

TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET
Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
(New Administrative Regulation)

301 KAR 3:150. Hunting and Fishing Outfitter and Guide Licenses.

RELATES TO: KRS 150.170, 150.412, 164.772

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 150.025, 150.175, 150.190

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, pursuant to statutory authority to promulgate administrative regulations to carry out the provisions of KRS Chapter 150 as established in KRS 150.025 and as an independent department of state government within the meaning of KRS Chapter 12 as established in KRS 150.021(1), promulgated by the Commissioner with approval of the Commission in accordance with KRS 150.010(1), does hereby certify this administrative regulation is promulgated in compliance with Section 8 of 2025 RS HB6.

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 150.025 authorizes the department to promulgate administrative regulations to establish open seasons for the taking of wildlife, to regulate bag limits and methods of take, and to make these requirements apply statewide or to a limited area. KRS 150.175 authorizes the department to issue an outfitter and guide license. KRS 150.190 authorizes the department to ensure that an applicant for an outfitter or guide license is qualified to act as an outfitter or guide. This administrative regulation establishes the requirements for an outfitter and guide license.

Section 1. Outfitter License Requirements and Application.

- (1) A person who possesses a valid Hunting Outfitter license may guide clients in the take or attempt to take wildlife.
- (2) A person who possesses a valid Fishing Outfitter License may guide clients in the take or the attempt to take fish.
- (3) A person who possesses an outfitter license who guides clients in the take, or in the attempt to take, fish or wildlife must comply with the guide reporting requirements established in Section 7 of this administrative regulation.
- (4) Outfitter License Types.
 - (a) A Fishing Outfitter License Tier 1 is required for a fishing outfitter that operates without any fishing guides working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
 - (b) A Fishing Outfitter License Tier 2 is required for a fishing outfitter that operates with one (1) or more fishing guides working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
 - (c) A Hunting Outfitter License Tier 1 is required for a hunting outfitter that operates without any hunting guides working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
 - (d) A Hunting Outfitter License Tier 2 is required for a hunting outfitter that operates with one (1) hunting guide working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
 - (e) A Hunting Outfitter License Tier 3 is required for a hunting outfitter that operates with two (2) to four (4) hunting guides working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
 - (f) A Hunting Outfitter License Tier 4 is required for a hunting outfitter that operates with five (5) or more hunting guides working for, or contracted with, the license holder.
- (5) A fishing or hunting outfitter license shall be valid from March 1 through the last day of February.
- (6) An applicant for an outfitter license shall:
 - (a) Be eighteen (18) years of age or older;
 - (b) Have not been convicted of any state or federal fish, boat or wildlife violation during the previous three (3) years;

- (c) Have not been convicted of a felony;
 - (d) Possess a valid annual fishing license and trout permit if applicable; and
 - (e) Possess a valid annual hunting license and all applicable game permits, except elk.
- (7) In order to obtain an outfitter license, a person shall submit to the department by mail or online at fw.ky.gov/dclapp:
- (a) A completed Fishing or Hunting Outfitter License Application form to the Division of Law Enforcement, #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601;
 - (b) A Law Information Network of Kentucky National Crime Information Center (LINK/NCIC) background check obtained through the Kentucky State Police;
 - (c) Proof of a valid and current certification in:
 - 1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and
 - 2. First aid.
 - (d) Proof of completion of a boater education course upon applying for:
 - 1. A fishing outfitter license for fishing in a boat; or
 - 2. A hunting outfitter license for hunting in or with a boat;
 - (e) Proof of completion of a hunter education course upon applying for a hunting outfitter license;
 - (f) A copy of the applicant's valid driver's license, or state issued identification card;
 - (g) The applicable fee for the appropriate outfitter license as referenced at <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Pages/Fees.aspx> and established in 301 KAR 5:022 or the price difference between the license tier levels if license holder is modifying the application during the license year; and
 - (h) If applying for a Fishing Outfitter License and the license holder plans to utilize a fishing helper, provide the fishing helper(s) name, address and Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Customer Identification Number.
- (8) An outfitter license applicant who possesses a valid United States Coast Guard Captain's License, or Six-pack, may submit a copy of this license in lieu of the boater education course requirements and the CPR and first aid requirements for obtaining a license.
- (9) An outfitter shall not facilitate, promote, or assist a client in the violation of, or attempt of, any state or federal fish or wildlife law or regulation.
- (10) An outfitter shall not participate in the taking of fish or game beyond the daily limit of the person or persons being guided, except that an outfitter may take a daily limit of fish or game, as applicable, while guiding.
- (11) An outfitter shall obtain the applicable permits, provide the applicable boater education documentation, and update their application during the license year:
- (a) To add or remove a guide under their outfitter license;
 - (b) To add or remove a fishing helper under their fishing outfitter license; or
 - (c) Prior to guiding for a species not selected on their most recent application; or
 - (d) Prior to guiding from a boat, if they did not select that they intended to guide from a boat on their most recent application.
- (12) If an outfitter employees or contracts with a guide under the outfitter license in which results in an increase in license tier level, the outfitter shall pay the remaining fee balance between the previous license tier and the new license tier level. The new guide shall not be approved until all the pertinent documents are submitted and approved as established in Section 3 of this administrative regulation.
- (13) A Fishing Outfitter License holder shall be allowed to use a fishing helper as established in Section 6 of this administrative regulation.
- (14) The department shall not refund the payment for an outfitter license if the license holder's outfitter license is suspended, revoked or if the outfitter license tier level decreases within the license year.

