



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Senator Griffo's Weekly Column #5: Changes to Sportsmen's Licenses

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Attention sportsmen: Starting Feb. 1, New York is making changes to its hunting and fishing licenses, including reducing fees.

Gov. Cuomo proposed simplifying the licensing system during last year's budget negotiations. I voted to support the proposal because I felt it would encourage more hunters, anglers and trappers – whether living here or out of state – to make use of New York's great outdoors.

Here are some of the biggest changes you should know about:

- **Fishing license:** A fishing license is currently \$29 for New York residents and \$70 for non-residents and it's valid through Sept. 30, regardless of when you bought it. Starting Feb. 1, the price will be \$25 for residents ages 16-69 and \$50 for non-residents – and the license will be good for one full year.
- **Hunting licenses:** These licenses are currently valid from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. However, this year the dates are Sept. 1 to Aug. 31. This makes a lot of sense, as early goose, squirrel, early bear and northern zone bow hunting for deer have seasons that begin in September.
The state has also combined small game and big game licenses into a single hunting license, which will cost \$22 for those ages 16 to 69. (The previous cost was \$29.) It will be \$100 for non-residents for a small game/big game license.
- **Combination licenses:** If you've got a combination license already, it's good through Sept. 30. However, as part of the restructuring, the DEC has eliminated sportsman, super sportsman and conservation legacy licenses. You'll have to purchase individual licenses, privileges and permits instead. For residents, the cost of old sportsman license versus the combined cost of a new individual hunting and individual fishing license will be the same: \$47. The cost of an old super sportsman license for residents versus a new individual hunting, fishing, bow, muzzleloader and turkey license will also be the same: \$88. Non-residents will see a slight reduction when purchasing the new licenses individually versus the old combination licenses.
My office has already heard from a couple of sportsmen concerned that it will be more difficult to purchase individual licenses than it was to purchase a combination license. I urge you to call my office at (315) 793-9072 if you encounter such a difficulty so I can share that feedback with the DEC.
- **Lifetime licenses:** There will be no changes to the cost of a lifetime license.

I've also heard concerns that the DEC is transitioning to separate licenses so that it can eventually hike fees. I've not seen evidence that this is the case, but rest assured that I will keep an eye on the proposals and oppose any fee increases in the future.

For more details on licenses - including reduced fees for juniors, seniors and military members - visit the DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/95007.html>

As always, my office will be happy to assist you if you encounter trouble purchasing a license or have any questions about the changes.