



2023

Everytown Gun Law Rankings

See the Rankings

Explore by State

Explore by Policy

By Everytown Research & Policy

Gun Safety Policies Save Lives

Which states have the ideal laws to prevent gun violence?

We compared gun policy across the country, scoring every state on the **strength of its gun laws** and comparing it with its **rate of gun violence**. In states where elected officials have taken action to pass gun safety laws, fewer people die by gun violence. Choose a state to see how it stacks up on 50 key policies, or explore a policy to see how much of the country has adopted it.

State & Rank

Sorting by [gun law strength](#)

Gun Law Strength

Composite score

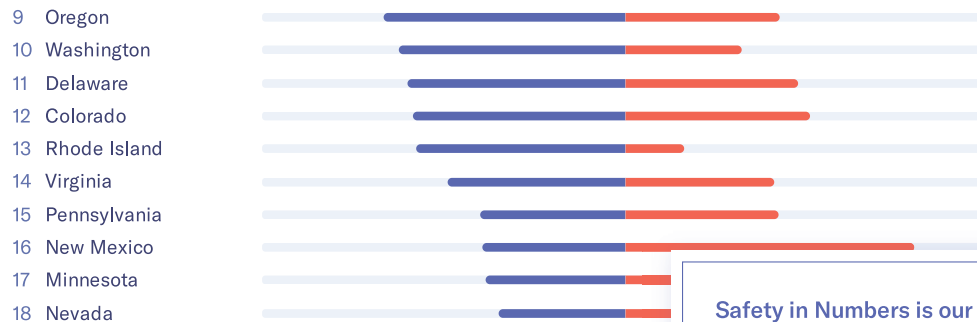
Gun Violence Rate

Gun deaths per 100,000 residents

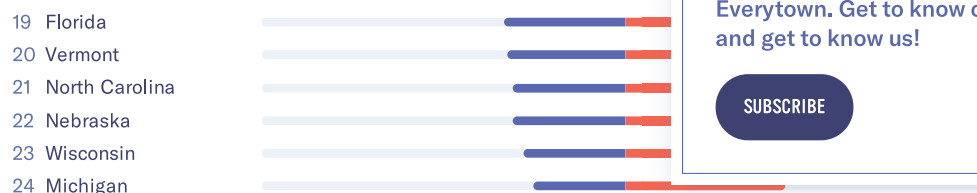
NATIONAL LEADERS



MAKING PROGRESS

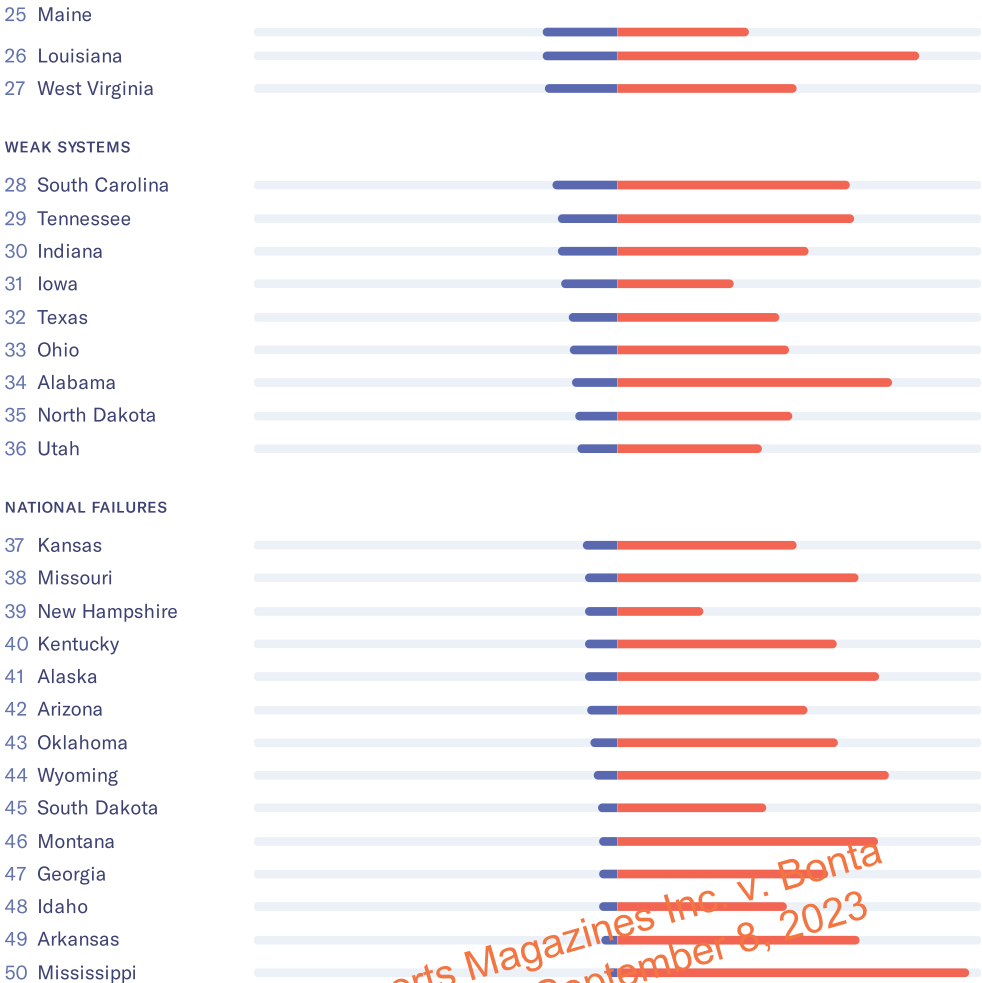


MISSING KEY LAWS



Safety in Numbers is our new monthly newsletter highlighting all things Team Research here at Everytown. Get to know our work and get to know us!

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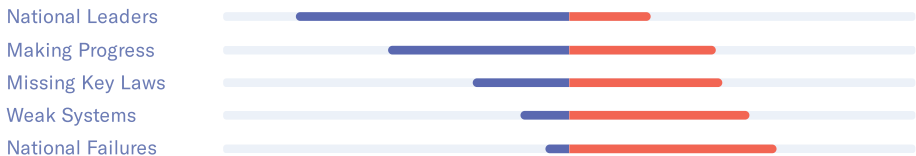


Gun laws work

When we compare the states head-to-head on the top 50 gun safety policies, a clear pattern emerges. States with strong laws see less gun violence. Indeed, the 14 states that have failed to put basic protections into place—"national failures" on our scale—have nearly triple the rate of gun deaths as the eight national gun safety leaders.

Strong Gun Laws, Fewer Deaths

The correlation is especially clear when looking at average data by tier. The tiers range from an average of 8.2 gun deaths per 100,000 residents for the National Leaders to 21.0 gun deaths per 100,000 residents for the National Failures.



The top 50 laws we focus on represent a wide range of interventions. Some block gun access by people who pose a threat with a firearm while others focus on limiting gun violence in public. Some seek to increase police accountability and protect civil rights, while another set targets bad actors in the gun industry.

