

**CHAPTER 917****TRAPPING****SUBCHAPTER 1****LICENSE REQUIREMENTS AND FEES****§12201. Trapping license**

**1. License required.** Except as otherwise authorized pursuant to this Part, a person may not trap unless that person has a valid license issued under this section. Each day a person violates this subsection that person commits a Class E crime for which a minimum fine of \$50 and an amount equal to twice the applicable license fee must be imposed.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**1-A. Trapping by agents of commissioner.** The commissioner may authorize a full-time department employee to trap wild animals without a license for purposes of animal damage control. A person serving as an agent of the commissioner for purposes of animal damage control, including animal control officers appointed pursuant to Title 7, section 3947, must satisfy the licensing requirements of this section prior to trapping or attempting to trap a wild animal.

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §209 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**1-B. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Junior trapper supervisor" means:

(1) The parent or guardian of the junior trapper; or

(2) A person 18 years of age or older who:

(a) Is approved by the parent or guardian of the junior trapper; and

(b) Holds or has held a valid Maine trapping license or meets the requirements of subsection 3. [PL 2019, c. 639, §8 (AMD).]

B. "In the presence of" means in visual and voice contact without the use of visual or audio enhancement devices, including but not limited to binoculars and citizen band radios. [PL 2013, c. 538, §30 (NEW).]

[PL 2019, c. 639, §8 (AMD).]

**2. Eligibility.** The following persons are eligible to purchase a trapping license, subject to the provisions of subsection 3.

A. A resident 16 years of age or older is eligible to purchase a resident adult trapping license. [PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (AMD).]

B. A person 10 years of age or older and under 16 years of age is eligible to purchase a junior trapping license. If the person is a nonresident and not a citizen of the United States, the license issued under this paragraph authorizes the person to trap only beaver pursuant to section 12259, subsection 3. [PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (AMD).]

C. A person under 10 years of age may trap all legal species, except bear, without a license, except that if the person is a nonresident and not a citizen of the United States, the person may trap only beaver pursuant to section 12259, subsection 3. [PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (AMD).]

D. A nonresident 16 years of age or older is eligible to purchase a nonresident adult trapping license, except that if the person is not a citizen of the United States, the license authorizes the person to trap only beaver pursuant to section 12259, subsection 3. [PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (AMD).]

E. [PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (RP).]  
[PL 2021, c. 411, §4 (AMD).]

**3. Successful completion of trapper education program required for license.** Except as provided in paragraph A, a person who applies for a state license to trap, other than a junior trapping license pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph B or an apprentice trapper license issued under section 12204, must submit proof of having successfully completed a trapper education course of the type described in section 10108, subsection 7 or satisfactory evidence of having previously held an adult license to trap in this State or any other state, province or country in any year beginning in or after 1978.

When proof or evidence can not otherwise be provided, the person may substitute a signed affidavit that that person has previously held the required adult trapping license or that that person has successfully completed the required trapper education course.

A. A person who is an enrolled member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians or the Mi'kmaq Nation who presents certification from the respective reservation chief or governor or the Mi'kmaq Nation Tribal Council stating that the person is an enrolled member of a federally recognized nation, band or tribe listed in this paragraph is exempt from the requirements of this subsection. [PL 2023, c. 646, Pt. A, §16 (AMD).]  
[PL 2023, c. 646, Pt. A, §16 (AMD).]

**4. Issuance.** The commissioner, or the commissioner's agent, may issue a license to engage in trapping.  
[PL 2017, c. 164, §16 (AMD).]

**5. Expiration.** All licenses issued under this section are valid for one year commencing July 1st of each year.

A junior trapping license issued to a person who has passed that person's 15th birthday is valid through the year for which the license was issued.  
[PL 2021, c. 411, §5 (AMD).]

