

CHAPTER 12
SPECIAL NONRESIDENT DEER AND TURKEY LICENSES

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 12/17/30

561—12.1(483A) Purpose. These rules establish the process by which the department will issue special nonresident deer and turkey licenses to individuals as part of statewide or local efforts to promote the state and its natural resources.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.2(483A) Definitions. When used in this chapter:

“Approved organization” means an organization that is incorporated under Iowa Code chapter 504 as a nonprofit organization, whose mission involves providing hunting experiences for disabled veterans and military personnel.

“Conservation organization” means an organization that is incorporated under Iowa Code chapter 504 as a nonprofit organization, whose mission emphasizes natural resource conservation or supports science-based natural resource management or who provides educational outreach efforts in Iowa related to environmental stewardship or natural resources conservation and management. A local or state chapter or division of a national or international conservation organization shall qualify as a conservation organization. A person who purchases a deer license from a conservation organization under these rules is not subject to the restriction provided in 12.5(1)“b.”

“Coordinator” means the department staff person appointed by the director to administer the process for allocation of special nonresident deer and turkey licenses pursuant to this chapter.

“Department” means the department of natural resources.

“Director” means the director of the department of natural resources.

“Nonresident disabled veteran or disabled member of the armed forces” means a person who is a veteran and who has an assigned service-related disability rating of 30 percent or more by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; or a person who is a member of the armed forces serving on active federal duty currently participating in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES).

“Outdoor industry” means a commercial enterprise or venture that promotes or otherwise contributes to the use of natural resources. A business that solely provides guide or outfitter services is not an outdoor industry.

“Program” means the review and selection process through which special nonresident deer and turkey licenses are allocated in accordance with Iowa Code section 483A.24 and these rules.

“Review committee” means the committee that ranks certain requests for special licenses for consideration by the director or the director’s designee and consists of the following: the administrator of the conservation and recreation division, the chief of the wildlife bureau, the chief of the law enforcement bureau, the chair of the natural resource commission, and the vice-chair of the natural resource commission.

“Special licenses” means the special nonresident deer licenses and special nonresident turkey licenses issued pursuant to these rules.

“Special nonresident deer license” means a deer license issued pursuant to Iowa Code section 483A.24(3).

“Special nonresident turkey license” means a turkey license issued pursuant to Iowa Code section 483A.24(4).

“Sponsor” means an entity that applies on behalf of one or more hunters. Sponsors shall either conduct business in Iowa and be registered with the secretary of state or have some other affiliation with the state of Iowa.

“Statewide signature event organization” means an authority of the state with a foundation dedicated to a mission of making capital improvements on state property or that serves as a major platform for the promotion of Iowa’s agriculture, culture, and natural resources.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.3(483A) Availability of special licenses.

12.3(1) The program shall be available to provide no more than the number of special licenses allowed by Iowa Code section 483A.24 to nonresidents through requests submitted by individual hunters, through a sponsor, or through an approved organization.

12.3(2) A statewide signature event organization shall receive one special nonresident deer license upon application. The statewide signature event organization shall return to the department the greater amount of either one-half of the proceeds from its sale of the special nonresident deer license or the fee for a nonresident deer license as set forth in Iowa Code section 483A.1. The department's proceeds shall cover the cost of the special nonresident deer license. A license made available to a statewide signature event organization in accordance with this subrule may be valid for up to two years after selection of the organization by the director or the director's designee. The statewide signature event organization shall notify the coordinator immediately following the sale of the special nonresident deer license of which year and for what season the special nonresident deer license will be used.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.4(483A) Coordinator duties. The coordinator of the program shall:

12.4(1) Assist the review committee in the evaluation and selection of hunters who may receive special licenses.

12.4(2) Develop templates for requests for special licenses and provide the templates to hunters, sponsors, and approved organizations upon request.

12.4(3) Convene the review committee to rank hunters according to the criteria in 561—12.7(483A).

12.4(4) Summarize each request received and distribute the summaries to the review committee and the director or the director's designee.

