



Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Free and Reduced Fishing Licenses for Disabled Veterans

FACT SHEET

How does a disabled veteran qualify for a free fishing license?

Section 2707 of the Fish and Boat Code of 1980, as amended, 30 Pa.C.S. § 2707, sets forth the standards for free and reduced resident fishing licenses for disabled veterans.

To qualify for a free fishing license, an applicant must:

Be a bona fide resident of Pennsylvania;

(1) Have a service-connected disability

AND

(2) Be 100% disabled as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

How does a disabled veteran qualify for a reduced fishing license?

Any disabled veteran who has a service-connected disability who is between 60 and 99 percent disabled as certified by the United States Veterans Administration and is a resident of this Commonwealth may initially obtain a reduced fee resident annual or a senior resident lifetime fishing license upon application to the Fish and Boat Commission or county treasurer.

To qualify for a reduced fishing license, an applicant must:

Be a bona fide resident of Pennsylvania;

(1) Have a service-connected disability

AND

(2) Be 60 to 99% disabled as certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Where can a qualified resident disabled veteran obtain a free or reduced fishing license?

Free or reduced fishing licenses can be initially obtained from county treasurers, the Fish and Boat Commission's Harrisburg office or the six regional law enforcement offices. After providing verification of eligibility, annual licenses may then be obtained at any issuing agent or online.

What documentation is required?

First, the applicant must prove they are a bona fide resident in the same way as any applicant for a resident license.

The most common proof of residence is a driver's license, but applicants who don't have a driver's license may prove residence by showing other positive proof of domicile in the Commonwealth.

Second, the applicant must show they are a qualified disabled veteran. The only acceptable documentation is written certification from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that the applicant has a qualifying service-connected disability.

Must the applicant prove the injury or disability was combat-related?

No. The law requires that the injury or disability be service-connected. The law makes no mention of combat. The Fish and Boat Code's requirements for free resident fishing license for certain disabled veterans are consistent with other Pennsylvania laws.

Must the injury or disability have been incurred "in line of duty"?

No. The law requires that the injury or disability be "service-connected."

Would a soldier who sustained a qualifying 100% disability as a result of an automobile accident that occurred during a period of war or armed conflict qualify for a free fishing license?

Probably. If the disability were service-connected as certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, it is likely that the applicant would qualify.

How can a veteran qualify for a free lifetime resident fishing license?

The 100% disabled veteran must present documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to show the qualifying service-connected disability.

How can a veteran qualify for a reduced resident fishing license?

The 60 to 99% disabled veteran must present documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to show the qualifying disability.

Does a disabled veteran who qualified for a free fishing license have to pay for permits?

No. A Combination Trout /Lake Erie Permit will be issued free of charge to disabled veterans who qualify for free fishing licenses. This "combo" permit is valid as a trout and Lake Erie permit.

Does a disabled veteran who qualified for a reduced fishing license have to pay for permits?

Yes. If the veteran chooses to fish where the permit is required, the price of the permit is not reduced.