**5-A. Junior trapping license requirements.** A trapper 16 years of age who obtained a junior trapping license before that person reached 16 years of age may not trap with that license unless the person is in the presence of and under the effective control of a junior trapper supervisor at all times while trapping or the person has successfully completed a trapper education course established under section 10108, subsection 7. The following penalties apply to a violation of this subsection:

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged; and [PL 2019, c. 639, §9 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates paragraph A after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime.  
[PL 2019, c. 639, §9 (NEW).]

[PL 2019, c. 639, §9 (NEW).]

**6. Trapping fees.** The fees for trapping licenses are as follows:

A. A junior trapping license, for a person 10 years of age or older and under 16 years of age, is \$10; [PL 2021, c. 411, §6 (AMD).]

B. A resident adult trapping license, for a person 16 years of age or older, is \$36; and [PL 2021, c. 411, §6 (AMD).]

C. A nonresident adult trapping license is \$318. [PL 2021, c. 411, §6 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 411, §6 (AMD).]

**7. Supervision of junior trappers.** The following provisions must be observed.

A. A person under 10 years of age may not trap unless that person is accompanied at all times while trapping by a junior trapper supervisor. A person under 10 years of age may not trap bear. [PL 2019, c. 639, §10 (AMD).]

B. A person over 10 years of age and under 16 years of age may not trap unless that person:

(1) Holds a junior trapping license; and

(2) Is in the presence of and under the effective control of a junior trapper supervisor at all times while trapping, unless the holder of the junior trapping license submits proof of having successfully completed a trapper education course of the type described in section 10108, subsection 7. [PL 2019, c. 639, §10 (AMD).]

[PL 2019, c. 639, §10 (AMD).]

**8. License violations.** The following penalties apply to violations of restrictions of licenses under this section.

A. A person who violates a restriction of a license issued under this section commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §211 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person who violates a restriction of a license issued under this section after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §211 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

Each day a person violates a restriction of a license issued under this section is a separate offense.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §211 (RPR); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**9. Penalties for supervisors of junior trappers.** A person who is the junior trapper supervisor of a holder of a valid junior trapping license when that junior trapper violates any provision of this Part pertaining to trapping:

A. Commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged; and [PL 2013, c. 538, §33 (RPR).]

B. After having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period, commits a Class E crime. [PL 2013, c. 538, §33 (RPR).]

[PL 2019, c. 639, §11 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §§B209-211 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2005, c. 12, §III23 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 69, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 213, Pt. OO, §9 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 185, §3 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 538, §§30-33 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 245, §6 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 164, §§14-16 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 427, §§16, 17 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 427, §19 (AFF). PL 2019, c. 325, §6 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 639, §§8-11 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 411, §§4-6 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 369, Pt. A, §4 (REV). PL 2023, c. 369, Pt. A, §5 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 646, Pt. A, §16 (AMD).

#### §12202. Trapping by landowner

Notwithstanding section 12201, subsection 1 and subject to all other applicable laws and rules, a resident and a member of the resident's immediate family, as long as the trapper's license to trap is not

under suspension or revocation, may trap for wild animals without a trapping license issued under section 12201 on land: [PL 2015, c. 301, §29 (AMD).]

**1. Possession.** To which they are legally entitled to possession; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**2. Domiciled.** On which they are actually domiciled; and [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**3. Agricultural purposes.** That is used exclusively for agricultural purposes. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2013, c. 408, §18 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 301, §29 (AMD).

#### §12203. Trapping by agents of commissioner

**(REPEALED)**

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B212 (RP). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF).

#### §12204. Apprentice trapper license

**1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "In the presence of" means in visual and voice contact without the use of visual or audio enhancement devices, including but not limited to binoculars and citizen band radios. [PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

B. "Apprentice trapper supervisor" means a person who is 18 years of age or older and has held a valid adult trapping license under this subchapter for the prior 3 consecutive years. [PL 2019, c. 639, §12 (AMD).]  
[PL 2019, c. 639, §12 (AMD).]