Section 2. Outfitter License Prohibitions and Revocation.

- (1) The department shall revoke and not renew the outfitter license for a period of three
- (3) years of a person who:
 - (a) Is convicted of any state or federal fish, boat, or game violation;
 - (b) Knowingly aides a client in the illegal take of fish or wildlife;
 - (c) Intentionally falsifies the license application; or
 - (d) Intentionally falsifies the Guiding Activity Report.
- (2) The department shall deny or permanently revoke the outfitter license of a person convicted of a felony.
- (3) The department may suspend or revoke an outfitter license if one (1) or more licensed guide working under the outfitter license holder is convicted of any state or federal fish, boat, or game violation.
- (4) The guide license for any guides working under an outfitter whose outfitter license has been suspended, denied, or revoked, shall also be suspended or denied until such time the supervising outfitter's license is reinstated or until their guide license is transferred under an outfitter with a valid license.
- (5) The department shall deny an outfitter license to a person who:
 - (a) Fails to meet the eligibility requirements;
 - (b) Fails to properly complete the application process;
 - (c) Has not yet submitted all required reporting information from a prior license year; or
 - (d) Otherwise meets the grounds for revocation or suspension of an outfitter license.

Section 3. Guide License Requirements and Application.

- (1) A person shall possess a valid fishing guide license issued under a fishing outfitter license holder in order to guide others in the taking of fish.
- (2) A person shall possess a valid hunting guide license issued under a hunting outfitter license holder in order to guide others in the taking of wildlife.
- (3) A guide license shall be valid from March 1 through the last day of February.
- (4) An applicant for a guide license shall:
 - (a) Be eighteen (18) years of age or older;
 - (b) Have not been convicted of any state or federal fish, boat or wildlife violation during the previous three (3) years;
 - (c) Have not been convicted of a felony;
 - (d) Possess a valid annual fishing license if applying for a fishing guide license; and
 - (e) Possess a valid annual hunting license and all applicable game permits, except elk, if applying for a hunting guide license.
- (5) In order to obtain a guide license, a person shall submit to the department by mail or online at fw.ky.gov/dclapp:
 - (a) A completed Fishing or Hunting Guide License Application form to the Division of Law Enforcement, #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601;
 - (b) A Law Information Network of Kentucky National Crime Information Center (LINK/NCIC) background check obtained through the Kentucky State Police;
 - (c) Proof of a valid and current certification in:
 1. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); and
 2. First aid;
 - (d) Proof of completion of a boater education course upon applying for:
 1. A fishing guide license for fishing in a boat; or
 2. A hunting guide license for hunting in or with a boat;
 - (e) Proof of completion of a hunter education course upon applying for a hunting guide license; and
 - (f) A copy of the applicant's valid driver's license, or state issued identification card;

- (g) The applicable fee as referenced at <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Pages/Fees.aspx> and established in 301 KAR 5:022; and
- (h) If applying for a Fishing Guide License and the license holder plans to utilize a fishing helper, provide the fishing helper(s) name, address and the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Customer Identification Number.
- (6) A completed guide application must be accompanied with the appropriate corresponding outfitter license application as established in Section 1 of this administrative regulation.
- (7) A guide applicant who possesses a valid United States Coast Guard Captain's License, or Six-pack, may submit a copy of this license in lieu of the boater education course requirements and the CPR and first aid requirements for obtaining a license.
- (8) A guide shall not facilitate, promote, or assist a client in the violation of, or attempt of, any state or federal fish, boat or wildlife law or regulation.
- (9) A Fishing or Hunting Guide License shall only be issued to a person who is approved to work for, or contracted with, a licensed Hunting or Fishing Outfitter.
- (10) A fishing guide shall only work under a fishing outfitter who has listed the fishing guide on their fishing outfitter license application.
- (11) A hunting guide shall only work under a hunting outfitter who has listed the hunting guide on their hunting outfitter license application.
- (12) A Fishing Guide License holder may be allowed to use a fishing helper as established in Section 6 of this administrative regulation.
- (13) If the license of the outfitter under which a guide operates is suspended or revoked, the guide shall not be allowed to perform guiding activities until such time the outfitter's license is reinstated or the guide's affiliation is moved under a different outfitter with a valid license.
- (14) A guide shall obtain the applicable permits, provide the applicable boater education documentation, and update their application during the license year:
- (a) To add or remove a fishing helper from under their fishing guide license;
 - (b) Prior to guiding for a species not selected on their most recent application; or
 - (c) Prior to guiding from a boat, if they did not select that they intended to guide from a boat on their most recent application.
- (15) The department shall not refund the payment for a guide license if the license holder's guide license is suspended or revoked.

