



2026 MENTORED PHEASANT HUNT APPLICATION PACKET





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INTRODUCTION

What is a mentored pheasant hunt?

Mentored Pheasant Hunts (formerly known as junior pheasant hunts) are designed to provide new hunters with a unique opportunity to gain experience. Every year, the Pennsylvania Game Commission works with organizations across the state to sponsor instructional pheasant hunts for mentored permit or junior license holders. The Pennsylvania Game Commission helps support these hunts by providing pheasants to clubs who are hosting these events across the commonwealth.

When can you host a mentored pheasant hunt?

Organized instructional mentored pheasant hunts can be hosted any time during the junior pheasant hunt season. This year the junior pheasant hunt season will be open October 10-18, 2026, which includes Sundays.

Who can host a mentored pheasant hunt?

Any of the following may apply to host a mentored pheasant hunt if your hunt is open to the public and anyone who meets the criteria to participate.

- ✓ Sportsmen's Clubs who have an interest in helping new hunters get afield and support the mission of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
- ✓ Any chapter or association of a conservation-based Non-Governmental Organization which promotes hunting for new hunters of all ages
- ✓ Federal or State Government Agencies who would like to provide hunting opportunities on their properties.
- ✓ An organization which wishes to help promote recruitment, and retention of hunters in the commonwealth.
- ✓ Other organizations or entities that are conservation adjacent.

If you feel you do not directly fall into one of the above categories and wish to host a hunt, please email mentoredhunting@pa.gov.

Please note, priority for receiving live birds will be given to organization who host an event that allow all new hunters (youth mentored permit holder, adult mentored permit holders and junior license holders) to participate.

Where can you host a mentored pheasant hunt?

Interested organizations can host a mentored pheasant hunt on any of the following properties:

- ✓ Privately owned property in which has suitable acreage and habitat for pheasant hunting. The hunt must remain open to the public for participants even though it is held on private land.
- ✓ Pennsylvania Game Commission owned property (State Game Lands). If you wish to host your event on State Game Lands, please fill out the “State Game Lands Special Use Permit Application (Form 60.7).” Your permit must be obtained prior to hosting your event on state game lands and will be distributed to you via your regional PGC office.
- ✓ Other publicly owned land (DCNR State forest, USFWS National Forest, etc..). Please contact the owner of the property to obtain permit and permission to host your hunt prior to the hunt.

Who can participate in a mentored pheasant hunt?

Junior license holders and all mentored permit holders are eligible to participate on organized mentored pheasant hunts during the junior pheasant hunt season.

To legally hunt pheasants, resident and nonresident junior hunting license holders and mentored permit holders need a pheasant hunting permit. Junior hunters and mentored hunters under the age of 17 must obtain a FREE pheasant hunting permit. Those 17 and older must purchase a pheasant hunting permit. Both can be obtained at huntfish.pa.gov or at any license issuing agent.

If you have any questions or concerns about who can or cannot participate on these hunts or what licenses are needed, please contact us at mentoredhunting@pa.gov.

Registration for your mentored pheasant hunt

Interested participants can register for mentored pheasant hunts on the Pennsylvania Game Commission’s event webpage. Anyone hosting an event is required to post and have participants register for the event through this event webpage. To learn how register an event, please email mentoredhunting@pa.gov to receive instructions on how to post your event.

Summary of 2026 mentored pheasant hunting regulations

- ✓ Pheasant hunting is open statewide for the special hunt season Oct. 10-18, 2026 (includes Sundays).
- ✓ Junior hunters and mentored permit holders under 17 need a FREE pheasant hunting permit.

- ✓ Mentored Permit holders over the age of 17 must purchase a Pheasant Hunting permit.
- ✓ Junior hunters and all mentored hunters can participate in the junior pheasant season. Hunters must be accompanied as required by law.
- ✓ All participants, including mentors, must wear 250 sq. inches of fluorescent orange on the head, chest, and back to legally pursue pheasants in Pennsylvania.
- ✓ Male and female pheasants may be taken in all WMUs (2 daily, 6 possession).
- ✓ There is no open season for taking pheasants in Wild Pheasant Recovery Areas, except as authorized by executive order.

Questions?

For additional information or questions, please email us at mentoredhunting@pa.gov.

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING A MENTORED PHEASANT HUNT

Step 1: Determine whether your club or organization has the capacity to host a hunt.