**2. Apprentice trapper supervisor required.** A holder of an apprentice trapper license may not trap other than in the presence of an apprentice trapper supervisor. [PL 2019, c. 639, §13 (AMD).]

**3. Apprentice trapper supervisor responsibility.** An apprentice trapper supervisor shall ensure that the holder of an apprentice trapper license follows safe and ethical trapping protocol and adheres to the laws under this Part. An apprentice trapper supervisor may not intentionally permit a person trapping under an apprentice trapper license with that apprentice trapper supervisor to violate subsection 2. [PL 2019, c. 639, §14 (AMD).]

**4. Eligibility.** A resident or nonresident 16 years of age or older who has never held a valid adult trapping license in this State, or any other state, province or country, is eligible to obtain an apprentice trapper license. Notwithstanding section 12201, subsection 3, a person is eligible to obtain an apprentice trapper license without having successfully completed a trapper education course as described in section 10108, subsection 7. A person may not obtain an apprentice trapper license more than twice. [PL 2013, c. 538, §34 (AMD).]

**5. Expiration of apprentice trapper license.** An apprentice trapper license is valid for up to 12 calendar months and expires on June 30th.

[PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

**6. Issuance; fee.** The commissioner, through the commissioner's authorized agent, shall issue an apprentice trapper license to an eligible person. The fee for an apprentice trapper license is \$36 for residents and \$318 for nonresidents.

[PL 2017, c. 164, §17 (AMD).]

**7. Restrictions.** The holder of an apprentice trapper license is not eligible to obtain a permit to trap for bear under section 12260-A.

[PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

**8. Penalties.** The following penalties apply to violations of this section.

A. A person who violates this section commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 and not more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this section after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

[PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2011, c. 51, §1 (NEW). PL 2013, c. 538, §34 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 301, §30 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 164, §17 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 639, §§12-14 (AMD).

## SUBCHAPTER 2

### TRAPPING SEASON, REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

#### §12251. Closed seasons

**1. General.** Except as otherwise provided in this Part and except as the commissioner may establish by rule that is not inconsistent with this chapter, there is a perpetual closed season on trapping any wild animal or wild bird.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**2. Unity Utilities District.** There is a continued closed season on all wild animals and wild birds on property owned by the Unity Utilities District located on Route 139 and Prairie Road in the municipality of Unity in Waldo County.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**3. Closed season violation.** A person may not trap, or attempt to trap, any wild animal or wild bird during the closed season or possess any wild animal or wild bird taken during the closed season on that wild animal or wild bird.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §213 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B213 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF).

#### §12252. Unlawful trapping methods

**1. Unlawfully rigging traps.** A person may not use auxiliary teeth on any leg-hold trap set on land.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**2. Use or possession of prohibited implements or aids.** A person may not:

A. Set or tend a snare for the purpose of trapping any wild animal or wild bird, except as provided in section 10105, subsection 1 and section 12259; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. Set or tend a set gun for the purpose of killing, taking, catching, wounding, harming or molesting any wild animal or wild bird; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

C. Deposit any medicinal, poisonous or stupefying substance for the purpose of killing, taking, catching, wounding, harming or molesting any wild animal or wild bird, except that a landowner or member of the landowner's immediate family may use gas cartridges on the landowner's own land for woodchuck control; or [PL 2015, c. 301, §31 (AMD).]

D. Sell, advertise, give notice of the sale or keep for sale any set gun or poisonous substance for the taking of wild animals or wild birds, except that a person may sell, advertise, give notice of sale of or keep for sale rodenticide for orchard mouse control and gas cartridges for woodchuck control. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

[PL 2015, c. 301, §31 (AMD).]

**3. Use of pole traps.** A person may not use or set any steel trap on the top of a pole, constituting a device commonly known as a "pole trap" for the purposes of catching any wild bird.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**4. Penalty.** A person who violates this section commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §214 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B214 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2015, c. 301, §31 (AMD).