12.4(5) Establish the date on which applications for special licenses for disabled veterans and disabled active military personnel are due, establish the dates on which the director or the director's designee will select the conservation organizations and hunters who will receive special licenses, and inform the conservation organizations, the approved organizations and the hunters of their selection.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.5(483A) Request, review, and selection process for promotional special licenses.

12.5(1) *Submission of requests.*

a. Individual hunters or sponsors shall submit a request, or requests, to the coordinator.

b. Applicants will not qualify for a deer license under this rule if they were issued a deer license under this rule the previous year.

c. Hunters awarded a deer license under this rule may purchase preference points for the regular nonresident deer license and shall not lose those preference points when awarded a deer license under this rule.

12.5(2) *Review.* The review committee shall review the summaries prepared by the coordinator, rank the hunters according to criteria in 561—12.7(483A), and forward the rankings to the director or the director's designee for consideration and final selection. The review committee shall exercise its discretion and, in addition to the criteria in 561—12.7(483A), shall also consider the following:

a. Requests that demonstrate little or no promotion of the state of Iowa or its natural resources shall not be included in the rankings forwarded to or considered by the director or the director's designee.

b. Requests from a sponsor, a sponsor-related entity, or hunter that has been found guilty of a game violation in Iowa or elsewhere within the past five years or that, in the opinion of the review committee, has exhibited poor hunting ethics or judgment shall not be considered for a special license.

c. Review of requests shall occur at least once annually but may occur more frequently as needed based upon the number of requests and the dates by which they are received.

12.5(3) *Selection and payment.* Upon notice of selection to receive a special license, the sponsor or hunter shall make payment in accordance with 561—12.12(483A) to the department through the coordinator.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.6(483A) Consideration of requests for promotional special licenses. The review committee will recommend to the director or the director's designee which conservation organizations are best qualified to promote the state and its natural resources. In making recommendations to the director or the director's designee, the review committee will base its recommendations on the expected ability of hunters to promote the state and its natural resources and, if applicable, based on the degree of success special license holders have had in previous years or seasons in promoting the state and its natural resources. By way of illustration, the committee may consider requests from the following:

12.6(1) A hunter who has a direct beneficial impact on the state through an arm's-length business relationship with an Iowa-based outdoor industry.

12.6(2) A conservation organization that will use the special nonresident deer license as a fundraiser for that organization. A conservation organization shall be limited to one special nonresident deer license per year, whether the organization is a local or state chapter or division of a national or international conservation organization. The organization shall return to the department the greater amount of either one-half of the proceeds from its sale of the special nonresident deer license or the fee for a nonresident deer license as set forth in Iowa Code section 483A.1. The department's proceeds shall cover the cost of the special nonresident deer license. A license made available to a conservation organization in accordance with this subrule may be valid for up to two years after selection of the organization by the director or the director's designee. The sponsoring conservation organization shall notify the coordinator immediately following the sale of the special nonresident deer license of which year and for what season the special nonresident deer license will be used. The conservation organization shall specifically explain how and during what period the organization will market the special nonresident deer license for auction or some other legal fundraiser.

12.6(3) A hunter nominated by the governor or a member of the Iowa legislature.

12.6(4) A hunter recommended by the department.

12.6(5) A hunter who is a well-known public figure nationally or regionally and who may provide a positive portrayal of the state and its natural resources.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.7(483A) Ranking criteria for promotional special licenses.

12.7(1) The following criteria shall be used by the review committee to rank individual hunters as identified in 12.6(1), 12.6(4) and 12.6(5). The rankings shall be determined as the average of the following rating points and will be provided to the director or the director's designee as an aid in determining the selection of hunters.

a. Five points if the hunter is directly affiliated with an Iowa-based outdoor industry.

b. From 0 to 10 points for the following:

(1) The relative size of the hunter's potential audience.

(2) The hunter's proposal to promote the state and its natural resources.

(3) If the hunter has received a special license in the past, the value of the actual promotion of the state and its natural resources or special services provided as a result.

c. From 0 to 5 points if the hunter meets the description in 12.6(5).