Mentorship is crucial for the success of these hunts. Prior to planning a hunt, consider how many hunt participants you would safely and realistically be able to support and if you can provide enough mentors for participants. Please note that mentors must be at least 21 years of age and possess a valid hunting license. Can you secure enough mentors to host a hunt?

Consider if your organization can supply the equipment and gear needed to host a hunt. All participants are required to wear at least 250 sq. inches of fluorescent orange and should have eye and ear protection. Can your organization provide the equipment needed to host a hunt?

The Pennsylvania Game Commission does NOT provide liability insurance for organizations who choose to host mentored pheasant hunts. Prior to planning a hunt, consider if your organization wants or needs liability insurance. At a minimum, we ask all mentors, event staff, and participant guardians to sign a Junior Hunt Consent and Release Form, prior to participating in a hunt.

If your club decides to host a mentored pheasant hunt, a planning timeline is provided in Appendix A to help you coordinate an event.

Step 2: Submit application to host a hunt and order birds.

Organizations planning on hosting a mentored pheasant hunt must submit a “Mentored Pheasant Hunt Notification” form (on page 8) and Request for Live Birds form (on page 9) to us via email at mentoredhunting@pa.gov or by mail at 2001 Elmerton Avenue Harrisburg, PA 17110 by August 17, 2026. Confirmation of number of participants must be submitted by September 21, 2026.

Step 3: Submit application for special use permit for hunts held on State Game Lands.

Organizations planning on hosting a mentored pheasant hunt must on State Game Lands must submit an application for a Special Use Permit found below in this application and at this link: <https://www.pa.gov/services/pgc/apply-for-a-state-game-lands-special-use-permit>

If you are hosting a hunt on a different type of public land, please consult the landowner to obtain proper permit and permissions.

Step 4: Set up participant registration and advertise event.

Once your application has been accepted, the Pennsylvania Game Commission will provide you details and login information to post your mentored pheasant hunt on our event webpage (event manager system). At least two months prior to your event, please go to our event webpage and make sure your event is posted and all the details are correct. A link for promotional purposes can be pulled from this page. If you have questions or any issues, please contact us at mentoredhunting@pa.gov or via phone at 717-787-7015.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission will collectively promote the state’s mentored pheasant hunt events but will not promote each event individually. To increase registration, we encourage organizations to take steps to promote their specific mentored pheasant hunt. To assist with promotions, a fillable flyer and social media graphics are available for download and use on our mentored pheasant hunt webpage, as well as included in this packet. We recommend start promoting your mentored pheasant hunt at least two months in advance.

Step 5: Schedule a day to pick up birds and release birds.

Organizations should contact their local Game Commission region office during the last week of September to schedule a time and place to pick up birds. Please note, birds must be transported on a trailer or a ventilated pick-up truck bed.

- ✓ Northwest Region Office: 814.432.3187
- ✓ Southwest Region Office: 724.238.9523
- ✓ Northcentral Region Office: 570.398.4744
- ✓ Southcentral Region Office: 814.643.1831
- ✓ Northeast Region Office: 570.675.1143
- ✓ Southeast Region Office: 610.926.3136

Pheasants provided by the Game Commission will be distributed at a rate of two legal birds per youth participant. Birds will be provided at the same sex ratio as the Game Commission distributes during the regular pheasant-hunting season. Male and female pheasants shall be stocked at each release site to promote a natural hunting scenario and aid in training youth to identify their target. The ratio will be 1:1 (female/male).

These pheasants are raised in a natural environment with minimum human contact. Since they are relatively wild, they can be injured easily – even die – during shipment. Please see Appendix B for important information to assist you in handling crates with live pheasants, as well as releasing pheasants from the crates, to ensure a successful and positive hunting experience for participants.

All Game Commission-provided pheasants must be stocked prior to the event. To increase the chance of flushing pheasants, it is recommended that birds be held overnight and stocked at first daylight before participants arrive.

Step 6: Host the hunt.

On the day of the event, please ensure all participants have filled out and signed an Emergency Medical Authorization Form and Junior Hunt Consent and Release prior to participating. Each of these documents can be found at the end of this document.

