

TITLE 17: CONSERVATION  
CHAPTER I: DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCHAPTER b: FISH AND WILDLIFE

PART 680  
LATE-WINTER DEER HUNTING SEASON

Section	
680.10	Statewide Season
680.20	Statewide Deer Permit Requirements
680.25	Deer Permit Requirements – Free Landowner/Tenant Permits (Repealed)
680.30	Deer Permit Requirements – Group Hunt (Repealed)
680.40	Statewide Firearm Requirements for Late-Winter Deer Hunting
680.50	Statewide Deer Hunting Rules
680.60	Reporting Harvest
680.70	Rejection of Application/Revocation of Permits
680.80	Regulations at Various Department-Owned or -Managed Sites

AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.13, 2.20, 2.24, 2.25, 2.26 and 3.36 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5].

SOURCE: Adopted at 15 Ill. Reg. 13353, effective September 3, 1991; amended at 16 Ill. Reg. 15446, effective September 28, 1992; amended at 17 Ill. Reg. 18810, effective October 19, 1993; amended at 18 Ill. Reg. 15739, effective October 18, 1994; amended at 19 Ill. Reg. 15422, effective October 26, 1995; amended at 20 Ill. Reg. 10906, effective August 5, 1996; amended at 21 Ill. Reg. 9128, effective June 26, 1997; amended at 22 Ill. Reg. 14875, effective August 3, 1998; amended at 24 Ill. Reg. 8975, effective June 19, 2000; amended at 26 Ill. Reg. 13820, effective September 5, 2002; emergency amendment at 28 Ill. Reg. 1032, effective January 6, 2004, for a maximum of 150 days; amended at 28 Ill. Reg. 2197, effective January 26, 2004; amended at 28 Ill. Reg. 15503, effective November 19, 2004; amended at 29 Ill. Reg. 20462, effective December 2, 2005; amended at 30 Ill. Reg. 14508, effective August 24, 2006; amended at 31 Ill. Reg. 13180, effective August 30, 2007; amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 19736, effective December 3, 2008; amended at 33 Ill. Reg. 11601, effective July 27, 2009; amended at 34 Ill. Reg. 16518, effective October 8, 2010; amended at 35 Ill. Reg. 15242, effective September 2, 2011; amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 14967, effective August 30, 2013; amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 10607, effective July 20, 2016; amended at 42 Ill. Reg. 13144, effective June 22, 2018; amended at 44 Ill. Reg. 11559, effective June 29, 2020; amended at 45 Ill. Reg. \_\_\_\_\_, effective September 24, 2021.

**Section 680.10 Statewide Season**

- a) Season: One-half hour before sunrise on the first Thursday after December 25 to ½ hour after sunset on the following Sunday, and ½ hour before sunrise on the first Friday after January 11 to ½ hour after sunset on the following Sunday. Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise or after ½ hour after sunset is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum \$500 fine and a maximum \$5,000 fine in addition to other statutory

penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

- b) For the purpose of removing surplus deer, the Department of Natural Resources (Department) shall open select counties and sites to firearm deer hunting during the Late-Winter Deer Season. The Department shall notify the public of the counties that are projected to have surplus deer populations via a public announcement.
- c) Hunting outside the set season dates or without a valid permit for the county hunted in is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24). Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise or after ½ hour after sunset is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum \$500 fine and a maximum \$5,000 fine in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 14967, effective August 30, 2013)

### **Section 680.20 Statewide Deer Permit Requirements**

- a) Illinois resident hunters must have an unfilled deer permit valid for the previous firearm, muzzleloader or youth deer season and valid for one of the open counties or a valid Late-Winter Deer Season permit (\$17.50). Nonresident hunters must have an unfilled deer permit valid for the previous firearm, muzzleloader or youth deer season and valid for one of the open counties. A Late-Winter Deer Season Permit is issued for one county or special hunt area and is valid only in the county or special hunt area stated on the permit. Unfilled firearm, muzzleloader or Youth Deer Hunt Permits are valid only for the county for which they were originally issued, except that Youth Deer Hunt Permits issued as part of the statewide youth-only deer hunting season Pilot Program, as described in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 685.20, are valid for all of the open counties and unfilled landowner property-only hunting firearm deer permits are valid only for the farmlands that the person to whom it was issued owns, leases, or rents within the open counties/portions of counties.
  - 1) Unfilled firearm, muzzleloader or Youth Deer Hunt Permits that were originally issued for special hunt areas are not valid during the Late-Winter Season unless:
    - A) the hunter's name is redrawn at the daily site lottery to hunt at the same special hunt area during the Late-Winter Season; or
    - B) the special hunt area is open to persons with a county permit and the special hunt area does not conduct a daily site lottery.
  - 2) Sites conducting a daily site lottery will be announced publicly.
- b) Resident Late-Winter Deer Permits will be available for sale over-the-counter (OTC) from agents designated by the Department (pursuant to 17 Ill. Adm. Code

