

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Residency

To apply for a resident license, a person must:

- Have a domicile within South Dakota for at least 90 consecutive days immediately preceding the date of application for, purchasing, or attempting to purchase any hunting, fishing, or trapping license/permit. (A domicile is a person's established, fixed, and permanent home to which the person, whenever absent, has the present intention of returning), AND
- Make no claim of residency in any other state or foreign country for any purpose, and
- Claim no resident hunting, fishing, or trapping privileges in any other state or foreign country, and
- Prior to any application for any license, transfer to SD the person's driver's license and motor vehicle registrations.

EXCEPTION: The following persons are eligible for resident licenses:

- Any person who previously had a domicile in SD who is absent due to business of the United States or SD, or is serving in the armed forces of the US, or the spouse of an active-duty military person;
- Any person who previously had a domicile in SD who is absent due to regular attendance at a post-high school institution as a fulltime student or in a medical or dental residency program;
- Any person in the active military of the US or that person's spouse who is continuously stationed in SD;
- Any person who is a patient in any war veterans' hospital within SD;
- Any person who is an employee of the veterans' administration or any veterans' hospital in SD;
- Any person residing on restricted military reservations in SD;
- Any person attending regularly a post-high school institution in SD as a full-time student for 30 days or more immediately preceding the application;
- Any foreign exchange student over 16 years of age attending a public or private high school who has resided in the state for 30 days or more preceding the application;
- Any foreign exchange student who is between the ages of 12 and 16 who has completed the GFP course of instruction in the safe handling of firearms and has been issued a certificate of competency upon completion of instruction and who has resided in SD for 30 days or more preceding application for a license;
- Any person who is a minor dependent of a resident of SD

Termination of Residency

A person (other than a person who fits into one of the previous EXCEPTIONS) is deemed to have terminated their South Dakota resident hunting, fishing, and trapping status if the person does any of the following:

- Applies for, purchases, or accepts a resident hunting, fishing, or trapping license issued by another state or foreign country;
- Registers to vote in another state or foreign country;
- Accepts a driver's license issued by another state or foreign country; or
- Moves to any other state or foreign country and makes it the person's domicile or makes any claim of residency for any purpose in the other state or foreign country;
- Resides in any other state, territory or country for an aggregate of 180 or more days in a calendar year.

However, a person who has lawfully acquired a resident hunting, fishing, or trapping license and who leaves the state after acquiring the license to take up residency elsewhere may continue to exercise all the privileges granted by the license until the license expires if the person's respective privileges are not revoked or suspended.

Age Eligibility

- Residents and nonresidents must be 12 years old by Dec. 31, 2025 to hunt.
- Residents under age 16 must successfully complete a HuntSAFE course.
- Nonresidents under age 16 must include the certificate number from their hunter safety card, or a current or previous hunting license issued to them from any state.
- Residents and nonresidents who have not completed the HuntSAFE course at the time of application must leave their HuntSAFE number blank within their profile, but they can still apply. If successful in the draw, their license will be held until the GFP License Office is notified of the HuntSAFE card number once the course has been successfully completed.
- Information on the "Mentored Hunt" program is found in a separate application form. Youth who obtain a license in the combined deer drawing are NOT eligible for a Mentor Deer license.