#### §12253. Consent to trap

**1. Trapping without written consent.** A person may not, without first obtaining the written consent of the landowner or occupant, trap any wild animal on land in any organized or incorporated place or on the cultivated or pasture area of land that is used for agricultural purposes in any unorganized place and on which land there is an occupied dwelling. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to:

A. Beaver trapping; [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. Trapping with drowning sets in navigable rivers and streams; or [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

C. Trapping with drowning sets on state-owned land and public rights-of-way. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**2. Trapping near occupied dwelling without written consent.** A person may not trap any wild animal within 200 yards of an occupied dwelling without first obtaining the written consent of the owner or occupant of the land on which the trap is to be set. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to beaver trapping or trapping with drowning sets on state-owned land or public rights-of-way.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**3. Trapping near compact, built-up portion of city or village.** A person may not trap outside that person's land within 1/2 mile of the compact, built-up portion of a city or village, except:

A. A person may trap within 1/2 mile of the built-up portion of a city or village with drowning sets; and [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. A person who has a written permit from the landowner may trap on that landowner's land with cage-type live traps within 1/2 mile of the built-up portion of a city or village. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**3-A. Penalties.** The following penalties apply to violations of subsection 3.

A. A person who violates subsection 3 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person who violates subsection 3 after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]  
[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**4. Proof of ownership of land.** Before any prosecution is made under subsection 1 or 2, the landowner or occupant shall provide proof to the commissioner of that landowner's ownership or that occupant's occupancy of the land in question.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**5. Permission to trap on land of another.** This section does not give license or permission to set, place or tend traps on property that is owned by another person.

[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §215 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

## SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B215 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF).

### §12254. Labeling traps

**1. Prohibition.** A person may not set a trap for any wild animal without having the trap plainly labeled with that person's full name and address.

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §216 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**2. Penalties.** The following penalties apply to violations of this section.

A. A person who violates subsection 1 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §216 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person who violates subsection 1 after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §216 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]  
[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §216 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

## SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B216 (RPR). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF).

### §12255. Tending traps

**1. Failure to visit traps.** A person shall:

A. While trapping in an organized or incorporated place:

- (1) Check each trap, except killer-type traps or drowning sets, at least once in every calendar day; and
- (2) Check each killer-type trap or drowning set at least once in every 3 calendar days, except that a drowning set placed within 1/2 mile of a city, town or village center must be checked at least once in every calendar day; and [PL 2015, c. 301, §32 (AMD).]

B. While trapping in an unorganized place:

- (1) Check each trap, except killer-type traps and drowning sets, at least once in every calendar day; and
- (2) Check each killer-type trap or drowning set at least once in every 5 calendar days. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §217 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

This subsection does not apply to under-ice drowning sets for beaver and muskrat. For the purposes of this subsection, "check" means to visit or cause to be visited.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.  
[PL 2015, c. 301, §32 (AMD).]

**2. Failure to remove animal from trap.** A person shall remove or cause to be removed from that person's trap an animal found caught in that trap.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.  
[PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §217 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**3. Carrying a firearm while trapping.** Notwithstanding section 11205, subsection 1, paragraph A and section 11206, subsection 1, paragraph A, a person who holds a valid trapping license may carry a firearm at any time during the open trapping season for the sole purpose of dispatching trapped animals unless that person is prohibited from possessing a firearm under Title 15, section 393, subsection 1 and has not obtained a valid permit in accordance with Title 15, section 393, subsection 2.

[RR 2011, c. 1, §18 (COR).]

### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B217 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2009, c. 340, §15 (AMD). RR 2011, c. 1, §18 (COR). PL 2015, c. 301, §32 (AMD).

### §12256. Disturbing traps of another

A person may not disturb or take a trap or a wild animal from a trap, other than that person's own trap, without the consent of the owner of the trap, except that a landowner or occupant of land that the landowner or occupant is legally entitled to possess may remove any trap found on the land if permission has not been granted under section 12253, subsection 1 or 2 or the person has not obtained a written permit from the landowner to trap on that landowner's land with cage-type live traps within 1/2 mile of a built-up portion of a city or village. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]



A person who violates this section commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).

