

CHAPTER 98  
WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING  
[Prior to 12/31/86, Conservation Commission[290] Ch 111]

RESIDENT WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING

**571—98.1(483A) General.** Wild turkey may be taken during the spring season subject to the following:

**98.1(1) License.** When hunting wild turkey, all hunters must have in possession a wild turkey spring hunting license valid for the current year, the unused transportation tag issued with that license, a hunting license, and evidence of having paid the habitat fee (if normally required to have a hunting license and to pay the habitat fee to hunt). No one, while hunting wild turkey, shall carry or have in possession any license or transportation tag issued to another hunter. No one who is issued a wild turkey license and transportation tag shall allow another person to use or possess that license or transportation tag while turkey hunting or tagging a turkey. A hunter having a license valid for one of the spring turkey seasons may accompany, call for, or otherwise assist any other hunter who has a valid turkey hunting license for any of the spring seasons. The hunter who is assisting may not shoot a turkey or carry a firearm or bow unless the hunter has a valid license with an unused tag for the current season.

*a. Two types of licenses will be issued.*

(1) Combination shotgun-or-archery license. Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses shall be issued by season and shall be valid statewide in the designated season only.

(2) Archery-only license. Archery-only licenses shall be valid statewide and shall be valid during all seasons open for spring turkey hunting, except the youth season.

*b. Number of licenses.* No one may apply for or obtain more than two paid spring wild turkey hunting licenses. A hunter may obtain no more than two combination shotgun-or-archery licenses, or two archery-only licenses, or one of each. If two paid combination shotgun-or-archery licenses are obtained, at least one must be for season 4. If one paid combination shotgun-or-archery license and one archery-only license are obtained, the combination shotgun-or-archery license must be for season 4.

**98.1(2) Daily bag and possession limit.** Season possession limit, including daily bag limit, is one bearded (or male) wild turkey per license.

**98.1(3) Shooting hours.** Shooting hours shall be from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

**571—98.2(483A) Means and method of take.**

**98.2(1) Permitted weapons.** Wild turkey may be taken in accordance with the type of license issued as follows:

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery license.* Wild turkey may be taken by shotgun or muzzleloading shotgun not smaller than 20-gauge and shooting only shot sizes number 4 through 8 lead or nontoxic shot; and by bow and arrow as defined in paragraph 98.2(1)“b.” A person shall not have shotshells containing shot of any size other than number 4 through 8 lead or nontoxic shot on the person while hunting wild turkey.

*b. Archery-only license.* Except for crossbows for persons with certain afflictions of the upper body, as provided in 571—15.22(481A), only longbow, compound, or recurve bows shooting broadhead arrows are permitted. Blunthead arrows with a minimum diameter of 9/16 inch may also be used. Arrows must be at least 18 inches long. No explosive or chemical devices may be attached to the arrow, broadhead, or blunthead.

**98.2(2) Prohibited devices.** The use of live decoys, dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, aircraft, bait, crossbows, except as otherwise provided, and the use or aid of recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds are prohibited. Paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may hunt from any stationary motor-driven land conveyance. “Paraplegic” means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with the involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord. “Bait” means grain, fruit, vegetables, nuts or any other natural food materials; commercial products containing natural food

products; or by-products of such materials transported to or placed in an area for the intent of attracting wildlife.

**98.2(3) Zones.** A person with a resident wild turkey spring hunting license may take wild turkey statewide.

**98.2(4) Seasons.** Seasons will be established in accordance with the type of license issued.

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.* Consecutive seasons are 4, 5, 7, and 19 days, respectively, with the first season beginning on the second Monday of April. These seasons shall be designated as seasons 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively.

*b. Archery-only licenses.* The season shall be 35 days beginning on the Monday closest to April 15.

[ARC 9656B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 9/14/11; ARC 3832C, IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]

**571—98.3(483A) Procedures to obtain licenses.** All spring wild turkey hunting licenses will be sold using the electronic licensing system for Iowa (ELSI). Licenses may be purchased through ELSI license agents, by calling the ELSI telephone ordering system, or through the ELSI Internet license sales website.