Section 4. Guide License Prohibitions, Denials, Suspension, and Revocation.

- (1) A guide shall not participate in the taking of fish or game beyond the daily limit of the person or persons being guided, except that a guide may take a daily limit of fish or game, as applicable, while guiding.
- (2) The department shall revoke and not renew the guide license for a period of three (3) years, of a person who:
- (a) Is convicted of any state or federal fish, boat, or game violation;
 - (b) Knowingly aides a client in the illegal take of fish or wildlife;
 - (c) Intentionally falsifies the license application; or
 - (d) Intentionally falsifies the Guiding Activity Report.
- (3) The department shall deny or permanently revoke the guide license of a person convicted of a felony.
- (4) The department shall deny a guide license to a person who:
- (a) Fails to meet the eligibility requirements;
 - (b) Fails to properly complete the application process;
 - (c) Has not yet submitted all required reporting information from a prior license year; or
 - (d) Otherwise meets the grounds for revocation or suspension of a guide license.

(5) The department shall suspend a guide license upon notification of the removal of a guide by the corresponding outfitter.

(6) The department may suspend a fishing outfitter or fishing guide license for failure to submit required reports as established in Section 7 of this regulation.

Section 5. Requirements for Specific Guiding Activities.

(1) While guiding for a species that requires a permit for take, outfitters and guides shall possess all required licenses and permits to take the fish or wildlife being pursued, except an outfitter or guide need not possess an elk permit while guiding for elk.

(2) Outfitters and guides performing guiding activities while on a boat shall possess and present to a game warden upon request, either:

(a) Proof of completion of boater education course; or

(b) A valid United States Coast Guard Captain's License or Six-pack.

(3) While guiding on private land, an outfitter or guide shall provide at the request of a game warden a name and phone number of the person granting the outfitter or guide permission to be on the private property.

Section 6. Fishing Helper.

(1) A fishing outfitter or fishing guide may utilize a fishing helper(s).

(2) A fishing helper shall have in possession while assisting a fishing outfitter or fishing guide a valid Kentucky fishing license and applicable permits for the fish their clients are taking, or attempting to take.

(3) A fishing outfitter or the fishing guide shall be responsible for any violation of this administrative regulation by a fishing helper who is registered by the fishing outfitter or fishing guide.

(4) A fishing helper shall be registered on the Outfitter License or Guide License Application as established in Section 1 and Section 3 of this administrative regulation.

(5) A fishing helper shall not participate in the taking of fish beyond the daily limit of the person or persons being guided, except that a fishing helper may take a daily limit of fish, as applicable, while guiding.

Section 7. Reporting Requirements.

(1) Outfitter license holders and guide license holders shall report their guiding activities using the online Guiding Activity Reporting portal at <https://app.fw.ky.gov/commReport>:

(a) By the 15th day of every month for the previous month's guiding, for all Fishing Guide or Fishing Outfitter license holders, even if no guiding occurred for fishing;

(b) Within thirty (30) days after closure of the hunting season for a species in which the Hunting Outfitter or Hunting Guide was approved to take or attempt to take, even if no guiding occurred for hunting; or

(c) Within thirty (30) days after the end of the license year for a species that can be hunted year-round in which the Hunting Outfitter or Hunting Guide was approved to take or attempt to take, even if no guiding occurred for hunting.