APPENDIX A: JUNIOR PHEASANT HUNT PLANNING TIMELINE

6 Months Prior

- Select a location to host mentored pheasant hunt.
- Host planning meeting with organization club.
- Outline what gear and equipment will be needed for the hunt. How will this gear/equipment be supplied?
- Does your club have liability insurance? If not, do you need it?
- Will your organization supply food for this event? Could you find a partner or sponsor to donate food for this event?
- Does your organization want to provide training prior? Like an orientation day or hunter education course.
- Do you plan to hunt with dogs? If so, how many and who will bring them?
- Find sponsors or host fundraising events to help fund mentored pheasant hunt, if needed.
- Start to recruit volunteers to staff event and mentors.

4 Months Prior

- Fill out and submit junior pheasant hunt application form and if needed, the request for live birds form by August 17, 2025
- If your organization is offering a hunter education course for participants, determine a date and secure instructors for event. If you need assistance, please reach out to us via email at mentoredhunting@pa.gov

3 Months Prior

- Post your event on the Pennsylvania Game Commission's event website when given the login and credentials.
- Host meeting with pertinent members, event staff, and mentors to:
- Give an overview of the event.
- Designate responsibilities and ensure everyone understands what they are doing.
- Ensure funding has been secured and equipment will be available.
- Prepare all promotional and print materials needed for event.
- Prepare a packet of information to send to participants at least two weeks in advance. Packet could include information about training opportunities prior, equipment/gear that participants must bring, schedule for the day etc.
- Create promotional materials to advertise event (or download and use the ones provided by the Game Commission). Make sure you provide a link or QR code on promotional materials to registration page and a deadline to register!

2 Months Prior

- Promote your event.
- Send all print materials to participants.
- Visit hunt location to ensure it is still a good fit for the hunt.
- Create a first aid plan and gather any materials needed for it.

1 Month Prior

- Check the Game Commission event page, to verify the number of participants attending event. Ensure the registration closes on the correct date.
- Contact all event staff, mentors, and dog handlers to ensure everyone is still planning on attending.
- Start preparing and gathering supplies – gear/equipment—for hunt. If you are supplying guns, we highly recommend inspecting each gun prior to the day of the hunt.
- Ensure registration for event closes at least two weeks in advance.

1 Week Prior

- Print out participant roster from event page.
- Confirm food, beverages, equipment, staff, mentors, etc. one last time.

APPENDIX B: Guidelines for Transporting and Releasing Pheasants

Receiving and Transporting Pheasants

Contact your Region Office no later than 9/25/2026 to confirm the time and place you will pick up birds. Birds must be transported on a trailer or in the bed of a pick-up truck. If the truck has a cap, it **MUST** have side-window ventilation. Please do not transport birds in a closed vehicle.

They may sustain heat exhaustion and die. To prevent injuries and death of birds, handle and transport crates level and always have two people move them. Be careful not to drop crates or turn them on their side.

Please do not mix any other birds or crates you obtain with the Game Commission crates. The Game Commission promotes and conducts biosecurity safeguards to prevent poultry diseases. Poultry diseases can be spread by direct contact with dust, dirt, and feather particles.

Stocking Pheasants

Pheasants are being provided for you to stock preceding the hunt to ensure the best opportunity of locating birds in the field. All Game Commission-provided pheasants must be stocked prior to the event. To increase the chance of youth flushing pheasants, it is recommended that birds be held overnight and stocked at first daylight before youth arrive. To provide a good hunt experience for participants, stock pheasant in a manner consistent with a natural hunting situation. Stocking pheasants before the youth go afield provides a fair chase and simulates the natural hunting situation they would encounter during the regular pheasant season. We recommend identifying several locations throughout your hunt site location to stock a minimum of 10 birds at each location.

To prevent birds from wildly flushing out of crates which often results in birds flying out of the designated hunt area, consider using a soft release method. Place the crate in dense vegetation and allow birds to calm down. Then slide the door open moving away from the crate allowing the birds to walk out on their own.

If you need to store birds overnight, please store create with live birds in a cool, dry, and safe environment. To avoid predation of birds, place the crates off the ground in an open vehicle, trailer, or vented storage building. To prevent the birds from overheating or dying, avoid stacking crates beside each other and allow air to flow between the crates. It is important birds are stored in a dry space, wet feathers pull out easily and can cause birds to overheat when drying off.

Crates shall be returned to a predetermined location the first business day following the event.