**98.3(1)** Spring wild turkey hunting licenses will be sold beginning December 15 through the last day of the season for which the license is valid.

**98.3(2)** License quotas. There will be no quotas for combination shotgun-or-archery licenses or for archery-only licenses for resident hunters.

**98.3(3)** Landowner/tenant licenses. An eligible landowner or tenant may obtain a free combination shotgun-or-archery license or a free archery-only license. Nonresident landowners are not eligible for free turkey hunting licenses.

*a. Free combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.* A free combination shotgun-or-archery license will be issued by season and will be valid only on the farm unit of the landowner or tenant.

*b. Free archery-only licenses.* A free archery-only license will be valid for all seasons but only on the farm unit of the landowner or tenant.

*c. Number of licenses.* One paid combination shotgun-or-archery license or one paid archery-only license may be obtained in addition to the free shotgun-or-archery license or the free archery-only license. If a free archery-only license and a paid combination shotgun-or-archery license are obtained, the shotgun-or-archery license must be for season 4. If a free shotgun-or-archery license and a paid shotgun-or-archery license are obtained, one of the licenses must be for season 4.

**571—98.4(483A) Transportation tag.** Immediately upon the killing of a wild turkey, the transportation tag issued with the license and bearing the license number of the licensee, year of issuance, and date of kill properly shown shall be visibly attached to one leg of the turkey. The hunter who shot the turkey must use the transportation tag issued to that hunter to tag the turkey. No one may tag a turkey with a transportation tag issued to another hunter. The tag must be attached in such a manner that it cannot be removed without mutilating or destroying the tag. The tag must be attached before the carcass can be moved in any manner from the place of kill. The transportation tag shall remain affixed to the leg of the turkey until the turkey is processed for consumption. The leg that bears the tag must be attached to the carcass of any wild turkey being transported within the state during any wild turkey spring hunting season. The tag shall be proof of possession of the carcass by the above-mentioned licensee.

**571—98.5(483A) Eligibility for free landowner/tenant turkey licenses.**

**98.5(1) Who qualifies for a free turkey hunting license.**

*a.* Owners and tenants of a farm unit and the spouse or domestic partner as defined by the Iowa department of administrative services and juvenile child of an owner or tenant who reside with the owner or tenant are eligible for free turkey licenses. The owner or tenant does not have to reside on the farm unit but must be actively engaged in farming it. Nonresident landowners do not qualify.

*b.* “Juvenile child” means a person less than 18 years of age or a person who is 18 or 19 years of age and is in full-time attendance at an accredited school pursuing a course of study leading to a

high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma. A person 18 years of age or older who has received a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma does not qualify.

**98.5(2) *Who qualifies as a tenant.*** A “tenant” is a person other than the landowner who is actively engaged in the operation of the farm. The tenant may be a member of the landowner’s family, including in some circumstances the landowner’s spouse or child, or a third party who is not a family member. The tenant does not have to reside on the farm unit.

**98.5(3) *Definition of “actively engaged in farming.”*** Landowners and tenants are “actively engaged in farming” if they personally participate in decisions about farm operations and those decisions, along with external factors such as weather and market prices, determine their profit or loss for the products they produce. Tenants qualify if they farm land owned by another and pay rent in cash or in kind. A farm manager or other third party that operates a farm for a fee or a laborer who works on the farm for a wage and is not a family member does not qualify as a tenant.

**98.5(4) *Landowners who qualify as active farmers.*** These landowners:

- a. Are the sole operator of a farm unit (along with immediate family members); or
- b. Make all decisions about farm operations, but contract for custom farming or hire labor to do some or all of the work; or
- c. Participate annually in decisions about farm operations such as negotiations with federal farm agencies or negotiations about cropping practices on specific fields that are rented to a tenant; or
- d. Raise specialty crops from operations such as orchards, nurseries, or tree farms that do not necessarily produce annual income but require annual operating decisions about maintenance or improvements; or
- e. May have portions of the farm enrolled in a long-term land retirement program such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as long as other farm operations occur annually; or
- f. Place their entire cropland in the CRP or other long-term land retirement program with no other active farming operation occurring on the farm.