All states should start with a core group of five foundational laws—passing background checks and/or purchase permitting, along with Extreme Risk laws and secure gun storage requirements; and rejecting Shoot First (also known as Stand Your Ground) and permitless carry laws. While each of the top 14 states in the gun law rankings has all five of these policies in place, only one of the bottom 14 states has even one of these critical protections.

The national gun safety landscape has seen states move in opposite directions in recent years. While all nine states in our “making progress” tier have made significant additions to their firearm laws in recent years—with each adding several points to its gun law score—a whopping 24 states at the other end of the scale have made the dangerous decision to repeal their concealed carry permit requirements.

Our gun law rankings are a roadmap for how to build the ideal state system. They will walk you through the most important policies and help you compare these protections across the country.

Even the strongest system can’t protect a state from its neighbors’ weak laws

The rankings clearly show that gun laws save lives. But no state is an island (except Hawaii), and any state may be vulnerable if its neighbors fail to protect public safety. That’s how northeastern states with strong laws ended up victims of the infamous “iron pipeline,” the route traffickers use to bring guns up from southeastern states with weak laws. The evidence tells a simple story about porous borders: Out of all guns showing up at crime scenes after crossing state lines, four out of five come from states that lack good background check laws.

Notable strong law states like Illinois and Maryland remain plagued with high gun violence in their biggest cities—in large part because they’re targeted by traffickers. Indeed an outsized share of likely trafficked crime guns recovered in Illinois begin their journey in states with weak laws. And Virginia, which had weak gun purchase laws until 2020, has long been the top supplier of crime guns into Maryland. At the other end of the scale, states like New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island have unusually low gun death rates compared with their somewhat weaker policies, in part because they are buffered by robust laws among other states in the region.

