

# DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Military Personnel and Veteran Licensing/Lottery/Safety Exemptions & Benefits

### Active Duty

- Military personnel, and their dependents, in any branch or unit of the United States armed forces are eligible to receive a free annual state park permit (bring current military orders and military ID to park)
- Military personnel, including National Guard or other military reserves, who are residents of Minnesota, will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, antlerless deer lottery, bear and turkey lotteries upon applying for the drawing and submitting the [military preference application form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf).  
[http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res\\_militarypreference.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf)
- Residents on leave who have maintained legal residency in Minnesota (must have a valid Minnesota Driver's License or State Identification card) who are serving in the United States Military and stationed outside the state may (while carrying proof of Minnesota residency and official leave papers):
  - Hunt small game without a license while on leave. No Minnesota waterfowl stamp or pheasant stamp is needed but they must have a federal duck stamp to hunt waterfowl.
  - Hunt deer (Choose one weapon type. Codes: Firearms: 232; Archery: 233, Muzzleloader: 234), bear (Code 663), wild turkey (Codes: Spring: 615; Fall: 654) and wolf (Codes: Early Season Firearm: 691; Late Firearm: 692; Trapping: 693) without charge after obtaining the appropriate licenses and tags from an ELS license agent by presenting official leave papers. Bonus permits are not included.
  - Fish without a license.
  - Use ski trails without a ski pass.

### Residents Discharged

- From the United States armed forces within 10 days of the start of, or during, the firearm deer season may, upon showing official discharge papers, purchase a firearm deer license during the season that is valid immediately upon issuance.
- From federal active service outside the United States within the preceding 24 months may (while carrying proof of Minnesota residency and official military discharge papers):
  - Take small game without a license. No state stamps are required. Federal stamp is needed for waterfowl hunting if under 65 years old.
  - Take fish without a license. Trout stamps are not required. (Note: Free sturgeon tags are available only from the DNR License Center in St. Paul.)
  - Obtain one free deer per year license (Choose one weapon type. Codes: Firearms: 232, Archery: 233, Muzzleloader: 234), valid for one either-sex deer except in buck-only areas.
  - Use ski trails without a ski pass.
- From active service as a member of the United States armed forces, including National Guard or other military reserves, during the preceding 24 months will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, antlerless deer lottery, bear and turkey lotteries upon applying for the drawing and submitting the [military preference application form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf).  
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## Resident Veterans

- With proof of a 100% service-related disability:
  - May obtain a free small game license (Code 241). No state stamps are required. Federal stamp is needed for waterfowl hunting if under 65 years old.
  - May obtain one free deer license (Choose one weapon type. Codes: Firearms: 232, Archery: 233, Muzzleloader: 234) per year. The free deer license is valid for one either-sex deer except in buck-only areas.
  - Will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, antlerless deer lottery, bear and turkey lotteries upon applying for the drawing and submitting the [military preference application form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf). [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res\\_militarypreference.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf)
  - May apply for a permanent card that can be presented to an agent annually to receive a free small game and/or deer license. This card serves as proof of 100% permanent service-connected disability. The [application form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/vet-deer-license-permanent.pdf) can be found at <http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/vet-deer-license-permanent.pdf>
  - May obtain a free permanent angling license. This permanent license is available only from the DNR License Center in St. Paul. A trout stamp is not required with this license. The [application form](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/fishing/dvet-permanent-angling.pdf) can be found at <https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/fishing/dvet-permanent-angling.pdf>
- Who are patients of a Minnesota Veterans home may fish without a license with written permission of the superintendent or chief executive of the institution. For more information and the [authorization form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/fishing/residents_institutions.pdf), see the DNR website at [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/fishing/residents\\_institutions.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/fishing/residents_institutions.pdf).
- With any level of service-related disability may obtain a free annual state park permit. Bring paperwork proving eligibility to the state park to receive the park permit.

## Resident Purple Heart Recipients

- Must purchase licenses, but will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, antlerless deer lottery, bear and turkey lotteries upon applying for the drawing and submitting the [military preference application form](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf). [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res\\_militarypreference.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/licenses/hunting/res_militarypreference.pdf)
- May obtain a free annual state park permit. Bring paperwork proving eligibility to the state park to receive the park permit.

## Nonresidents

- Nonresident spouses of residents on active military duty may purchase resident hunting and fishing licenses. Nonresidents must provide proof of their spouse's residency and active military duty.
- A person in the United States armed forces who is stationed in Minnesota, training at Camp Ripley or an active member of the Minnesota National Guard may purchase resident hunting and fishing licenses by providing official military papers stating that they are stationed in the state, training at Camp Ripley or a member of the Minnesota National Guard. Elk licenses are excluded.

## Firearms Safety Training

- Individuals who have completed basic training in the United States armed forces, reserves, or National Guard may obtain a hunting license or approval authorizing hunting even if they haven't been issued a firearms safety certificate. Individuals only qualify for this exemption from the firearms safety requirement during the time they are active duty. Once discharged or no longer active duty they must complete a firearms safety training course if they were born after December 31, 1979. These individuals may be exempt from the field day component of the classroom or home study course by providing proof of basic training, i.e., discharge papers (DD214), or current military identification to the instructor of the course. [Firearms safety information](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/firearms_isa/index.html) can be found at: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/firearms\\_isa/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/firearms_isa/index.html).

- An apprentice hunter validation may be used in place of firearms safety certification. The validation can only be used in Minnesota, and can only be purchased twice. Those using this exemption must hunt with a licensed hunter whose license was not obtained using an apprentice hunter validation. For more information, see the [apprentice hunter validation page](http://www.mndnr.gov/safety/apprentice/index.html) on the DNR website at [www.mndnr.gov/safety/apprentice/index.html](http://www.mndnr.gov/safety/apprentice/index.html).

### **Minnesota Conservation Volunteer magazine**

A free two-year subscription to Minnesota Conservation Volunteer, the DNR's donor-supported magazine advocating conservation and careful use of Minnesota's natural resources, is available to military personnel and veterans. Call 1-888-646-6367 and ask for the military personnel and veteran offer or visit the [Minnesota Conservation Volunteer](http://www.mndnr.gov/magazine) website at [www.mndnr.gov/magazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/magazine).