2026 MENTORED PHEASANT HUNT APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: complete the form below and along with your request for live birds to: Attn: Hunter Education, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave Harrisburg, PA 17110 or via email at mentoredhunting@pa.gov.

NOTE: ALL REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE 9/21/2026 TO ALLOW FOR PROPER BIRD DELIVERY

Club or Organization (All information is required):

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: PA Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Pick one: Home Cell Work Other
E-mail: _____ Website (if applicable): _____

Point of Contact:

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: PA Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Pick one: Home Cell Work Other
E-mail: _____
Preferred communication method: Phone Email

Event Details:

Registration start date and time: _____
Maximum number of participants: _____
Date of event: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____
Rain date: _____
Address of the event location: _____
WMU: _

Describe the event including any pre- and post-hunt activities you plan to offer participants.

Which of the following are you permitting to participate on your hunt:

- Junior license holders and mentored permit holders 17 and younger
- Mentored permit holders 17 and older

Are you applying for a grant for live birds?

- Yes (Please continue with the Request for Live Birds)
- No (Thanks, please email your application to: mentoredhunting@pa.gov)

REQUEST FOR LIVE BIRDS

To request live birds for your event, this form must be submitted by 8/17/26 to: Attn: Hunter Education, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Ave Harrisburg, PA 17110 or via email mentoredhunting@pa.gov. The Pennsylvania Game Commission can only provide live pheasants for events that are open to the public, have proper permitting if held on public lands, or private lands enrolled in one of the Game Commission's Cooperative public access programs.

Landowner Information:

Landowner Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Landowner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Describe any bird delivery accommodations you may have:

The Pennsylvania Game Commission must receive this application by August 17, 2026. We do our best to accommodate all appropriate requests but cannot guarantee every organization will receive birds. Birds will be distributed on a first come, first served basis at a rate of two legal birds per registered youth participant. The number of birds assigned to the hunt will be determined by the number of youths registered for the hunt event on the deadline of September 21, 2026.

Organizations receiving birds are REQUIRED to:

1. Follow the Game Commission's recommended guidelines for releasing birds (Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disqualification from future grant opportunities.)
2. Register participants through the Event Manager System.
3. Confirm with the Game Commission the number of youths who will be participating in the event by no later than September 9/21/2026. This is required to plan the distribution of birds.

By signing below you are agree to follow the above stipulations:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION
STATE GAME LANDS
SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST-APPLICATION

Fully complete each applicable section below. All information must be printed or typed. Illegible Special Permit Applications will not be processed. Attach any necessary documentation that is required for the Special Permit. Insufficient information, documentation, or payment will delay or prevent the issuance of the Special Permit.

CID (hunting/furtaking license number, if applicable): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy):			
Last Name:		First Name:		Middle Name or Initial:	Suffix:
Physical Address (Street address; Apartment #, Suite # or Room; no P.O. Boxes):					
City:		State:	Zip Code/Postal Code:	County/Province:	Country:
Mailing Address (Include if different than Physical Address listed in boxes above):					
City:		State:	Zip Code/Postal Code:	County/Province:	Country:
Telephone Number:		Fax Number:		E-Mail Address:	
IF APPLYING ON BEHALF OF A BUSINESS, CORPORATION, PUBLIC AGENCY, ORGANIZATION OR INSTITUTION					
Name:					
Mailing Address:					
City:		State:	Zip Code/Postal Code:	County/Province:	Country:
Telephone Number:		Fax Number:		E-Mail Address:	

Dates of proposed activity:	
SGL or Area:	County:
Can this activity be conducted on lands other than Game Lands (If no, explain)?	
Anticipated number of people participating in this activity:	
Is there a fee or donation required?	
State Organization Representative Signature: (For Trail Requests)	

Describe the proposed use or activity (Attach additional sheets as necessary to fully explain requested activity- commercial activities are not permitted on SGL)

Certification: <i>I certify that I have read and understand the laws and regulations as they apply to the Special Permit that I am applying for and that all statements are true, correct and complete.</i>	
Signature of Applicant:	Date of Signature:

Return to the appropriate office as listed on the back of this form.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION FORM

Please complete this form to facilitate prompt authorization of medical treatment in the case of a medical emergency.