High gun ownership rates also play a role in strong states where deaths are higher

Access to a firearm drastically increases the likelihood of suicide and a gun in the home is associated with more gun homicide. Again, a state like Rhode Island has low gun violence relative to the strength of its laws—likely due in part to its very low gun ownership rate (it’s fourth-lowest in the nation). On the other hand, states like Nevada and New Mexico have higher rates of gun violence than their laws might suggest—perhaps in part as a result of above-average gun ownership.

It takes time for new laws to have an impact

Several states have had recent success passing strong policy—for example, Nevada added half of its gun law score and New Mexico added over 40% of its score in the past several years. Both states enacted Extreme Risk, background check, and domestic violence laws, with New Mexico also limiting qualified

immunity and Nevada tackling secure storage and ghost guns. Those states can hope to see newfound protection in the coming years—and more lives saved.

At the other end of the scale, Iowa repealed both its background check and carry permit laws in 2021, losing over 40% of its gun law score in one year. This new, radical change in its score provides a partial and likely temporary explanation for its relatively low gun death rate. Iowans should be concerned about a future spike in violence.

Federal laws help prevent gun violence nationwide

All 50 states can rely on a backbone of federal laws to help keep guns out of the wrong hands. Yet the federal system is far too weak overall—for example, failing to require background checks on all gun sales and giving special legal immunity to the gun industry. State policymakers should protect their residents by filling the many gaps in federal law, and must also take action where state power is at its strongest, such as requiring a process for domestic abusers to turn in guns when they become prohibited from having them.

There's work to do beyond strong state laws

By comparing state gun laws with gun violence outcomes, we see how critical it is to enact strong policy. But a caveat is required: There is necessary non-legislative gun safety work this site doesn't show—including community-based violence intervention programs; regulatory efforts, funding campaigns, and on-the-ground implementation; local executive action and city and town ordinances; and responsible cultural norms around gun safety.

Where do we go from here?

A safer future is possible. Our gun law rankings show which states are ahead and which are behind, and provide a checklist for how to get there.

How did we calculate these rankings? Learn more in our methodology.



How does gun violence impact your state? Learn more about gun violence statistics.



Join our movement to advocate for change in your state.



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No. 22-56090 archived September 8, 2023

2023 Everytown Gun Law Rankings
Last updated January 12, 2023

Methodology



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Join Us.

Every day, 120 people in America are killed with guns. The gun homicide rate in the U.S. is 26 times higher than that of other developed countries, but research shows that common-sense public safety laws can reduce gun violence and save lives.

[JOIN US](#)

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License Statistics

License sales data is organized by license type and year. Data available includes license fees, quantity issued and revenue totals.

- **Sport Fishing**

Sport fishing licenses are valid January 1 through December 31. Validations and report cards are required for certain species or areas.

- **Hunting**

Hunting licenses are valid July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Validations and harvest tags are required for many species.

- [Big Game Hunting Drawing Statistics](#)
- [Waterfowl Reservation Drawing Statistics](#)

- **Commercial Fish Businesses**

Commercial fish business licenses are valid from January 1 through December 31.

- **Commercial Fishing**

Commercial fishing licenses, permits and registrations are valid from April 1 through March 31.

- **Special Licenses and Permits**

Special permits, licenses, registrations, and stamps are valid at different times throughout the year. These licenses are issued only at the [License and Revenue Branch in Sacramento](#) and are required for the taking, buying, selling, breeding, viewing, possessing, studying, and collecting of certain animals. Special permits are required for biological supply houses, falconers, fallow deer farmers, domesticated game breeders, guides, hunting clubs, native reptile propagators, restricted species permittees, scientific collectors, and trappers.

CDFW's License and Revenue Branch is responsible for the issuance and revenue collection of approximately 400 types of licenses and permits related to recreational hunting and fishing, commercial fishing and special permits. The Department enlists approximately 1,300 retail license agents and online license sales to issue sport fishing and hunting license through the Automated License Data System (ALDS). License Agents vary in size from "mom and pop" stores in rural areas to large big box stores in urban areas. License Agents issue licenses to the public through Internet Point of Sale (IPOS) terminals.