12.7(2) A conservation organization's request shall be forwarded to the director or the director's designee if the conservation organization meets the definition in 561—12.2(483A) and approval shall be based on evaluation of the organization's prior performance, if any, in selling the special nonresident deer license.

12.7(3) Hunters as identified in 12.6(3) shall not be ranked by the review committee, and their requests will be forwarded to the director or the director's designee for consideration.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.8(483A) License term for promotional special licenses. With the exception of the term provided for in 12.6(2), special licenses issued under these rules shall be valid for only the applicable deer or turkey season immediately following allocation of the license.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.9(483A) Reporting by recipients of promotional special licenses. Within eight months after a hunter's participation in a hunt with a license issued pursuant to this chapter, the sponsor or hunter shall provide to the coordinator information about the hunt to demonstrate how the hunt will provide or has provided promotion of the state and its natural resources. The director or the director's designee may consider compliance with this reporting requirement in evaluating future requests.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.10(483A) License costs for promotional special licenses. With the exception provided in 12.6(2) for conservation organizations, a nonresident who obtains a special license issued pursuant to this chapter shall pay the applicable fee as follows:

12.10(1) For a special nonresident deer license, the fee described in Iowa Code section 483A.1 for a deer hunting license, antlered or any sex deer.

12.10(2) For a special nonresident turkey license, the fee described in Iowa Code section 483A.1 for a wild turkey hunting license.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.11(483A) Request, review, and selection processes for special licenses for nonresident disabled veterans or disabled members of the armed forces.

12.11(1) Submission of requests.

a. Individual hunters or approved organizations shall submit a request, or requests, to the coordinator.
b. Applicants will not qualify for a deer or turkey license under this rule if they were issued a deer or turkey license under this rule the previous year. However, if there are unclaimed deer or turkey licenses under this rule, then the coordinator may keep a list of applicants who received licenses the previous year and who apply for the current year, and process those applicants' applications to determine the recipients of the unclaimed licenses.

c. Hunters awarded a deer license under this rule may purchase preference points for the regular nonresident deer license and shall not lose those preference points when awarded a deer license under this rule.

12.11(2) Review. After the established deadlines have passed, the coordinator shall review the applications for completeness and shall process the complete applications to determine the recipients of the special licenses. The coordinator shall exercise discretion and shall also consider the following:

a. Requests from an approved organization or hunter that has been found guilty of a game violation in Iowa or elsewhere shall not be considered for a special license.

b. If special licenses are unclaimed after the established deadlines, the coordinator may set new deadlines and inform participating approved organizations that licenses are still available.

12.11(3) Selection and payment. Upon notice of selection to receive a special license, the approved organization or hunter shall make payment in accordance with 561—12.17(483A) to the department through the coordinator.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.12(483A) License term for disabled veteran and military special licenses. Special deer or turkey licenses issued under these rules shall be valid for only the applicable deer or turkey season immediately following allocation of the license.

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

561—12.13(483A) License costs for disabled veteran and military special licenses. A nonresident who obtains a special license issued pursuant to this chapter shall pay the applicable fee as follows:

12.13(1) For a special nonresident deer hunting antlered or any sex deer license or a turkey hunting license, the fee described in Iowa Code section 483A.24(5) "c."

12.13(2) For a special nonresident hunting license that includes the wildlife habitat fee, the fee described in Iowa Code section 483A.24(5) "d."

[ARC 9704C, IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 483A.24.

[Filed ARC 7814B (Notice ARC 7652B, IAB 3/25/09), IAB 6/3/09, effective 7/8/09]

[Filed ARC 8753B (Notice ARC 8595B, IAB 3/10/10), IAB 5/19/10, effective 6/23/10]

[Filed ARC 2379C (Notice ARC 2132C, IAB 9/2/15), IAB 2/3/16, effective 3/9/16]

[Filed ARC 5517C (Notice ARC 5379C, IAB 1/13/21), IAB 3/10/21, effective 4/14/21]

[Filed ARC 9704C (Amended Notice ARC 9426C, IAB 7/23/25; Notice ARC 8646C, IAB 1/8/25),
IAB 11/12/25, effective 12/17/25]