

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

Hunter Education Program Certification Policy (LAC 76:I.312)

The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby give notice of its intent to amend two key changes to the Hunter Education program to improve alignment with youth participation requirements and enhance instructor recruitment and retention.

First, we propose lowering the minimum certification age for Hunter Education from 10 to 9 years old. This adjustment aligns with age requirements for youth shooting sports programs that require Hunter Education certification, eliminating redundancy for participations who would otherwise be required to retake the course at age 10, and ensures continued eligibility for competition. The existing curriculum, written at a fourth-grade reading level, remains appropriate for this age group and would not require revision.

Second, we propose removing the prescriptive instructor certification requirements currently outlined in Title 76, which specify 12 hours of instruction, a written test, and a live-fire demonstration, replacing them with flexible administrative oversight by the Department. This change would lower barriers to instructor recruitment, improve the ability to attract and retain qualified instructors, increase participation from schools offering Hunter Education, and allowing the program to more easily adapt to new technology and more efficient training methods.

The Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take any and all necessary steps on behalf of the commission to promulgate and effectuate this Notice of Intent, including but not limited to, the filing of the Fiscal and Economic Impact Statement, the

filing of the Notice of Intent and compiling public comments and submissions for the commission's review and consideration. In the absence of any further action by the commission following an opportunity to consider all public comments regarding the proposed rule, the Secretary is authorized and directed to prepare and transmit a summary report to the legislative oversight committees and file the final Rule.

Title 76

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Part I. Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and Agencies Thereunder

Chapter 3. Special Powers and Duties

Subchapter C. Hunter Safety Program

§312. Hunter Education Program Certification Policy

A.-E. ...

F. Minimum age for certification in all courses within the Louisiana Hunter Education Program shall be as follows:

1. classroom based hunter education course—age ~~10~~ 9;
2. computer based hunter education course—age 16;
3. blended computer based and field day combination course—age ~~10~~ 9.

G. All persons' ages ~~10 and 9 through~~ 11 who are hunter education certified, while hunting in the state of Louisiana, are to be accompanied by and under the direct supervision of a person who is 18 years of age or older and has a valid hunting license or proof of successful completion of a hunter education course approved by the department in order for that certification to be valid. Direct supervision means that the person being supervised shall be

within normal audible voice proximity and in direct line of sight of the supervising adult at all times.

H. Requirements for volunteer instructor certification shall be as follows:

1. complete and pass a hunter education instructor certification format approved by minimum of 12 hours of classroom, field, and/or computer based instruction as approved by the Louisiana Hunter Education Program; and
2. ~~pass a written exam prepared by the Louisiana Hunter Education Program;~~
3. ~~demonstrate the ability to lead students through exercises that exhibit the safe handling of hunting firearms; and~~

4 2. upon successful completion of instructor training, candidates shall be certified for an initial two-year period. Recertification shall be contingent on continued participation in the Louisiana Hunter Education Program.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:699.3.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 33:1396 (July 2007), amended LR 46:1613 (November 2020), LR 48:1107 (April 2022), LR

Family Impact Statement

In accordance with Act 1183 of 1999 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby issues its Family Impact Statement in connection with the preceding Notice of Intent. This Notice of Intent will have no impact on the six criteria set out at R.S. 49:972(B).

Poverty Impact Statement

The proposed rulemaking will have no impact on poverty as described in R.S. 49:973.

Provider Impact Statement

This Rule has no known impact on providers as described in HCR 170 of 2014.

Small Business Analysis

This proposed Rule has no known impact on small businesses as described in R.S. 49:965.2 through R.S. 49:965.8.

Public Comments

Written comments should be addressed to Mr. Travis DuFour, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, 200 Dulles Drive, Lafayette, LA, 70506 or via e-mail to tdufour@wlf.la.gov prior to 4:30 p.m., Monday, February 2, 2026.

Kevin Sagrera

Chairman