

Electronic Licensing System Modernization Technical Changes



Related Facts

The current Electronic License System (ELS) has been in place since 1999.

Volume, Sales, and Use of Funds

The ELS system processed 2,306,564 license transactions in fiscal year 2023, bringing in nearly \$75 million in revenue to the game and fish fund.

Game and Fish license revenues are used to support management, monitoring, and protection of fish and wildlife resources as well as the enforcement of game and fish laws.

In fiscal year 2023, the ELS system logged 548,029 recreational vehicle titles and registrations, bringing in \$34 million to the natural resources fund.

Natural Resource revenues from recreational vehicle title and registration (i.e. watercraft, snowmobile, all-terrain vehicles, etc.) supports the development and maintenance of Minnesota's recreational opportunities and the enforcement of related laws.

Summary

The DNR plans to launch a new Electronic License System (ELS), which will include a mobile phone app, in the spring of 2025. The ELS is the primary system that issues angling and hunting licenses and permits to residents of Minnesota and visitors. The ELS also registers and titles outdoor recreation vehicles, including watercraft and off-highway vehicles.

The new, modern system will make it easier for customers to buy licenses, register their harvests and sign up for safety training. It will also improve the business process for agents, registrars and DNR staff. The new system will not use durable paper; further, licenses and other items will be electronic and able to be displayed on an electronic device such as a smartphone. These items can alternatively be printed on ordinary paper by a customer or at a point of sale. Not having durable paper licenses and tags will change some practices related to required signatures, license possessions, harvesting game/fish, tagging game/fish, and other activities. This legislation makes the statutory changes needed to allow people to enjoy the advantages of the modernized licensing system. It does not modify the underlying intent of existing law.



Proposal

The proposal changes language and process to accurately describe the new electronic license system. There are a large number of specific changes needed; which are listed below:

14.386 Procedure for Adopting Exempt Rules; Duration

Updates reference in clause (d5) related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2).

84.027 Powers and Duties

Removes the assigning of an identification number that served as a temporary authorization. Temporary authorization will no longer be required as licenses will be issued immediately and will not be mailed to customers.

84.0874 Electronic Licensing System Data

Updates language from snowmobile trail “sticker” to be a snowmobile trail “pass”.

84.152 Wild Rice

Removes the written oath requirement for a wild rice dealer application.

84.788 Registration

Updates a clause referenced in Subd. 11 Refunds related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2) for off-highway motorcycles.

84.798 Registration

Updates clause reference in Subd. 10 Refunds related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2) for off-road vehicles.

84.8035 Off-Road Vehicle State Trail Pass

A pass must be available for viewing upon request.

84.82 Exemptions; Collector Snowmobiles; Unlimited Use

Updates clause reference in Subd. 11 Refunds related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2).

84.8205 Snowmobile State Trail Pass

Removes requirement to place state trail pass stickers on the vehicle and updates the “sticker” to be a “pass”; a pass must be available for inspection upon request.

84.922 Registration

Updates clause reference in Subd. 12 Refunds related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2) for all-terrain vehicles.

84.83 Snowmobile Trails and Enforcement Account; Receipts and Allocations

Updates language from snowmobile “sticker” to be a snowmobile “pass”.

85.41 Cross-Country-Ski Passes

Removes the signature requirement

85.45 Penalties

Removes the signature requirement for cross-country ski passes.

85.46 Horse Pass

Removes the signature requirement from a horse pass and it is issued to the rider; commercial passes are not signed, but issued to the owner.

86B.415 License Fees

Updates clause reference in Subd. 11 Refunds related to change made to 84.027, Subd. 15 (a2) for watercraft.

97A.015 Definitions

Removes the tagging requirement under a bonus permit for deer, removes license identification number definition as it will not be part of the new system, and defines “Validation” as this word is often used in these proposed changes.

97A.215 Inspections

Uses existing language in statute providing immunity from liability when a person uses an electronic device to present a license or permit to an officer.

97A.255 Prosecutions

Allows an officer to invalidate a license when an officer revokes and seizes it.

97A.405 License Requirements

Removes language relating to the issuance and receipt of a license purchased electronically, as licenses will no longer be mailed to the customer and this language no longer will apply. Removes requirements to take an oath to receive a duplicate license and to submit original licenses to receive replacement licenses. This also removes some tagging language.

97A.420 Seizure of Licenses

When an officer is required to seize a license, the change allows an officer to invalidate an electronic license, as well as reinstate an electronic license.



97A.445 Exemptions from License Requirement

Authorizes the commissioner, in the event of a disruption, to exempt license possession if the license system is not available.

97A.473 Resident Lifetime Licenses

Removes tag issuance and turkey stamp language as tags will not be issued. Also simplifies stamp language.

97A.474 Nonresident Lifetime Licenses

Removes tag issuance and turkey stamp language as tags will not be issued. Also simplifies stamp language.

97A.481 License Applications; Penalty

Technical change to remove a requirement that an application be in writing.

97A.485 Issuance of Licenses

Removes language involving the issuance of one day angling license books and one day paper fishing licenses.

97A.535 Possession and Transportation of Deer, Bear, Elk, and Moose

Removes tag requirements and adds in validation requirements to streamline the validation, registration, quartering and transporting requirements for big game.

97A.551 Possession and Transportation of Fish

Removes tag requirements for special fish management species and adds a requirement for an endorsement to replace the requirement for a tag as well as validation, registration, and transportation requirements for those fish that are also listed in rule more specifically (e.g. sturgeon).

97B.303 Venison Donations

Removes tag number language, clarifying that a licensee's DNR number can be used in place of a tag number.

97B.401 Bear License Required; Application

Removes requirement for application to be on a form.

97B.603 Taking Small Game by Party

Removes tag language for turkey, clarifying electronic registration will be used in place of prior tagging requirements.

97B.716 Prairie Chickens

Removes tag language, clarifying electronic registration will be used in place of prior tagging requirements.

97B.721 License Required to Take Turkey; Registration Requirements

Removes tag language, clarifying electronic registration will be used in place of prior tagging requirements.

97C.087 Special Fish Management Registration

Removes tag language and adds in endorsement and registration language for special fish management species (e.g. sturgeon).

97C.301 License Required to Take Fish

Removes signature requirement.

97C.355 Shelters on Ice; Dark Houses and Fish Houses

Removes the requirement that a shelter tag be affixed to the exterior of the shelter. A license is still required and issued to the shelter owner. Existing language requires owner information to be displayed on the outside of the shelter, allowing conservation officers to complete shelter license checks electronically.

Required Rulemaking

Allows conforming changes to follow the Good Cause Exemption process.

Repealer

All licenses will be issued electronically with a paper option, which removes the need for a temporary authorization number.

Removes language involving the issuance of one day angling license books and one day paper fishing licenses.



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