2520) beginning the second Tuesday in December through the last day of the Late-Winter Deer Season. There shall be no limitation on permit sales; resident hunters may purchase as many permits as they wish for any or all of the included counties.

- c) For a Special Hunt Area permit, resident hunters may apply online at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov) for a site-specific permit valid for one of the Department's Special Hunt Areas. The application period begins the last Tuesday in October and ends the fourth Monday in November. Permits will be allocated via a lottery drawing.
- d) For the applicant to be eligible to receive a Late-Winter Deer Permit (\$17.50), he/she must be an Illinois resident and not have had his/her deer hunting privileges suspended or revoked in this State pursuant to Section 3.36 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5/3.36]. Lifetime licenses issued after August 15, 2006 shall not qualify a non-resident of Illinois for a resident deer permit.
- e) Hunters purchasing Late-Winter Deer Permits must supply all necessary application information to the agents in order to properly complete the permit.
- f) Recipients of the Late-Winter Deer Hunting Permit shall record their signature on the permit and must carry it on their person while hunting.
- g) Permits are not transferable. For the purpose of this Section, "transfer" means the modification or changing, by the Department or any other person, individual or group, of the name or the location on an issued permit to another person or location.
- h) A \$3 service fee shall be charged for replacement permits. Monies derived from this source shall be deposited in the Wildlife and Fish Fund.
- i) Hunting without a valid permit is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24).
- j) Refunds and Cancellations
  - 1) A refund shall be issued by the Department for a permit that has been granted, or for an application that has been submitted, under the following circumstances:
    - A) The State managed or owned site for which the permit was issued was closed due to a national or State issued emergency or disaster declaration or any other emergency circumstance that resulted in the Department closing access to the hunting site, park or area. Issued permits shall be cancelled by the Department. This subsection (j) shall include, but is not limited to, closure of State parks, fish and wildlife areas, and recreation areas by the

- Department as a response to a Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation or executive order;
- B) The applicant for a permit was unsuccessful in obtaining a permit in the lottery for which the applicant applied; or
  - C) Upon the request of the permit holder, a permit was issued due to an error of the Department, the OTC point-of-sale vendor or the applicant. The permit that was issued in error and the request for a refund must be delivered to the Department before the first day of the season listed on the permit. Permits shall be considered delivered to the Department if the permit is received or postmarked before the first day of the season listed on the permit; or
  - D) Upon the return of an issued permit to the Department before the first day of the season listed on the issued permit. Permits shall be considered delivered to the Department if the permit is received or postmarked before the first day of the season listed on the permit. No refund shall be issued under this subsection (i)(1)(D) if the permit is returned or postmarked after the first day of the season listed on the permit.
- 2) A permit shall be cancelled if a refund is approved pursuant to subsection (j)(1)(A), (C) or (D). Once a permit has been cancelled, the cancelled permit shall not count towards the total number of permits that an applicant may obtain for the hunting season for which that cancelled permit was issued.
- 3) Upon the request of a permit holder, a refund may be issued by the Department for a permit that has been granted under the following circumstances:
- A) A medical condition or death of the permit holder that prevented the permit holder from hunting. A death certificate or medical documentation showing that the permit holder was unable to or advised not to hunt may be required by the Department before any refund is issued. Requests must be made within 90 days after the start of the season that the permit was issued for and must accompany the return of the permit to the Department at its headquarters in Springfield, Illinois. No refunds shall be issued under this subsection if the request or permit is delivered or postmarked to the Department at its headquarters in Springfield, Illinois 90 days after the first day of the season listed on the permit; or
  - B) The permit holder was unable to travel or use the permit that was issued to him or her due to a national or State issued emergency or

disaster declaration that resulted in a danger to the health or safety of the permit holder had they attempted to use the issued permit. Requests must be made within 60 days after the start of the season for which the permit was issued and must accompany the return of the permit to the Department at its headquarters in Springfield, Illinois. No refund shall be issued under this subsection (i)(3)(B) if the request or permit is delivered or postmarked 60 days after the first day of the season listed on the permit.

