
13 the purpose of issuing resident veterans hunting licenses at a  
14 reduced fee. The fee for a hunting license to hunt all species  
15 shall be \$1 for residents over 75 years of age. Nonresidents  
16 shall be charged \$57 for a hunting license.

17 Residents of this State may obtain a 3-year hunting  
18 license to hunt all species as described in Section 3.1 for 3  
19 times the annual fee. For residents age 65 or older ~~and~~  
20 ~~resident veterans of the United States Armed Forces after~~  
21 ~~returning from service abroad or mobilization by the President~~  
22 ~~of the United States,~~ the fee is one-half of the fee charged  
23 for a 3-year hunting license to hunt all species as described  
24 in Section 3.1 for a resident of this State. Veterans must  
25 provide to the Department, per administrative rule,  
26 verification of their service. For resident veterans of the

1 United States Armed Forces after returning from service abroad  
2 or mobilization by the President of the United States, the fee  
3 is \$5. The Department shall establish what constitutes  
4 suitable verification of service for the purpose of issuing  
5 resident veterans 3-year hunting licenses at a reduced fee.

6 Nonresidents may be issued a nonresident hunting license  
7 for a period not to exceed 10 consecutive days' hunting in the  
8 State and shall be charged a fee of \$35.

9 A special nonresident hunting license authorizing a  
10 nonresident to take game birds by hunting on a game breeding  
11 and hunting preserve area only, established under Section  
12 3.27, shall be issued upon proper application being made and  
13 payment of a fee equal to that for a resident hunting license.  
14 The expiration date of this license shall be on the same date  
15 each year that game breeding and hunting preserve area  
16 licenses expire.

17 Each applicant for a State Migratory Waterfowl Stamp,  
18 regardless of the applicant's residence or other condition,  
19 shall pay a fee of \$15 and shall receive a stamp. The fee for a  
20 State Migratory Waterfowl Stamp shall be waived for residents  
21 over 75 years of age. Except as provided under Section 20-45 of  
22 the Fish and Aquatic Life Code, the stamp shall be signed by  
23 the person or affixed to the person's license or permit in a  
24 space designated by the Department for that purpose.

25 Each applicant for a State Habitat Stamp, regardless of  
26 the applicant's residence or other condition, shall pay a fee

1 of \$5 and shall receive a stamp. The fee for a State Habitat  
2 Stamp shall be waived for residents over 75 years of age.  
3 Except as provided under Section 20-45 of the Fish and Aquatic  
4 Life Code, the stamp shall be signed by the person or affixed  
5 to the person's license or permit in a space designated by the  
6 Department for that purpose.

7 Nothing in this Section shall be construed as to require  
8 the purchase of more than one State Habitat Stamp by any person  
9 in any one license year.

10 The fees for State Pheasant Stamps and State Furbearer  
11 Stamps shall be waived for residents over 75 years of age.

12 The Department shall furnish the holders of hunting  
13 licenses and stamps with an insignia as evidence of possession  
14 of license, or license and stamp, as the Department may  
15 consider advisable. The insignia shall be exhibited and used  
16 as the Department may order.

17 All other hunting licenses and all State stamps shall  
18 expire upon March 31 of each year. Three-year hunting licenses  
19 shall expire on March 31 of the 2nd year after the year in  
20 which the license is issued.

21 Every person holding any license, permit, or stamp issued  
22 under the provisions of this Act shall have it in the person's  
23 possession for immediate presentation for inspection to the  
24 officers and authorized employees of the Department, any  
25 sheriff, deputy sheriff, or any other peace officer making a  
26 demand for it. This provision shall not apply to Department

1 owned or managed sites where it is required that all hunters  
2 deposit their license, permit, or Firearm Owner's  
3 Identification Card at the check station upon entering the  
4 hunting areas.

5 For the purposes of this Section, "acceptable  
6 verification" means official documentation from the Department  
7 of Defense or the appropriate Major Command showing  
8 mobilization dates or service abroad dates, including: (i) a  
9 DD-214, (ii) a letter from the Illinois Department of Military  
10 Affairs for members of the Illinois National Guard, (iii) a  
11 letter from the Regional Reserve Command for members of the  
12 Armed Forces Reserve, (iv) a letter from the Major Command  
13 covering Illinois for active duty members, (v) personnel  
14 records for mobilized State employees, and (vi) any other  
15 documentation that the Department, by administrative rule,  
16 deems acceptable to establish dates of mobilization or service  
17 abroad.

18 For the purposes of this Section, the term "service  
19 abroad" means active duty service outside of the 50 United  
20 States and the District of Columbia, and includes all active  
21 duty service in territories and possessions of the United  
22 States.

23 (Source: P.A. 103-456, eff. 1-1-24; 104-325, eff. 1-1-26.)