



**NPWS**

An tSeirbhís Páirceanna  
Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúlra  
National Parks and Wildlife  
Service

**Heritage Licensing Portal  
Deer Hunting Licence (DHL) Applications  
National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**



**An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta**  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage

Version: v.01  
Last Updated: 31 May 2024



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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## General

### *Q.1 What is the Heritage Licensing Portal and why has it been developed?*

The Heritage Licensing Portal is a newly developed online registration platform managed by the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage. The Portal was developed within the remit of the Heritage Modernisation Programme and goes live in June 2024.

The first licence application to appear on this Portal in 2024 will be the Deer Hunting Licence issued by the National Parks & Wildlife Service under Section 29 of the Wildlife Acts, as amended. This Portal will be the sole method to apply for and receive a Deer Hunting Licence and paper applications will no longer be accepted.

The purpose of the Portal is to support the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's effort to modernise processes and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided to the public.

Additionally, the Portal will provide the following benefits for applicants:

- Fully online, fast, efficient licensing process with no need to fill out and post documents.
- Applicants will have their own individual account, and be able to track the status of their application through the portal.
- Once approved, applicants will receive their licence instantly and will be able to view their licence(s) online and print them, if they so wish.
- Hunters will also be able to make returns throughout the season, negating the need to keep track of hunting data until year-end.

## Application requirements

### *Q.2 What documents may I need to upload with my application?*

- If a first time applicant, you must upload a deer hunting training certificate from one of the three NPWS approved training courses.
- If not a first time applicant it is recommended that you upload a copy of a deer hunting training certificate.
- Firearm Certificate or if you do not yet hold one, then a Proof of Purchase Certificate.
- If living outside of the State - EU Firearms Pass, or Country equivalent if living outside of the EU.

### *Q.3 Is it mandatory that I include a photograph of myself with my application?*

Yes, when you register for the new Portal it will be a mandatory requirement to include a photograph of yourself so that you can be identified as the owner of the licence.

Below are the requirements for including a photograph:

- You **must** submit a **digital photo** that has been taken in the last six months.
- You can **upload** your photo from a smartphone, tablet or laptop.
- Photos must be in **colour** and in a .jpeg format.
- Your face should be **clearly visible**.
- The photo should **frame your head and shoulders**, leaving some space around the edges.



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- Photos should be in **sharp focus** with minimal shadows or busy backgrounds.
- **Avoid** wearing hats, sunglasses, facemask, face covering, etc. in the photo.
- Photos with **digital enhancements or changes** will **not** be accepted.
- Images **will be returned** where they are a photograph of anything other than your head and shoulders; where the photo is blurred; or where your face cannot be seen clearly.
- Applications will not be processed until a valid photograph has been submitted.

*Q.4 As part of my application do I have to provide evidence of deer hunting training that I have done?*

- It is a mandatory requirement for all first time applicants to provide proof of having attended one of the following NPWS approved deer hunting training courses:
  - **Deer Alliance** – Hunter Competence Assessment Programme (HCAP)
  - **Country Sports Ireland** – Deer Stalking Training
  - **National Association of Regional Game Councils (NARGC)** – Deer Stalking Training
- It is **recommended** that all hunters attend deer hunting training prior to commencing that activity. Where that training has been completed, the certificate should be uploaded as part of your application.

*Q.5 I am applying from outside the State and cannot provide an Irish Firearm Certificate. What should I do?*

Applicants not in possession of an Irish firearms licence should upload an EU Firearms Pass or the equivalent from their Country of origin to satisfy the requirement to hold a licence to own and operate a firearm. These will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis during the assessment of applications.

## Updates to the application process

*Q.6 How will the Deer Hunting Licence Application Process change?*

- The application process for deer hunting licences will be online only.
- Within the portal applicants will be required to:
  - Sign a declaration that they are compliant with the minimum firearm requirements when hunting deer, as set out in Statutory Instrument No. 239/1977 (Wildlife Act, 1976 (Firearms and Ammunition) Regulations, 1977).
  - Include a photograph with their application to ensure the individual issued the licence can be identified.
  - Sign a declaration verifying that they will only hunt on land where they have permission, as set out in Section 28 of the Wildlife Act. The requirement for a minimum of 100 acres landowner permission has been removed.
  - Applicants will no longer have to provide written proof of landowner permission with their application.
  - Upload a firearm certificate and/or proof of firearm purchase.
- Deer hunting licences will issue through the portal only, they will not be posted.

*Q.7 Will NPWS continue to accept paper-based applications for Deer Hunting Licences?*

No, with the launch of the Heritage Licensing Portal the National Parks & Wildlife Service will no longer be able to accept and process paper-based applications beginning in 2024. This is to ensure



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that all applicants are treated equally; the NPWS does not end up with a dual processing system; and accurate statistics are produced.

*Q.8 How will I submit my Deer Hunting Returns each year?*

Hunting returns can be completed online throughout the year and then submitted at the end of the season or when applying for a new Deer Hunting Licence.

## Using the Heritage Licensing Portal

*Q.9 How do I access the Heritage Licensing Portal?*

The Heritage Licensing Portal can be accessed at <https://portal.heritage.gov.ie/>. Each hunter will need to register once on the Portal and they will then have their own login and password for the system. From there each applicant will be able to apply for a licence, track the status of their application and receive their licence once it has been approved.

*Q.10 What will be the duration of my Licence?*

There is no change to the duration of the deer hunting licence – it will run for a maximum period of one year. Should you apply prior to 1 August it will run from 1 August (or any later application date) until 31 July the following year.

*Q.11 Will licences be available within the portal?*

Deer hunting licences will be available to view and/or print through the portal only, they will not be posted. Applicants can print physical copies of such if they so choose or they can carry a digital copy of their licence.

*Q.12 How long will it take to receive my licence?*

The Heritage Licensing Portal is part of an effort to modernise and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided to the public. Average processing times will be made available in due course.

## Fees

*Q.13 Will a fee be introduced in the new Portal for DHL applications?*

No, the process will remain unchanged in that there will be no introduction of a fee with the new system. Applicants will not be required to pay fees to apply for a Deer Hunting Licence, though it remains open to the Minister to introduce a fee on licences under the Wildlife Act, should that be required at a later date.



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## Additional support

*Q.14 How will NPWS communicate with me with any issues regarding my licence?*

Should NPWS identify any issues or errors with your application or licence they can return the application to you for amendment through the Heritage Licensing Portal.

*Q.15 Where can I request additional support with my application?*

If you are unable to **register** please contact:

- Email – [heritage.licensing@housing.gov.ie](mailto:heritage.licensing@housing.gov.ie)

If you have any queries in relation to your Deer Hunting Licence Application please contact:

- Email – [deerlicences@npws.gov.ie](mailto:deerlicences@npws.gov.ie)
- Call – 01 888 3242