- C) A permit that was issued due to an error of the Department, the OTC point-of-sale vendor, or the applicant, if the permit is returned to the Department before the last day of the season for which the permit was issued.

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. \_\_\_\_\_, effective September 24, 2021)

#### **Section 680.40 Statewide Firearm Requirements for Late-Winter Deer Hunting**

- a) The only legal firearms to take, or attempt to take, deer are:
- 1) Shotgun, loaded with slugs only, of not larger than 10 nor smaller than 20 gauge, not capable of firing more than 3 consecutive slugs; or
  - 2) A single or double barreled muzzleloading rifle of at least .45 caliber shooting a single projectile through a barrel of at least 16 inches in length; or
  - 3) centerfire revolvers or centerfire single-shot handguns of .30 caliber or larger with a minimum barrel length of 4 inches and single-shot muzzleloading handguns (blackpowder handguns that are incapable of being loaded from the breech end) of .50 caliber or larger capable of producing at least 500 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle according to published ballistic tables of the manufacturer.
- b) Standards and specifications for legal ammunition are:
- 1) For shotguns and muzzleloading firearms, the minimum size of the projectile shall be .44 caliber. A wad or sleeve is not considered a projectile or a part of the projectile.
  - 2) The only legal ammunition for a centerfire handgun is a bottleneck centerfire cartridge of .30 caliber or larger with a case length not exceeding 1.4 inches, or a straight-walled centerfire cartridge of .30 caliber or larger, both of which must be available with the published ballistic tables of the manufacturer showing a capability of at least 500 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle. Single-shot muzzleloading handguns must use a projectile of .44 caliber or larger with sufficient blackpowder

- or "blackpowder substitute" (such as Pyrodex) to produce at least 500 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle. A wad or sleeve is not considered a projectile or part of a projectile.
- 3) Non-expanding, military-style full metal jacket bullets cannot be used to harvest white-tailed deer; only soft point or expanding bullets (including copper/copper alloy rounds designed for hunting) are legal ammunition.
- c) Standards and specifications for use of muzzleloading firearms are as follows:
- 1) A muzzleloading firearm is defined as a firearm into which the projectile is incapable of being inserted from the breech end.
  - 2) Only black powder or a "black powder substitute" such as Pyrodex may be used. Modern smokeless powders (nitrocellulose-based) are an approved blackpowder substitute only in muzzleloading firearms that are specifically designed for their use.
  - 3) Only percussion (cap or primer), wheel lock, matchlock, flintlock or electronic ignition may be used.
  - 4) The following shall constitute an unloaded muzzleloading firearm:
    - A) removal of percussion cap/primer:
    - B) removal of prime powder from frizzen pan with frizzen open and hammer all the way down;
    - C) removal of prime powder from flashpan and wheel unwound;
    - D) removal of prime powder and match with match not lit; or
    - E) removal of the battery from the electronic ignition .
- d) Hunters using unfilled muzzleloader deer permits may only use muzzleloading rifles as specified in subsection (a)(2). Hunters using unfilled firearm deer permits, or Late-Winter Deer Season Permits, may use all firearms specified in subsection (a). Hunters using unfilled youth deer permits may only use shotguns or muzzleloaders as specified in subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2).
- e) It shall be unlawful to use or possess any other firearm or ammunition in the field while hunting white-tailed deer during the Late-Winter Deer Season. However, the lawful possession of firearms to take furbearing mammals and game mammals other than deer by persons other than deer hunters shall not be prohibited during the Late-Winter deer season as set in Section 680.10. Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24).