Participants Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: PA Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Second Phone: (____) _____

Parent or Guardian: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Parent or Guardian: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Known allergies:

Additional Information / Special Instructions:

Participant Signature (18 or older): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

MENTORED PHEASANT HUNT CONSENT RELEASE

I, _____ (Participant) desire to participate in a special junior hunt sponsored by _____ (Organization). I have the permission and consent of my parent(s) or legal guardians(s), _____ (Parents) as is reflected by their signatures(s) on this form. We, Participant and Parents, understand that hunting is a sport involving firearms. Firearms, when mishandled, can be dangerous. I, Participant, understand that I must use utmost care during the special junior hunt and agree to live up to the highest standards of hunting and firearms safety. I agree to follow all instructions given by the organization, its members, agents, employees, licensees, volunteers, and associates (Representatives) assisting with the hunt. I (We), Parents, hereby consent to Participant's participation in the hunt and authorize representatives of Organization to exercise control over Participant during the hunt. We, Participant and Parents, also hereby grant the organization the unconditional right to use the participant's, name, voice and photographic likeness in connection with articles, press releases and audio/video productions that are a result of this event. We, Participant and Parents, for and in consideration of Participant being allowed to engage in these activities, hereby release and forever discharge Organization and its Representatives from any and all claims, damages, demands, actions, or causes of action of every name and nature arising out of these activities and do by these presents covenant and agree that we will indemnify and save Organization harmless against loss or damage which may result from Participant's participation in the special mentored hunt. We acknowledge that we are executing this Consent and Release of our own free will, mindful of possible hazards of such activities

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals, intending to be legally bound hereby, this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

Witness Signature: _____ Participant Signature: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT WAIVER

We appreciate your willingness to assist in our event. In order to maintain a high-quality event for the benefit of all volunteers and sponsors, every volunteer is asked to follow these guidelines.

Mentoring someone whether it's their first hunt or 100th hunt is a unique experience for both the mentor and the mentee. As a mentor, the way you portray hunting is crucial to the overall experience for the mentee and can be the difference between them wanting to hunt more and never wanting to do it again. Having a mentor who is compassionate, knowledgeable, and experienced will allow for a positive environment for the mentee to grow and learn. Also, it is crucial to remember that being a mentor is different than being a guide. A mentor is someone who allows the mentee to be independent while allowing them to fail in a safe setting. A good mentor also ensures to correct the mentees' mistakes after the event in an educational manner to further their hands on knowledge of hunting. A guide is someone who does not allow the hunter/mentee to experience the hunt on their own and does not let them make mistakes in efforts to maximize their chances of a successful harvest.

As a volunteer for this event it is expected that you will conduct yourself in a positive and professional manner. Creating a positive experience for all attendees will allow for greater success, and higher participation in the future not only for your events but the sport of hunting.

By signing below you acknowledge that the following will NOT be tolerated:

- Use of alcohol or drugs at any time before or during the event.
- Wearing clothing that displays inappropriate sayings or graphics.
- Use of profane or degrading language.
- Lobbying for or promoting private, political or religious causes, or distributing material that do are not approved by the sponsoring organization.
- Deliberately taking actions that place a participant or volunteer in an unsafe situation, regardless of whether the activity results in harm or injury.

Volunteer signature: _____ Date: _____

NORTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren

P.O. Box 31
Franklin, PA 16323
(814) 432-3188

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland

4820 Route 711
Bolivar, PA 15923
(724) 238-9523

NORTHCENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Union

1566 South Route 44 Highway
P.O. Box 5038
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
(570) 398-4744

SOUTHCENTRAL REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, York

8627 William Penn Highway
Huntingdon, PA 16652
(814) 643-1831

NORTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming

3917 Memorial Highway
Dallas, PA 18612
(570) 675-1143

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE--Serving the following Counties: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill

253 Snyder Road
Reading, PA 19605
(610) 926-3136

BUREAU OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION-SPECIAL PERMITS ENFORCEMENT DIVISION: For questions regarding general Special Permit issues or the Special Use Permits found on the first two yellow pages of this application. 717-783-8164.

BUREAU OF WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT: For questions regarding Special Permits involving Environmental Review and State Game Lands Impacts. 717-787-6818.

2001 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110



MENTORED PHEASANT HUNT

DATE:

TIME:

LOCATION:

Every year, the Pennsylvania Game Commission works with organizations across the state to sponsor mentored pheasant hunts for mentored permit holders or junior license holders.



**LEARN MORE OR
REGISTER HERE**