

**SB3537**



**104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**State of Illinois**

**2025 and 2026**

**SB3537**

Introduced 2/5/2026, by Sen. Chapin Rose

**SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:**

515 ILCS 5/20-45

from Ch. 56, par. 20-45

Amends the Fish and Aquatic Life Code. Provides that the fee for a license for a resident of the State for sport fishing devices or spearing devices is \$14.50 for individuals 18 to 64 years old (rather than \$14.50 for individuals 16 to 64 years old). Provides that no fee for a license or a 3-year license shall be charged to residents under 18 years old or residents 65 years old or older (rather than one-half of the fee shall be charged to residents 65 years old or older). Deletes provisions regarding fees for residents 75 years old or older. Further provides that no fee for lifetime licenses shall be charged to residents 65 years old or older.

LRB104 17072 BDA 30487 b

**A BILL FOR**

1 AN ACT concerning fish.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Fish and Aquatic Life Code is amended by  
5 changing Section 20-45 as follows:

6 (515 ILCS 5/20-45) (from Ch. 56, par. 20-45)

7 Sec. 20-45. License fees for residents. Fees for licenses  
8 for residents of the State of Illinois shall be as follows:

9 (a) Except as otherwise provided in this Section, for  
10 sport fishing devices as defined in Section 10-95 or  
11 spearing devices as defined in Section 10-110, the fee is  
12 \$14.50 for individuals 18 ~~16~~ to 64 years old, ~~one-half of~~  
13 ~~the current fishing license fee for individuals age 65 or~~  
14 ~~older,~~ and, commencing with the 2012 license year,  
15 one-half of the current fishing license fee for resident  
16 veterans of the United States Armed Forces after returning  
17 from service abroad or mobilization by the President of  
18 the United States as an active duty member of the United  
19 States Armed Forces, the Illinois National Guard, or the  
20 Reserves of the United States Armed Forces. Veterans must  
21 provide to the Department acceptable verification of their  
22 service. The Department shall establish by administrative  
23 rule the procedure by which such verification of service

1 shall be made to the Department for the purpose of issuing  
2 fishing licenses to resident veterans at a reduced fee. No  
3 fee under this subsection (a) shall be charged to  
4 residents under 18 years old or residents 65 years old or  
5 older.

6 (a-3) Except as otherwise provided in this Section,  
7 for sport fishing devices as defined in Section 10-95 or  
8 spearing devices as defined in Section 10-110, residents  
9 of this State may obtain a 3-year fishing license. The fee  
10 for a 3-year fishing license is 3 times the annual fee. No  
11 fee under this subsection (a-3) shall be charged to  
12 residents under 18 years old or residents 65 years old or  
13 older. For residents age 65 or older, the fee is one half  
14 of the fee charged for a 3-year fishing license. For  
15 resident veterans of the United States Armed Forces after  
16 returning from service abroad or mobilization by the  
17 President of the United States, the fee is one-half of the  
18 fee charged for a 3-year fishing license. Veterans must  
19 provide to the Department, per administrative rule,  
20 verification of their service. The Department shall  
21 establish what constitutes suitable verification of  
22 service for the purpose of issuing 3-year fishing licenses  
23 to resident veterans at a reduced fee.

24 (a-5) (Blank). ~~The fee for all sport fishing licenses~~  
25 ~~shall be \$1 for an annual license and 3 times the annual~~  
26 ~~fee for a 3 year license for residents over 75 years of~~

1 ~~age.~~

2 (b) All residents before using any commercial fishing  
3 device shall obtain a commercial fishing license, the fee  
4 for which shall be \$60, and a resident fishing license,  
5 the fee for which is \$14.50. Each and every commercial  
6 device used shall be licensed by a resident commercial  
7 fisherman as follows:

8 (1) For each 100 lineal yards, or fraction  
9 thereof, of seine the fee is \$18. For each minnow  
10 seine, minnow trap, or net for commercial purposes the  
11 fee is \$20.

