

2026 ELK



Draw	Application Opens	Application Closes	Results Available
First	04/15/2026	05/19/2026, 08:00 AM CDT	05/27/2026
Second	05/28/2026	06/11/2026, 08:00 AM CDT	06/15/2026

DRAW GUIDELINES

Successful applicants for Archery Elk, Black Hills Firearms Elk, Custer State Park Special Antlerless Elk, and Prairie Firearms Elk that use preference points will lose all preference points for that particular season and be ineligible to apply during the first draw or purchase preference points for that season for **nine** years.

Previous recipients of a Custer State Park Early Archery or Custer State Park Firearms Elk license are ineligible to apply for those seasons again.

First

Applicants may submit one choice for each of the six elk seasons that they are eligible for. There are no second choices in the first drawing.

Eligibility: South Dakota residents are NOT eligible to apply for an elk season in the first draw if they received a license for that same season within the previous nine years. Exception: This restriction does not apply to second-choice or leftover licenses issued without the use of preference points.

Second (if needed)

Anyone who does not have an elk license for the current year is eligible for the second drawing, including those individuals that were not eligible for the first drawing.

Applicants have the option of using accumulated preference points during the second draw.

Maximum Group Size: 2

IMPORTANT SEASON INFORMATION

Only ONE elk license is allowed per individual per year. Drawings will be conducted in the following order:

- Custer State Park Firearms Elk (CUE)
- Custer State Park Early Archery Elk (CEE)
- Black Hills Firearms Elk (BHE)
- Prairie Firearms Elk (PRE)
- Black Hills Archery Elk (AEE)
- Custer State Park Special Antlerless Elk (CAE)

Once an applicant has drawn a license, they are not eligible for subsequent drawings. However, the individual will continue to receive additional preference points for subsequent drawings as an unsuccessful applicant.

FEE SCHEDULE

License Types	Resident
21 - one any elk	\$195
23 - one antlerless elk	\$127

A non-refundable \$10 application fee is charged for each season applied for.

E.g., If you apply for four elk seasons, your credit or debit card will be charged \$40. If you apply in the second draw for one season, you will be charged another \$10 fee.

Applicants will be notified by email if they were successful in the drawing. If successful, the applicant's credit/debit card will have the full license fee charged.

RETURN POLICY (NEW FOR 2026)

Return Deadline: August 1, 2026

Return Fee: \$10 - Residents

A fee will be assessed if a customer returns their license. They will also be ineligible for any subsequent draws that year for that respective season.

GENERAL APPLICATION INFORMATION

Visit <https://gfp.sd.gov/hunt-fish-license/> to view application information, residency and age requirements, landowner preference, preference points, and license fee explanations.

[Unit Descriptions and Map](#)
[Interactive Hunting Unit Map](#)

CONTACT US

GFP LICENSING OFFICE
20641 SD Hwy 1806, Fort Pierre, SD 57532
605.223.7660 | TTY: 605.223.7684
Monday - Friday | 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

NOTE: All applications must be submitted [online](#).

ARCHERY ELK

LICENSE AVAILABILITY

Unit	Type	Resident	
AEE-H1A	21	30	—
	23	5	▼
AEE-H2A	21	130	▲
	23	30	▼
AEE-H3A	21	40	—
	23	30	—
AEE-H4A	21	10	—
	23	10	—
AEE-H5A	21	2	—
AEE-H7A	21	10	—
	23	10	—

LICENSE CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR

▲ Increase — No Change ▼ Decrease

SEASON DATES

September 1-30, 2026

IMPORTANT SEASON INFORMATION

- Unit AEE-H5A is mostly a wilderness area. Be prepared to walk extensively. In most areas motor vehicles, including ATVs, are not allowed. The elk population in this unit is lower than any other Black Hills unit.
- In cooperation with landowners, the Department offers an Elk Hunter Access Program. Successful applicants can visit gfp.sd.gov/elk for additional information.

