



STATE OF ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2026 Spring Turkey Lottery Application Information

Apply online at <https://exploremoreil.com>

SPRING TURKEY APPLICATION FEES

Illinois Resident Lottery (R-L-ST): \$19

Nonresident Lottery (NR-L-ST): \$129

SPRING TURKEY APPLICATION INFORMATION

Lottery 1: Illinois resident hunters may apply for one turkey permit – excludes hunters who have applied for, or are already in possession of, a landowner spring turkey permit.

- Group Hunt applications allowed: Yes
- Landowner spring turkey permit applicants/recipients eligible to apply: **NO**
- **Application period:** October 7, 2025 - December 1, 2025

Lottery 2: All hunters are eligible to apply for one turkey permit, but hunters who have not already been awarded a permit will receive preference.

- Group Hunt applications allowed: Yes
- Landowner spring turkey permit applicants/recipients eligible to apply: Yes
- **Application period:** December 12, 2025 - January 12, 2026

Lottery 3: All hunters are eligible to apply. Hunters may submit up to 3 applications; however, no one may receive more than 3 permits in total for spring turkey hunting.

- Group Hunt applications allowed: **NO**
- Landowner spring turkey permit applicants/recipients eligible to apply: Yes
- **Application period:** January 23, 2026 - February 9, 2026

Landowner (POH): Individuals applying for, or receiving, a spring turkey landowner permit may not apply in the Lottery 1 Spring Turkey drawing.

- Landowner application deadline date: February 9, 2026.

OVER-THE-COUNTER SALES PERIOD

Permits remaining after the Lottery 3 Drawing will be available over the counter from license vendors throughout the state on a first-come, first-served basis beginning March 10, 2026. Permits will be sold until quotas are exhausted, or until the close of the specific turkey season segment (i.e., of seasons 1 through 5) in the Zone (north vs. south).

HUNTING LICENSE and HABITAT STAMP

In addition to your turkey permit, you must have a valid Illinois Hunting, Sportsman's, Youth Hunting/Trapping, or Apprentice License, unless exempt. Before any person 18 years of age or older takes, attempts to take, or pursues any species of wildlife protected by the Wildlife Code, except migratory waterfowl, coots, and hand-reared birds on licensed game breeding and hunting preserve areas and state-controlled pheasant hunting areas, he or she shall first obtain a State Habitat Stamp. Disabled veterans and former prisoners of war shall not be required to obtain a State Habitat Stamp. Any person who obtained a Lifetime License before January 1, 1993, shall not be required to obtain a State Habitat Stamp.

GROUP HUNT INFORMATION

Up to six individuals may apply to hunt as a group during the First and Second Lottery Drawings. Groups must identify a group leader, and all applicants must list the same group leader in their submitted application. Groups must list the same county or special hunt area of choice and complete, in an identical fashion, all options regarding hunting locations and the season choices. **THERE ARE NO GROUP HUNTS IN LOTTERY 3.**

HUNT LOCATION & SEASON CHOICES

There are ten rows of boxes to allow the applicant to make up to ten DIFFERENT COUNTY or SPECIAL HUNT AREAS choices of combined locations and seasons (the 2nd through 10th choices are optional). When the applicant is drawn during the lottery, if the 1st choice is not available, the 2nd choice will be considered and so forth.

PREFERENCE SYSTEM - LOTTERY 1

(This does not apply to special hunt areas.)

The following must be met to obtain preference in the first computerized drawing:

- The applicant must apply using the official agency application.
- The applicant must be a resident of the State of Illinois, be eligible to receive a spring turkey permit, and not have turkey hunting privileges revoked.
- The applicant must apply for the same county and season choices which he/she listed on the previous year's application. Preference will not be granted for special hunt areas.

PERMIT SPECIFICATIONS

- Permits are not transferable.
- A permit allows the holder to hunt with either a shotgun or a bow and arrow.
- A lottery permit is valid only for the season and location (county/Special Hunt Area) indicated on the permit.
- A landowner permit is valid for all 5 seasons of the Northern or Southern zone where the landowner's property is located.

IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL TO

- Submit applications before the second computerized lottery drawing for more than one permit for the same person.
- Submit applications before the third computerized lottery drawing for more than two permits for the same person.
- Apply for or receive more than three permits for the spring turkey season. The three-permit total includes lottery-drawn, youth, landowner, and OTC permits.