#### §12257. Trapping by certain department employees

**1. Prohibition.** A department biologist or warden may not trap wild animals for profit while on duty within the district to which that person is assigned.

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §218 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**2. Penalties.** The following penalties apply to violations of this section.

A. A person who violates subsection 1 commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §218 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person who violates subsection 1 after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §218 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

[PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §218 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B218 (RPR). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF).

#### §12258. Eel permit for licensed trappers

**(REPEALED)**

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §§B219,220 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2015, c. 298, §7 (RP).

#### §12259. Trapping beaver

**1. Snares.** A person may use snares to trap for beaver during the open beaver trapping season.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**2. Rules.** All rules adopted pursuant to section 10104, subsection 1 pertaining to the trapping of beaver with killer-type traps also apply to the trapping of beaver with snares.

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**3. Nonresident trapping beaver.** A nonresident may not trap beaver in this State unless that nonresident's state or province of residency allows Maine residents to trap beaver in that state or province.

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2011, c. 253, §25 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §B221 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2011, c. 253, §25 (AMD).

#### §12260. Trapping bear

**1. Open and closed season.** There is an open season on trapping bear from September 1st to October 31st annually.

A. The commissioner may shorten the open season on bear in any part of the State as long as:

(1) The demarcation of the areas with a shortened season follows recognizable physical boundaries such as rivers and railroad rights-of-way; and

(2) The decision is made and published prior to February 1st of any year. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. The commissioner may terminate the open season on bear at any time in any part of the State if, in the commissioner's opinion, an immediate emergency action is necessary due to adverse weather conditions or severe hunting or trapping pressure. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

[PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

**2. Unlawful trapping of bear.** A person may not catch a bear in a trap and cause or allow another person to kill or register that bear. A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §222 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

**3. Setting bear traps.** Setting traps for bear is governed by this subsection.

A. A person may use a cable trap with a closing diameter of not less than 2 1/2 inches to trap bear in the State during the open season on bear. [PL 2003, c. 414, Pt. A, §2 (NEW); PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF).]

B. A person may not set a bear trap other than a cable trap or a cage-type trap as authorized by the commissioner. [PL 2011, c. 253, §26 (AMD).]

A person who violates this subsection commits a Class E crime.

[PL 2011, c. 253, §26 (AMD).]

**4. Trapping bear after having killed one.**

[PL 2021, c. 100, §8 (RP); PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF).]

**5. Exceeding bag limit on bears.**

[PL 2021, c. 100, §9 (RP); PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF).]

**6. Trapping bear near dumps.** Trapping bear near dumps is governed by this subsection.

A. The commissioner, or the commissioner's agent, shall establish a line of demarcation at least 500 yards from sites permitted or licensed for the disposal of solid waste. [PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §223 (AMD); PL 2003, c. 655, Pt. B, §422 (AFF).]

B. A person may not trap within the demarcation area established under paragraph A. The commissioner, or the commissioner's agent, is exempt from this prohibition for the purpose of live trapping of nuisance bears.

(1) A person who violates this paragraph commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 may be adjudged.

(2) A person who violates subparagraph (1) after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [RR 2021, c. 2, Pt. A, §22 (COR).]

[RR 2021, c. 2, Pt. A, §22 (COR).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 414, §A2 (NEW). PL 2003, c. 414, §D7 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 614, §9 (AFF). PL 2003, c. 655, §§B222-224 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 655, §B422 (AFF). PL 2011, c. 253, §26 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 309, §§5, 6 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 100, §§8, 9 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF). RR 2021, c. 2, Pt. A, §22 (COR).

#### §12260-A. Bear trapping permit

**1. Permit required.** Except as otherwise authorized pursuant to this Part a person may not trap for bear without a valid bear trapping permit during the open bear trapping season under section 12260, subsection 1.