**98.5(5) *Landowners who do not qualify.*** These landowners:

- a. Use a farm manager or other third party to operate the farm; or
- b. Cash rent the entire farm to a tenant who is responsible for all farm operations including following preapproved operations plans.

**98.5(6) *Where free licenses are valid.*** A free license is valid only on the farm unit of the landowner or tenant. “Farm unit” means all parcels of land that are at least two contiguous acres in size, that are operated as a unit for agricultural purposes, and that are under lawful control of the landowner or tenant regardless of how that land is subdivided for business purposes. Individual parcels of land do not need to be adjacent to one another to be included in the farm unit. “Agricultural purposes” includes but is not limited to field crops, livestock, horticultural crops (e.g., from nurseries, orchards, truck farms, or Christmas tree plantations), and land managed for timber production.

**98.5(7) *How many free licenses may be obtained.*** The maximum number of free licenses for the spring turkey season is two per farm unit, one for the landowner (or family member) and one for the tenant (or family member). If there is no tenant, the landowner’s family may obtain only one license. A tenant or the tenant’s family is entitled to only one free license even if the tenant farms land for more than one landowner.

**98.5(8) *Registration of landowners and tenants.*** Landowners and tenants and their eligible family members who want to obtain free spring wild turkey hunting licenses must register with DNR before the free licenses will be issued. Procedures for registering are described in 571—95.2(481A).

#### **571—98.6(483A) Youth spring wild turkey hunt.**

**98.6(1) *Licenses.*** A special youth spring wild turkey hunting license valid statewide may be issued to any Iowa resident who is 15 years old or younger on the date the youth purchases the license. The youth license may be paid or free to persons eligible for free licenses. If the youth obtains a free landowner/tenant license, it will count as the one free license for which the youth’s family is eligible. Each participating youth must be accompanied by an adult who possesses a valid wild turkey spring hunting license for one of the seasons and a hunting license, and has paid the habitat fee (if the adult is

normally required to have a hunting license and to pay the habitat fee to hunt). The accompanying adult must not possess a firearm or bow and must be in the direct company of the youth at all times. A person may obtain only one youth turkey hunting license but may also obtain one archery-only license or one combination shotgun-or-archery license for season 4.

**98.6(2) *Youth season dates.*** The youth turkey hunting license shall be valid during the three days immediately before the first turkey season. A person who is issued a youth spring wild turkey hunting license and does not take a wild turkey during the youth spring wild turkey hunting season may use the wild turkey hunting license and unused tag during any remaining spring wild turkey hunting season in the year in which the youth license was issued.

**98.6(3) *Limits and license quotas.*** An unlimited number of licenses may be issued. The daily and season bag and possession limit is one bearded (or male) wild turkey.

**98.6(4) *Method of take and other regulations.*** Wild turkeys may be taken with shotguns, muzzleloaded shotguns or bows as described in 571—98.2(483A). All other spring wild turkey hunting regulations for residents shall apply.

**98.6(5) *Procedures for obtaining licenses.*** Paid and free youth season licenses may be obtained through ELSI beginning December 15 through the last day of the youth season.

[ARC 9656B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 9/14/11; ARC 3832C, IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]

**571—98.7(481A) Harvest reporting.** Each hunter who bags a turkey must report that kill according to procedures described in 571—95.1(481A).