12 (2) For each device to fish with a 100 hook trot  
13 line device, basket trap, hoop net, or dip net the fee  
14 is \$3.

15 (3) When used in the waters of Lake Michigan, for  
16 the first 2000 lineal feet, or fraction thereof, of  
17 gill net the fee is \$10; and for each 1000 additional  
18 lineal feet, or fraction thereof, the fee is \$10.  
19 These fees shall apply to all gill nets in use in the  
20 water or on drying reels on the shore.

21 (4) For each 100 lineal yards, or fraction  
22 thereof, of gill net or trammel net the fee is \$18.

23 (c) Residents of this State may obtain a sportsmen's  
24 combination license that shall entitle the holder to the  
25 same non-commercial fishing privileges as residents  
26 holding a license as described in subsection (a) of this

1 Section and to the same hunting privileges as residents  
2 holding a license to hunt all species as described in  
3 Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code. No sportsmen's  
4 combination license shall be issued to any individual who  
5 would be ineligible for either the fishing or hunting  
6 license separately. The sportsmen's combination license  
7 fee shall be \$25.50. For residents age 65 or older, the fee  
8 is one-half of the fee charged for a sportsmen's  
9 combination license. For resident veterans of the United  
10 States Armed Forces after returning from service abroad or  
11 mobilization by the President of the United States as an  
12 active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the  
13 Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United  
14 States Armed Forces, the fee, commencing with the 2012  
15 license year, is one-half of the fee charged for a  
16 sportsmen's combination license. Veterans must provide to  
17 the Department acceptable verification of their service.  
18 The Department shall establish by administrative rule the  
19 procedure by which such verification of service shall be  
20 made to the Department for the purpose of issuing  
21 sportsmen's combination licenses to resident veterans at a  
22 reduced fee.

23 (c-5) Residents of this State may obtain a 3-year  
24 sportsmen's combination license that shall entitle the  
25 holder to the same non-commercial fishing privileges as  
26 residents holding a license as described in subsection

1 (a-3) and to the same hunting privileges as residents  
2 holding a license to hunt all species as described in  
3 Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code. A 3-year sportsmen's  
4 combination license shall not be issued to any individual  
5 who would be ineligible for either the fishing or hunting  
6 license separately. The 3-year sportsmen's combination  
7 license fee shall be 3 times the annual fee. For residents  
8 age 65 or older, the fee is one-half of the fee charged for  
9 a 3-year sportsmen's combination license. For resident  
10 veterans of the United States Armed Forces after returning  
11 from service abroad or mobilization by the President of  
12 the United States, the fee is one-half of the fee charged  
13 for a 3-year sportsmen's combination license. Veterans  
14 must provide to the Department, per administrative rule,  
15 verification of their service. The Department shall  
16 establish what constitutes suitable verification of  
17 service for the purpose of issuing 3-year sportsmen's  
18 combination licenses to resident veterans at a reduced  
19 fee.

20 (d) For 24 hours of fishing by sport fishing devices  
21 as defined in Section 10-95 or by spearing devices as  
22 defined in Section 10-110 the fee is \$5. This license does  
23 not exempt the licensee from the requirement for a salmon  
24 or inland trout stamp. The licenses provided for by this  
25 subsection are not required for residents of the State of  
26 Illinois who have obtained the license provided for in

1 subsection (a) or (a-3) of this Section.

2 (e) All residents before using any commercial mussel  
3 device shall obtain a commercial mussel license, the fee  
4 for which shall be \$50.

5 (f) Residents of this State, upon establishing  
6 residency as required by the Department, may obtain a  
7 lifetime hunting or fishing license or lifetime  
8 sportsmen's combination license which shall entitle the  
9 holder to the same non-commercial fishing privileges as  
10 residents holding a license as described in subsection  
11 ~~paragraph~~ (a) of this Section and to the same hunting  
12 privileges as residents holding a license to hunt all  
13 species as described in Section 3.1 of the Wildlife Code.  
14 No lifetime sportsmen's combination license shall be  
15 issued to or retained by any individual who would be  
16 ineligible for either the fishing or hunting license  
17 separately, either upon issuance, or in any year a  
18 violation would subject an individual to have either or  
19 both fishing or hunting privileges rescinded. The lifetime  
20 hunting and fishing license fees shall be as follows:

21 (1) Lifetime fishing: 30 x the current fishing  
22 license fee.