Each day a person violates this subsection, that person commits a Class E crime for which a minimum fine of \$50 and an amount equal to twice the applicable license fee must be imposed.

[PL 2007, c. 168, §7 (NEW); PL 2007, c. 168, §8 (AFF).]

**2. Eligibility; license required.** A person who possesses a valid trapping license or a license that authorizes the hunting of bear, deer, moose, bobcat and raccoon may obtain a permit to trap bear from the commissioner or the commissioner's authorized agent.

[PL 2021, c. 100, §10 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF).]

**3. Issuance; permit fee.** The commissioner, through the commissioner's authorized agent, shall issue a bear trapping permit to an eligible person. The annual fee for each permit issued is \$10 for residents and \$67 for nonresidents.

[PL 2021, c. 100, §11 (AMD); PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF).]

**4. Bear trapping education course requirements; proof of bear trapping permit.** Beginning January 1, 2022, a person who applies for a bear trapping permit must submit proof of having successfully completed a bear trapping education course as provided by the department or satisfactory evidence of having previously held a valid Maine bear trapping permit in any year prior to 2022. When proof of competency cannot otherwise be provided, the applicant may substitute a signed affidavit stating that the applicant has successfully completed the required bear trapping education course or held a valid Maine bear trapping permit prior to 2022.

A person who is trapping for bear under the supervision of and in the presence of a licensed guide who has successfully completed the bear trapping education course is exempt from this subsection.

A person who is an enrolled member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians or the Mi'kmaq Nation who presents certification from the appropriate reservation chief or governor or the Mi'kmaq Nation Tribal Council stating that the person is an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian nation, band or tribe listed in this paragraph is exempt from this subsection.

For the purposes of this subsection, "in the presence of" means in visual and voice contact without the use of visual or audio enhancement devices, including but not limited to binoculars, citizen band radios or electronic communication systems.

[PL 2023, c. 646, Pt. A, §17 (AMD).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2007, c. 168, §7 (NEW). PL 2007, c. 168, §8 (AFF). PL 2021, c. 100, §§10-12 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 100, §13 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 228, §10 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 369, Pt. A, §4 (REV). PL 2023, c. 369, Pt. A, §5 (AFF). PL 2023, c. 646, Pt. A, §17 (AMD).

#### §12261. Beagle clubs; trapping snowshoe hares

The commissioner may issue a license to an organization recognized as a beagle club by the commissioner to take live snowshoe hares. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**1. License required.** Except as otherwise authorized pursuant to this Part, a beagle club may not trap a snowshoe hare without a valid license issued under this section.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]  
[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**2. Traps labeled and checked daily.** A beagle club may not set a trap for a snowshoe hare unless that trap is plainly labeled with the name of the beagle club and the telephone number of a contact person and is checked at least once every calendar day.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]  
[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**3. Use of snowshoe hares.** A snowshoe hare trapped pursuant to this section may not be used for anything other than to stock the running areas of the licensee and may not be given to any other beagle club or entity.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]  
[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**4. Transport out of State.** A snowshoe hare trapped pursuant to this section may not be transported out of the State.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]  
[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**5. Trapping season for snowshoe hares.** A beagle club may not trap for snowshoe hares except between September 1st and April 30th of each calendar year.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]  
[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**6. Cottontail rabbits.** A beagle club may not keep and must release immediately a cottontail rabbit caught in a trap.

A. A person who violates this subsection commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500 may be adjudged. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

B. A person who violates this subsection after having been adjudicated as having committed 3 or more civil violations under this Part within the previous 5-year period commits a Class E crime. [PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

**7. Reporting of trapped cottontail rabbits.** As a condition of licensure under this section, a beagle club shall file with the department no later than July 1st of each calendar year a report of cottontail rabbits trapped pursuant to this section.

[PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2007, c. 45, §1 (NEW).

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