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. \_\_\_\_\_, effective September 24, 2021)

### **Section 680.50 Statewide Deer Hunting Rules**

- a) The bag limit is one antlerless deer per legally authorized permit. Persons using unfilled permits from the previous firearm, muzzleloader or youth deer season (see Section 680.20(a)) may only harvest antlerless deer even when using an either-sex permit. An antlerless deer is a deer without antlers or a deer having antlers less than 3 inches long.
- b) The harvest tag must be attached and properly sealed immediately upon kill and before the deer is moved, transported or field dressed. No person shall leave any deer that has been killed without properly attaching the harvest tag to the deer in the manner prescribed in Section 680.60 and on the permit.
- c) Hunters shall not have in their possession, while in the field during the Late-Winter deer season, any deer permit issued to another person (permits are non-transferrable).
- d) Permits shall not be re-issued in cases involving deer taken which are found to be diseased or spoiled due to previous injury. Disposal of unfit deer taken shall be the responsibility of the hunter. For those hunters participating in the Department's Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Program, a free permit for the same county or special hunt area will be made available the subsequent year if their tested deer is determined to have chronic wasting disease.
- e) Violation of this Section is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24), except unlawful take or possession of 2 or more deer within 90 days is a Class 4 felony, and unlawful take of 2 or more deer as a single act or possession or single course of conduct is a Class 3 felony (see 520 ILCS 5/2.36(a)).

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 14967, effective August 30, 2013)

### **Section 680.60 Reporting Harvest**

- a) Successful hunters must register their harvest by 10:00 p.m. on the same calendar day the deer was taken by calling the toll-free telephone check-in system at 1-866-ILCHECK or by accessing the on-line check-in system at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov). They will be provided with a confirmation number to verify that they checked in their harvest. This number must be written by the hunter on the harvest tag (leg tag). If the condition of the tag precludes writing on the tag in the appropriate space (i.e., bloody, etc.), the confirmation number shall be written elsewhere on the tag or onto a piece of paper and attached to the deer along with the temporary harvest tag. The deer must remain whole (or field dressed) until it has been checked in. In instances where deer are checked in while the hunter is still afield, the deer may not be dismembered while afield beyond quartering the animal. If quartered, all parts of the carcass (except the

entrails removed during field dressing) must be transported together and evidence of sex must remain naturally attached to one quarter. Evidence of sex is:

- 1) For a buck: head with antlers attached to carcass or attached testicle, scrotum, or penis.
  - 2) For a doe: head attached to carcass or attached udder (mammary) or vulva.
- b) The harvest tag (leg tag) and confirmation number must remain attached to the deer until it is at the legal residence of the person who legally took or possessed the deer and final processing is completed. If the head/antlers are delivered to a taxidermist for processing, the confirmation number must be recorded on the "head tag" portion of the permit and both must remain with the deer while at the taxidermist's. If the carcass is taken to a meat processor, the harvest tag (leg tag) with confirmation number must remain with the deer while it is processed and until it is at the legal residence of the person who legally took or possessed the deer. Persons delivering deer/parts of deer to a tanner for processing must supply the tanner with either their deer permit number, their confirmation number, or a written certification by the person from whom the deer was received that the specimen was legally taken or obtained.
- c) Site specific reporting requirements must be followed in addition to this Section.
- d) Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24).

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 14967, effective August 30, 2013)

### **Section 680.70 Rejection of Application/Revocation of Permits**

- a) In the event that the purchaser of a Late-Winter Deer Permit is in violation of either subsection (a)(1) or (2), the permit will be revoked in addition to any other penalties. The applicant may request a hearing on this decision pursuant to 17 Ill. Adm. Code 2530.
- 1) Providing false and/or deceptive information on the deer permit application form is a Class A misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.38).
  - 2) Purchasing a Late-Winter Deer Permit when the applicant has a license or permit currently revoked pursuant to Section 3.36 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5/3.36] is a Class A misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/3.36).
- b) Any violation of the Wildlife Code or administrative rules of the Department, in addition to other penalties, may result in revocation of hunting licenses and permits as per 17 Ill. Adm. Code 2530.

(Source: Amended at 33 Ill. Reg. 11601, effective July 27, 2009)



**Section 680.80 Regulations at Various Department-Owned or -Managed Sites**

Sites will be opened to Late-Winter deer hunting only if the site is announced as being open via a public announcement. A drawing will be held at 5:00 a.m. at the site if more hunters show up than can be accommodated at sites announced as having a daily site lottery (e.g., press release and/or site posting). Violation of a site specific regulation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.24).

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 14967, effective August 30, 2013)