23 (2) Lifetime hunting: 30 x the current hunting  
24 license fee.

25 (3) Lifetime sportsmen's combination license: 30 x  
26 the current sportsmen's combination license fee.

1           Lifetime licenses shall not be refundable. A \$10 fee shall  
2 be charged for reissuing any lifetime license. The Department  
3 may establish rules and regulations for the issuance and use  
4 of lifetime licenses and may suspend or revoke any lifetime  
5 license issued under this Section for violations of those  
6 rules or regulations or other provisions under this Code or  
7 the Wildlife Code, or a violation of the United States Code  
8 that involves the taking, possessing, killing, harvesting,  
9 transportation, selling, exporting, or importing any fish or  
10 aquatic life protected by this Code or the taking, possessing,  
11 killing, harvesting, transportation, selling, exporting, or  
12 importing any fauna protected by the Wildlife Code when any  
13 part of the United States Code violation occurred in Illinois.  
14 Individuals under 16 years of age who possess a lifetime  
15 hunting or sportsmen's combination license shall have in their  
16 possession, while in the field, a certificate of competency as  
17 required under Section 3.2 of the Wildlife Code. Any lifetime  
18 license issued under this Section shall not exempt individuals  
19 from obtaining additional stamps or permits required under the  
20 provisions of this Code or the Wildlife Code. Individuals  
21 required to purchase additional stamps shall sign the stamps  
22 and have them in their possession while fishing or hunting  
23 with a lifetime license. All fees received from the issuance  
24 of lifetime licenses shall be deposited in the Fish and  
25 Wildlife Endowment Fund. No fee under this subsection (f)  
26 shall be charged to residents 65 years old or older.

1           Except for licenses issued under subsection (e) of this  
2 Section, all licenses provided for in this Section shall  
3 expire on March 31 of each year, except that the license  
4 provided for in subsection (d) of this Section shall expire 24  
5 hours after the effective date and time listed on the face of  
6 the license. Licenses issued under subsection (a-3) or (c-5)  
7 shall expire on March 31 of the 2nd year after the year in  
8 which the license is issued.

9           The Department shall by administrative rule provide for  
10 the automatic renewal of a fishing license upon the request of  
11 the applicant.

12           All individuals required to have and failing to have the  
13 license provided for in subsection (a), (a-3), or (d) of this  
14 Section shall be fined according to the provisions of Section  
15 20-35 of this Code.

16           All individuals required to have and failing to have the  
17 licenses provided for in subsections (b) and (e) of this  
18 Section shall be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor.

19           (g) For the purposes of this Section, "acceptable  
20 verification" means official documentation from the Department  
21 of Defense or the appropriate Major Command showing  
22 mobilization dates or service abroad dates, including: (i) a  
23 DD-214, (ii) a letter from the Illinois Department of Military  
24 Affairs for members of the Illinois National Guard, (iii) a  
25 letter from the Regional Reserve Command for members of the  
26 Armed Forces Reserve, (iv) a letter from the Major Command

1 covering Illinois for active duty members, (v) personnel  
2 records for mobilized State employees, and (vi) any other  
3 documentation that the Department, by administrative rule,  
4 deems acceptable to establish dates of mobilization or service  
5 abroad.

6 For the purposes of this Section, the term "service  
7 abroad" means active duty service outside of the 50 United  
8 States and the District of Columbia, and includes all active  
9 duty service in territories and possessions of the United  
10 States.

11 (Source: P.A. 102-780, eff. 5-13-22; 102-837, eff. 5-13-22;  
12 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-456, eff. 1-1-24; revised 7-3-25.)