License sales statistics by area are available upon request for sport fishing and hunting items. Contact the Department's License and Revenue Branch for more information.

- Email the [License and Revenue Branch](#)
- [Look up License Agents](#)
- [CDFW Offices](#)

Sport Fishing Licenses

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
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Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗
2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗
2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗
1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗
1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗
1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗

Commercial Fishing Licenses

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗
2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗
2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗
1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗
1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗
1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗

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Hunting Licenses

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗
2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗
2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗
1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗
1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗

Commercial Fish Business Licenses

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗
2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗
2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗
1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗
1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗
1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗

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Special Licenses and Permits

Fees	Number Issued	Revenue
2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗	2020s (PDF) ↗
2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗	2010s (PDF) ↗
2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗	2000s (PDF) ↗
1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗	1990s (PDF) ↗
1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗	1980s (PDF) ↗
1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗	1970s (PDF) ↗

Hunting Licenses and Tags

Items & Fees	Tag Reporting	Reduced-Fee	Forms	FAQs
	Exchanges, Returns, Preference Points			

License Items and Fees

Purchase these items [ONLINE](#) or at any [CDFW License Sales Office](#) or [License Agent](#).

Valid JULY 1, 2023 through JUNE 30, 2024

Fish and Game Code Section 70 defines "Resident" as any person who has resided continuously in the State of California for six months or more immediately prior to the date of their application for a license or permit, any person on active military duty with the Armed Forces of the United States or auxiliary branch thereof, or any person enrolled in the Job Corps established pursuant to Section 2883 of Title 29 of the United States Code.

Fish and Game Code Section 86 defines "Take" as hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill.

License fees include a 3% nonrefundable application fee, not to exceed \$7.50 per item.

Licenses issued from license agents include a 5% nonrefundable license agent handling fee.

Hunting Licenses

Title	Fee	Description
Resident Hunting License	\$58.58	Required for any resident 16 years of age or older who takes birds or mammals.
Nonresident Hunting License	\$204.69	Required for any nonresident 16 years of age or older who takes birds or mammals.
Junior Hunting License	\$15.38	Required for any resident or nonresident less than 16 years of age who takes birds or mammals. To qualify, hunter must be less than 16 years of age at the beginning of the license year (July 1).
One-Day Nonresident Hunting License	\$28.08	<p>IMPORTANT! This license is only available for nonresidents taking resident and migratory game birds on Licensed Game Bird Clubs (Upland Game Bird Validation is also required) or Licensed Domesticated Migratory Game Bird Shooting Areas (Federal Duck Stamp and California Duck Validation are also required).</p> <p>This license is only available for purchase online or at any CDFW License</p>

Title	Fee	Description
		Sales Offices.
Two-Day Nonresident Hunting License	\$58.58	Starting with the 2023-2024 hunting license year, a Two-Day Nonresident Hunting License allows a nonresident 16 years of age or older to take resident and migratory game birds, resident small game mammals, wild pigs, nongame mammals and furbearers for two consecutive days. Additional validations and tags may be required for certain species. IMPORTANT! This license is NOT valid for deer, bear, elk, pronghorn antelope, or bighorn sheep.
Disabled Veteran Reduced Fee Hunting License	\$9.01 at CDFW Offices \$9.46 from License Agents	Available for any resident or nonresident honorably discharged disabled veteran with a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability. After you prequalify for your first Disabled Veteran Reduced Fee Hunting License, you can purchase a disabled veteran license anywhere licenses are sold. Disabled Veteran Reduced Fee Hunting License
Recovering Service Member Reduced-Fee Hunting License	\$9.01 at CDFW Offices \$9.46 from License Agents	Available to any recovering service member. A recovering service member is defined as a member of the armed forces, including a member of the National Guard or a Reserve, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy and is in an outpatient status while recovering from a serious injury or illness related to the member's military service. After you prequalify for your Recovering Service Member Reduced-Fee Hunting License, you can purchase a recovering service member hunting license anywhere licenses are sold. Recovering Service Member Reduced-Fee Hunting License
Duplicate Hunting License	\$12.96	Available Online , at any CDFW License Sales Offices and License Agents .