**571—98.8** Reserved.

#### NONRESIDENT WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING

**571—98.9(483A) General.** Wild turkey may be taken during the spring season subject to the following:

**98.9(1) *License.*** When hunting wild turkey, all hunters must have in possession a valid nonresident wild turkey spring hunting license, the unused transportation tag issued with that license, a valid nonresident hunting license, and proof of having paid the current year's habitat fee. No one, while hunting turkey, shall carry or have in possession any license or transportation tag issued to another hunter. No one who is issued a wild turkey license and transportation tag shall allow another person to possess that license or transportation tag while turkey hunting or tagging a turkey. Licenses will be issued by zone and season and will be valid in the designated zone and season only. No one shall obtain more than one nonresident wild turkey spring hunting license. A hunter having a license valid for one of the spring turkey seasons may accompany, call for, or otherwise assist any other hunter who has a valid turkey hunting license in that season and zone. The hunter who is providing assistance may not shoot a turkey or carry a firearm or bow unless that hunter has a valid license and an unused tag for the current season and zone. Two types of licenses will be issued:

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery license.* Shotguns, muzzleloading shotguns and archery equipment as defined in subrule 98.12(1) may be used.

*b. Muzzleloading shotgun-only license.* Only muzzleloading shotguns as defined in subrule 98.12(1) may be used.

**98.9(2) *Seasons.*** Bearded (or male) wild turkey may be taken only by the use of shotguns, muzzleloading shotguns, and bow and arrow during the first, second, third or fourth seasons as defined in 98.2(4) "a."

**98.9(3) *Daily bag, possession and season limits.*** The daily bag limit is one bearded (or male) wild turkey; the possession and season limit is one bearded (or male) wild turkey.

**98.9(4) *Shooting hours.*** Shooting hours shall be from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day.

**98.9(5) *Special licenses.*** The commission shall issue licenses in conformance with Iowa Code section 483A.24(12) to nonresidents 21 years of age or younger who have a severe physical disability or who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness. A person applying for this license must provide a completed form obtained from the department of natural resources. The application shall be certified

by the applicant's attending physician with an original signature and declare that the applicant has a severe physical disability or a terminal illness using the criteria listed in 571—Chapter 15. A medical statement from the applicant's attending physician that specifies criteria met shall be on 8½" × 11" letterhead stationery. The attending physician shall be a currently practicing doctor of medicine, doctor of osteopathy, physician assistant or nurse practitioner.

[ARC 8253B, IAB 11/4/09, effective 12/9/09; ARC 3832C, IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]

**571—98.10(483A) Zones open to hunting.** Licenses shall be valid only in designated areas as follows:

1. Zone 4. Zone 4 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by Interstate Highway 80 and on the west by U.S. Highway 59.
2. Zone 5. Zone 5 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by U.S. Highway 20 and on the east by U.S. Highway 59.
3. Zone 6. Zone 6 is that portion of Iowa lying east of U.S. Highway 63 and north of Interstate Highway 80.
4. Zone 7. Zone 7 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by U.S. Highway 20, on the west by U.S. Highway 59, on the south by Interstate Highway 80, and on the east by U.S. Highway 63.
5. Zone 8. Zone 8 is that portion of Iowa north of U.S. Highway 20 and west of U.S. Highway 63.

**571—98.11(483A) License quotas.** A limited number of wild turkey hunting licenses will be issued in each zone in each season as follows:

**98.11(1) Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.**

- a. Zone 4. 262.
- b. Zone 5. 55.
- c. Zone 6. 165.
- d. Zone 7. 35.
- e. Zone 8. 20.

**98.11(2) Muzzleloading shotgun-only licenses.** 150 statewide. A hunter purchasing a muzzleloading shotgun license must declare a zone and season and hunt only in that zone and season.

**571—98.12(483A) Means and method of take.**

**98.12(1) Permitted weapons.** Wild turkey may be taken only with shotguns and muzzleloading shotguns not smaller than 20-gauge and shooting only shot sizes number 4 through 8 lead or nontoxic shot. No person may have shotshells containing shot of any size other than number 4 through 8 lead or nontoxic shot on the person while hunting wild turkey. Except for crossbows for persons with certain afflictions of the upper body, as provided in 571—15.22(481A), only longbow, compound, or recurve bows shooting broadhead arrows are permitted. Blunthead arrows with a minimum diameter of 9/16 inch may also be used. Arrows must be at least 18 inches long. No explosive or chemical devices may be attached to the arrow, broadhead, or blunthead.

