



MASSWILDLIFE

DIVISION OF FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

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[MASS.GOV/MASSWILDLIFE](https://www.mass.gov/masswildlife)

To: Executive Office of Veterans Services
From: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife)
Subject: Clarification regarding fishing and hunting licenses
Date: April 30, 2026

MassWildlife has recently received calls from veterans, as well as from local Veterans Service Offices, seeking clarification about whether fishing and hunting licenses are free for veterans in Massachusetts. These inquiries suggest there is some confusion about current license eligibility, and we would like to help ensure that accurate information is being shared consistently.

Hunting and fishing licenses in Massachusetts are **not automatically free for veterans**. Free licenses are currently available only to certain qualifying groups, including residents with certain disabilities and seniors. Veteran status alone does not make a person eligible for a free license. Freshwater fishing and hunting licenses are free for those residents aged 70 and older and discounted for those aged 65–69. Saltwater fishing licenses are free for those residents aged 60 and older. More information about hunting and fishing license eligibility can be found on www.mass.gov/massfishhunt.

Because some of this confusion appears to be reaching veterans through local Veterans Service Offices in municipalities, we would greatly appreciate your guidance on the best way to help distribute corrected information to those offices. If there is an existing communication channel, mailing list, bulletin, or other method for reaching local Veterans Service Officers, MassWildlife would welcome the opportunity to provide clear language or a short notice for distribution.

We also want to extend a warm invitation to veterans across the Commonwealth to participate in upcoming MassWildlife fishing clinics this summer and fall. These free clinics offer a welcoming opportunity to learn or refresh fishing skills, spend time outdoors, and connect with others through recreation. We have two special clinics scheduled this summer on May 16 at the Marlboro Fish & Game Club and September 12 at the Riverside Rod & Gun Club in Hudson. These events are open to all veterans and their families. We would be glad to share clinic information for distribution through your networks as well. No pre-registration is required, but those with questions can contact MassWildlife's Angler Education Program Education Coordinator, Jim Lagacy, at 508.389.6309 or jim.lagacy@mass.gov.

Thank you for your partnership in helping us communicate accurate information and connect veterans with meaningful outdoor opportunities.

Sincerely,

Nicole McSweeney
Assistant Director of Outreach and Education
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife

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