Big Game Tag Drawing Applications

More information about Applying for the Big Game Tag Drawing

Title	Fee	Description
Resident First-Deer Tag or First-Deer Tag Drawing Application	\$38.62	Hunters may obtain two deer tags per license year. Applicants for deer tags must be age 12 as of July 1, of the current license year or at the time of purchase if purchasing after July 1. A First-Deer Tag Drawing Application or First-Deer Tag must be purchased before or at the same time as a Second-Deer Tag Drawing Application (junior hunters only) or Second-Deer Tag. See the Big Game Hunting Digest for more information.
Resident Second-Deer Tag or Second-	\$48.09	

Title	Fee	Description
Deer Tag Drawing Application		
Nonresident First-Deer Tag or First-Deer Tag Drawing Application	\$343.25	
Nonresident Second-Deer Tag or	\$343.25	

Big Game Tags

Title	Fee	Description
Bear Tag	\$30.81 Resident Junior \$56.98 Resident \$361.90 Nonresident	Resident and nonresident licensed hunters age 12 or older as of July 1 of the current license year, may purchase. One bear tag per license year.
Elk Tag	\$25.41 Resident Junior \$554.80 Resident \$1,700.35 Nonresident	Resident and nonresident licensed hunters age 12 or older as of July 1 of the current license year, may enter a drawing for this tag. Each person may submit only one Elk Tag Drawing Application per license year.
Pronghorn Antelope Tag	\$25.41 Resident Junior \$186.84 Resident \$571.60 Nonresident	Resident and nonresident licensed hunters, age 12 or older as of July 1 of the current license year, may enter a drawing for this tag. Each person may submit only one Pronghorn Tag Drawing Application per license year.
Bighorn Sheep Tag	\$532.75 Resident \$1,977.05 Nonresident	Resident and nonresident licensed hunters, age 16 or older as of July 1 of the current license year, may enter a drawing for this tag. Each person may submit only one Bighorn Sheep Tag Drawing Application per license year. Hunters can not apply as a party. Applicants can not apply if they have previously been issued a California Bighorn Sheep Tag through the Big Game Drawing.
Wild Pig Tag	\$28.08 Resident \$94.22 Nonresident	Resident and nonresident licensed hunters, 12 years of age or older at the time of application, may purchase an unlimited number of Wild Pig Tags. Tags are nonrefundable and nontransferable.

Bird Hunting Validations

Title	Fee	Description
California Duck Validation	\$37.29	Required for any person taking waterfowl, excluding juniors hunting under the authority of a Junior Hunting License.
Upland Game Bird Validations	\$23.25	Required for any person taking upland game bird species, excluding juniors hunting under the authority of a Junior Hunting License.
Federal Duck Stamp	\$25.00	Required for any person hunting waterfowl. Hunters under the age of 16 are exempt from the Federal Duck Stamp requirement. Federal Duck Stamps are not sold at CDFW offices. Federal Duck Stamps can be purchased at many post offices and some license agents. More information about the Federal Duck Stamp (USFWS) ↗.
Harvest Information Program (HIP) Validation	NO FEE	Required for any person hunting ducks, dove, gallinules, geese, band-tailed pigeon, black brant, coots, and snipe. This validation is free to hunters who complete the Harvest Information Program (HIP) Survey. The validation is available where hunting licenses are sold. The HIP Validation is imprinted on your hunting license document when you answer the HIP Survey questions. If you hunt migratory game birds, verify that a HIP Validation has been printed on your hunting license. The HIP Survey provides wildlife biologists with data needed to make wildlife management decisions and formulate hunting seasons. More information about HIP ↗.

Passes for State-Operated Hunting Areas

Title	Fee	Description
Type A One-Day Pass	\$26.49	Allows a licensed hunter to hunt on a Type A State-operated Wildlife Area for one day if space is available. Junior hunters are exempt from permit requirements.
Type A Two-Day Pass	\$42.38	Allows a licensed hunter to hunt on a Type A State-operated Wildlife Area. This pass may be used as follows: 1) by one person for any two authorized shoot days; or 2) by two persons on any one authorized shoot day. Junior hunters are exempt from pass requirements.
Type A Season Pass	\$198.98	Allows a licensed hunter unlimited season access to Type A and Type B State-operated Wildlife Areas for one person if space is available. Junior hunters are exempt from permit requirements.
Type B Season Pass	\$66.70	Allows a licensed hunter unlimited season access to Type B State-operated Wildlife Areas for one person if space is available. Junior hunters are exempt from pass requirements.