**98.12(2) Prohibited devices.** The use of live decoys, dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, aircraft, bait, crossbows, except as otherwise provided, and the use or aid of recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds are prohibited, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may hunt from any stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with the involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord. "Bait" means grain, fruit, vegetables, nuts or any other natural food materials; commercial products containing natural food materials; or by-products of such materials transported to or placed in an area for the intent of attracting wildlife.

[ARC 3832C, IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]

**571—98.13(483A) Application procedure.** Applications for nonresident wild turkey spring hunting licenses must be made through the electronic licensing system for Iowa (ELSI) telephone ordering system or the ELSI Internet license sales website. Applications will be accepted from December 15 through the last Sunday in January. No one may submit more than one application during the application period.

If applications have been sold in excess of the license quota for any license type, zone, or season, a drawing will be held to determine which applicants receive licenses. Licenses or refunds of license fees will be mailed to applicants after the drawing is completed. License agent writing fees, department administrative fees, Internet sales charges and telephone order charges will not be refunded. If any license quota has not been filled, the excess licenses will be sold first-come, first-served through the telephone ordering system or the Internet license sales website beginning at 6 a.m. the second Saturday after the close of the application period until the quota has been filled or the last day of the season for which the license is valid, whichever occurs first. No one may obtain more than one nonresident wild turkey spring hunting license. Hunters may apply individually or as a group of up to 15 applicants. All members of a group will be accepted or rejected as a group in the drawing. If a group is rejected, members of that group may purchase licenses individually if excess licenses are available.

Each individual applicant who is unsuccessful in the drawing will be assigned one preference point for each year in which the individual applies and is unsuccessful. If a person who was unsuccessful in the drawing purchases a leftover license within four weeks, the person will receive a refund for the cost of the preference point. Preference points will not accrue in a year in which an applicant fails to apply, but the applicant will retain any preference points previously earned. Once an applicant receives a license, all preference points will be erased. Preference points will apply to any zone or season for which a hunter applies. The first license drawing each year will be made from the pool of applicants with the most preference points. If licenses are still available after the first drawing, subsequent drawings will be made from pools of applicants with successively fewer preference points and continue until the license quota is reached or all applicants have received licenses. Applicants who apply as a group will be included in a pool of applicants with the same number of preference points as that of the member of the group with the fewest preference points assigned.

[ARC 9656B, IAB 8/10/11, effective 9/14/11]

**571—98.14(483A) Transportation tag.** Immediately upon the killing of a wild turkey, the transportation tag issued with the license and bearing the license number of the licensee, year of issuance, and date of kill properly shown shall be visibly attached to one leg of the turkey. The hunter who shot the turkey must use the transportation tag issued to that hunter to tag the turkey. No one may tag a turkey with a transportation tag issued to another hunter. The tag must be attached in such a manner that it cannot be removed without mutilating or destroying the tag. The tag must be attached before the carcass can be moved in any manner from the place of kill. The transportation tag shall remain affixed to the leg of the turkey until the turkey is processed for consumption. The leg that bears the tag must be attached to the carcass of any wild turkey being transported within the state during any wild turkey spring hunting season. The tag shall be proof of possession of the carcass by the above-mentioned licensee.

**571—98.15(481A) Harvest reporting.** Each hunter who bags a turkey must report that kill according to procedures described in 571—95.1(481A).

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.48, 483A.1, 483A.7 and 483A.24.