PRAIRIE FIREARMS ELK

LICENSE AVAILABILITY

Unit	Type	Resident	
PRE-09A	21	10	▲
	23	30	—
PRE-11B	21	32	▲
	23	60	▲
PRE-15A	21	8	—
	23	5	—
PRE-27A	21	30	—
	23	40	—
PRE-35A	21	10	—
	23	30	—
PRE-35B	21	10	▲
	23	40	—
PRE-49A	21	10	—
	23	15	—
PRE-ERA	21	Unlimited	▲
PRE-WRA	21	50	▲
	23	100	▲

LICENSE CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR

▲ Increase — No Change ▼ Decrease

SEASON DATES

September 1 - December 31, 2026

IMPORTANT SEASON INFORMATION

- Many prairie elk hunting units have low elk densities, and most land within these units is privately owned.
- Hunters are **strongly encouraged** to secure landowner permission to hunt *before* applying.
 - These licenses are **not valid** on tribal lands.
 - In cooperation with landowners, the Department offers an Elk Hunter Access Program. Successful applicants can visit gfp.sd.gov/elk for additional information.

NOTICE: Successful hunters must have their elk checked by a GFP representative within 24 hours of the kill.

BLACK HILLS FIREARMS ELK

LICENSE AVAILABILITY

Unit	Type	Resident	
BHE-H1A	21	80	—
BHE-H1B	23	75	▼
BHE-H2A	21	400	▲
BHE-H2B	23	75	▼
BHE-H2C	23	75	▼
BHE-H2E	23	25	▼
BHE-H2F	23	10	▼
BHE-H2G	23	10	▼
BHE-H2H	23	5	▼
BHE-H2I	23	5	▼
BHE-H2J	23	5	▼
BHE-H3A	21	120	—
BHE-H3B	23	45	—
BHE-H3C	23	45	—
BHE-H3D	23	45	—
BHE-H3E	23	60	—
BHE-H3F	23	60	—
BHE-H3G	23	60	—
BHE-H4A	21	40	—
BHE-H4B	23	40	—
BHE-H5A	21	5	—
BHE-H7A	21	20	▼
BHE-H7B	23	50	—
BHE-H9A	21	15	—
BHE-H9B	23	40	—

LICENSE CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR

▲ Increase — No Change ▼ Decrease

FEE SCHEDULE

License Types	Resident
21 - one any elk	\$195
23 - one antlerless elk	\$127

SEASON DATES

October 1-31, 2026

H1A, H2A, H3A, H4A, H5A, H7A, and H9A

October 15-31, 2026 AND December 1-16, 2026

H1B, H4B, H7B, and H9B

October 15-31, 2026

H2B, H2E, H2H, H3B, and H3E

December 1-16, 2026

H2C, H2F, H2I, H3C, and H3F

December 17-31, 2026

H2G, H2J, H3D, and H3G

IMPORTANT SEASON INFORMATION

- Unit BHE-H5A is mostly a wilderness area. Be prepared to walk extensively. In most areas motor vehicles, including ATVs, are not allowed. The elk population in this unit is lower than any other Black Hills unit.
- Elk exist in low densities in units BHE-H9A/B, and most land in this unit with elk activity is privately owned. Hunters are **strongly encouraged** to secure landowner permission to hunt *before* applying.
- In cooperation with landowners, the Department offers an Elk Hunter Access Program. Successful applicants can visit gfp.sd.gov/elk for additional information.

NOTICE: Successful hunters must have their elk checked by a GFP representative within 24 hours of the kill.

CUSTER STATE PARK ELK

LICENSE AVAILABILITY

Unit	Type	Resident	
CAE-CU1	23	25	▲
CAE-CU2	23	25	▲
CEE	21	15	▲
CUE	21	35	▲

LICENSE CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR

▲ Increase ■ No Change ▼ Decrease

FEE SCHEDULE

License Types	Resident
21 - one any elk	\$306
23 - one antlerless elk	\$206

SEASON DATES

CSP Special Antlerless Elk (CAE)

CU1 - October 15-31, 2026

CU2 - December 1-16, 2026

CSP Early Archery Elk (CEE)

September 1-30, 2026

CSP Firearms Elk (CUE)

October 1-31, 2026

NOTICE: Successful hunters must have their elk checked by a GFP representative within 24 hours of the kill.