(2) The outfitter or guide conducting the guiding shall submit all the following information, using the online Guide Activity Reporting portal, by each of the applicable deadlines established in subsection (1) of this section:

(a) For guiding for fishing:

1. Outfitter or guide name;

2. Outfitter or guide license number;

3. Whether guiding for fishing occurred during the month, and if so:

a. Dates fished or bowfished;

b. Waterbody fished per day fished or bowfished;

c. Fish species targeted each day;

d. Number of anglers or bowfishers guided per trip;

- e. Hours fished or bowfished per trip; and
- f. Fish species caught or shot and the number of each species that were:
 - (i) Released with number of fish below legal harvest size and at or above legal harvest size; and
 - (ii) Harvested.
- (b) For guiding for hunting:
 - 1. Outfitter or guide name;
 - 2. Outfitter or guide license number;
 - 3. Species targeted;
 - 4. Total number of guided resident and nonresident clients per species targeted;
 - 5. Number of animals harvested per species by sex of the animal;
 - 6. Number of animals shot, but not recovered by sex of the animal for black bear, bobcat, deer, elk, and turkey;
 - 7. Name of each county where guiding occurred per species;
 - 8. Name of each public land area where guiding occurred per species; and
 - 9. Indicate whether any guiding was performed for any pen-raised animals or at facilities that are permitted as a shooting facility.
- (3) Failure to submit the required reporting information by the deadline established in subsection (1) of this section for guiding conducted by a fishing outfitter or fishing guide will result in:
 - (a) Issuance of a courtesy reminder letter to a fishing guide or fishing outfitter who has once failed to properly submit the reporting information during the license year.
 - (b) Issuance of a warning letter to a fishing guide or fishing outfitter who has twice failed to properly submit the reporting information during the license year.
 - (c) Suspension of the fishing guide or fishing outfitter license of a fishing guide or fishing outfitter who has failed to properly submit the reporting information for three (3) or more months in a given license year until the fishing guide or fishing outfitter submits to the department all required reporting information.
 - (d) Suspension of the fishing guide or fishing outfitter license for a period of three (3) months for failure to properly submit the reporting information four (4) or more times in a license year.
 - (e) Additional three (3) month suspension of the fishing guide or fishing outfitter license if a prior year's three (3) month suspension extends into a new license year and subsequent failures to properly submit the reporting information occur.
- (4) Failure to submit the required reporting information by the deadline established in subsection (1) of this section for guiding conducted by a hunting outfitter or hunting guide will result in denial of future license applications or renewals until all required reporting has been completed.

Section 8. Administrative Hearings.

- (1) An individual whose outfitter or guide license has been denied or revoked may request an administrative hearing pursuant to KRS Chapter 13B.
- (2) A request for a hearing shall be in writing and postmarked or delivered in person to the department no later than thirty (30) days after notification of the denial or the revocation.
- (3) Upon receipt of the request for a hearing, the department shall proceed according to the provisions of KRS Chapter 13B.
- (4) The hearing officer's recommended order shall be considered by the department's commissioner, and the department's commissioner shall issue a final order, pursuant to KRS Chapter 13B.

Section 9. Incorporation by Reference.

- (1) "Fishing Outfitter License Application", 2025 edition, is incorporated by reference.

- (2) "Fishing Guide License Application", 2025 edition, is incorporated by reference.
- (3) "Hunting Outfitter License Application", 2025 edition, is incorporated by reference.
- (4) "Hunting Guide License Application", 2025 edition, is incorporated by reference.
- (5) This material may be inspected, copied, or obtained, subject to applicable copyright law, at the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, #1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or online at:
 - (a) <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Documents/Fishing-Outfitter-License-App.pdf> for the "Fishing Outfitter License Application";
 - (b) <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Documents/Fishing-Guide-License-App.pdf> for the "Fishing Guide Application";
 - (c) <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Documents/Hunting-Outfitter-License-App.pdf> for the "Hunting Outfitter Application";
 - (d) <https://fw.ky.gov/Licenses/Documents/Hunting-Guide-License-App.pdf> for the "Hunting Guide Application".

Approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission
RICH STORM, Commissioner

APPROVED BY AGENCY: July 3, 2025

FILED WITH LRC: July 9, 2025 at 3:30 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT PERIOD: A public hearing on this administrative regulation shall be held on September 29, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., at KDFWR Administration Building, 1 Sportsman's Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601. Individuals interested in being heard at this hearing shall notify this agency in writing by five workdays prior to the hearing, of their intent to attend. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing was received by that date, the hearing may be cancelled. A transcript of the public hearing will not be made unless a written request for a transcript is made. If you do not wish to be heard at the public hearing, you may submit written comments on the proposed administrative regulation. Written comments shall be accepted through September 30, 2025. Send written notification of intent to be heard at the public hearing or written comments on the proposed administrative regulation to the contact person.

CONTACT PERSON: Jenny Gilbert, Legislative Liaison, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, 1 Sportsman's Lane, phone (502) 564-3400, fax (502) 564-0506, email fwpubliccomments@ky.gov.