[Temporary, filed 11/7/75—published 12/1/75, effective 11/7/75]

[Filed emergency 11/18/76—published 12/15/76, effective 11/18/76]

[Filed 12/9/77, Notice 11/2/77—published 12/28/77, effective 2/1/78]

[Filed 12/7/78, Notice 10/18/78—published 12/27/78, effective 1/31/79]

[Filed 12/5/79, Notice 10/31/79—published 12/26/79, effective 1/30/80]

[Filed 11/7/80, Notice 9/17/80—published 11/26/80, effective 1/1/81]

[Filed 11/6/81, Notice 9/30/81—published 11/25/81, effective 1/1/82]

[Filed 11/5/82, Notice 9/29/82—published 11/24/82, effective 1/1/83]

[Filed 11/10/83, Notice 9/28/83—published 12/7/83, effective 1/11/84]

[Filed 11/2/84, Notice 9/26/84—published 11/21/84, effective 1/1/85]

[Filed emergency 2/26/85—published 3/13/85, effective 2/26/85]

[Filed 11/14/85, Notice 9/25/85—published 12/4/85, effective 1/8/86]  
[Filed 11/14/86, Notice 9/24/86—published 12/3/86, effective 1/7/87]  
[Filed without Notice 12/12/86—published 12/31/86, effective 2/4/87]  
[Filed 11/13/87, Notice 9/23/87—published 12/2/87, effective 1/6/88]  
[Filed 11/10/88, Notice 9/21/88—published 11/30/88, effective 1/4/89]  
[Filed emergency 12/8/89 after Notice 10/4/89—published 12/27/89, effective 12/8/89]  
[Filed emergency 2/12/90 after Notice 12/27/89—published 3/7/90, effective 2/12/90]  
[Filed emergency 12/7/90 after Notice 10/3/90—published 12/26/90, effective 12/7/90]  
[Filed 11/8/91, Notice 10/2/91—published 11/27/91, effective 1/1/92]  
[Filed 11/6/92, Notice 9/30/92—published 11/25/92, effective 1/1/93]  
[Filed 11/5/93, Notice 9/29/93—published 11/24/93, effective 12/29/93]  
[Filed 11/18/94, Notice 9/28/94—published 12/7/94, effective 1/11/95]  
[Filed 11/16/95, Notice 9/27/95—published 12/6/95, effective 1/10/96]  
[Filed 11/15/96, Notice 10/9/96—published 12/4/96, effective 1/10/97]  
[Filed 11/14/97, Notice 10/8/97—published 12/3/97, effective 1/7/98]  
[Filed 11/13/98, Notice 10/7/98—published 12/2/98, effective 1/6/99]  
[Filed 11/12/99, Notice 9/8/99—published 12/1/99, effective 1/5/00]  
[Filed 11/13/00, Notice 10/4/00—published 11/29/00, effective 1/3/01]  
[Filed emergency 3/14/01—published 4/4/01, effective 3/14/01]  
[Filed 10/12/01, Notice 9/5/01—published 10/31/01, effective 12/5/01]  
[Filed 11/21/02, Notice 9/4/02—published 12/11/02, effective 1/15/03]  
[Nullified language editorially removed 5/28/03]†  
[Filed 11/19/03, Notice 9/3/03—published 12/10/03, effective 1/14/04]  
[Filed 11/17/04, Notice 9/1/04—published 12/8/04, effective 1/12/05]  
[Filed 6/28/05, Notice 3/30/05—published 7/20/05, effective 8/24/05]  
[Filed 5/17/06, Notice 3/29/06—published 6/7/06, effective 7/12/06]  
[Filed 5/21/07, Notice 3/28/07—published 6/20/07, effective 7/25/07]  
[Filed 6/24/08, Notice 4/9/08—published 7/16/08, effective 8/20/08]  
[Filed ARC 8253B (Notice ARC 8017B, IAB 7/29/09), IAB 11/4/09, effective 12/9/09]  
[Filed ARC 9656B (Notice ARC 9507B, IAB 5/18/11), IAB 8/10/11, effective 9/14/11]  
[Filed ARC 3832C (Notice ARC 3729C, IAB 4/11/18), IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]

†See HJR 5 of 2003 Session of Eightieth General Assembly.