Reservation Applications for State-Operated Hunting Areas

Title	Fee	Description
Reservation Application	\$1.34 per application	Allows a licensed hunter to apply for reservation drawings to hunt on State-operated Wildlife Areas.

Lifetime Hunting Licenses

Title	2023 Fee	Description
Ages 0-9	\$644.50	Available to any resident showing proof of completion of hunter education training. Lifetime hunting licensees receive an annual hunting license each year for life. Lifetime Hunting Packages must first be purchased from a CDFW License Sales Office . See Lifetime License application and information for more detail.
Ages 10-39	\$1,054.25	
Ages 40-61	\$949.75	
Ages 62+	\$644.50	
Lifetime Bird Hunting Privilege Package	\$374.25	Lifetime licensees who purchase the Lifetime Bird Hunting Privilege Package receive Upland Game Bird and California Duck Validations each year for life.
Lifetime Big Game Hunting Privilege Package	\$784.50	Lifetime licensees who purchase the Big Game Hunting Privilege Package receive a One-Deer Tag Application and five Wild Pig Tags each year for life.

Permits for Hunters with Disabilities

Title	Fee	Description
Mobility Impaired Disabled Persons Motor Vehicle Hunting License Application	NO FEE	Available to any resident or nonresident for mobility impaired disabled hunter who must use a motor vehicle to pursue game. A person must be either permanently or fully confined to a wheel chair, a single or double amputee above the knee or double amputee below the knee or depend upon the aid of a walker, crutches, etc. to walk. Certification from the hunter's physician is required. The license is only available from the CDFW's License and Revenue Branch .

[Mobility Impaired Disabled Persons Motor Vehicle Hunting License \(PDF Form\)](#).

Title	Fee	Description
Visually Disabled Muzzleloader Scope Permit	NO FEE	Available to any resident or nonresident visually impaired hunter having a permanent loss, significant limitation, or diagnosed disease or disorder, which substantially impairs the vision of a hunter, preventing the hunter from viewing and aligning the sights of a muzzle-loading rifle with the target in order to hunt deer. A visually disabled hunter may use a scope of no more than one power while hunting under the conditions of a muzzle-loading deer hunt tag. Certification from the hunter's physician or optometrist is required annually, except if the physician or optometrist indicated on the initial application that the hunter's disability is permanent the hunter will be able to provide a copy of their previously issued Visually Disabled Muzzleloader Scope Permit to renew the permit. The permit is only available from the CDFW's License and Revenue Branch .

[Visually Disabled Muzzleloader Scope Permit Application \(PDF Form\)](#).

Disabled Archer Permit	NO FEE	Available to any resident or nonresident hunter's having permanent loss, significant limitation, or diagnosed disease or disorder, which substantially impairs one or both upper extremities preventing a hunter to draw and hold a bow in a firing position. Allows the hunter to hunt with a crossbow or other device to draw and hold a bow in a firing position under the conditions of an archery tag or during archery season. Certification from the hunter's physician is required annually, except if the physician indicated on the initial application that the hunter's disability is permanent the hunter will be able to provide a copy of their previously issued Disabled Archer Permit to renew the permit. The permit is only available from the CDFW's License and Revenue Branch .
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[Disabled Archer Permit Application \(PDF Form\)](#).

Duplicate Fees

Title	Fee	Description
Duplicate Hunting License	\$12.96	Replaces a lost or stolen hunting license.
Duplicate Hunting Validation	\$3.50	(California Duck Validation and Upland Game Bird Validation) Replaces lost or stolen hunting validations.
Duplicate Big Game Tag	\$12.96	Replaces lost or stolen big game tags. Available only at CDFW license sales offices. Duplicate Big Game Tag Affidavit (PDF Form)
Duplicate Hunter Education Certificate	\$8.13	Replaces a lost or stolen Hunter Education Certificate.

Related Information

- [Available Deer Tags \(PDF\)](#) 
- [Big Game Tags and Drawings](#)
- [Certificate of Nonreceipt / CNR \(PDF\)](#) 
- [Collectible Stamps](#)
- [Free Hunt Days](#)
- [General Hunting Information](#)
- [Hunter Education Requirements](#)
- [Hunting Regulations](#)
- [Licensed Game Bird Clubs \(PDF\)](#) 
- [Search For a Licensed Guide \(Fishing and Hunting\)](#)
- [Waterfowl Hunting Reservations](#)

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