

ARKANSAS REGISTER

Proposed Rule Cover Sheet



Secretary of State

Cole Jester

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Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1094

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Name of Department _____

Agency or Division Name _____

Other Subdivision or Department, If Applicable _____

Previous Agency Name, If Applicable _____

Contact Person _____

Contact E-mail _____

Contact Phone _____

Name of Rule _____

Newspaper Name _____

Date of Publishing _____

Final Date for Public Comment _____

Location and Time of Public Meeting _____

Proposal: Amend Code 01.00-R – Administrative Hearing Procedure

Justification: Amendments to Code 01.00 - R – Administrative Hearing Procedure are requested to ensure that a person convicted of violating Code 05.37 does not have their revocation period reduced by up to half, as is currently permitted by this Code.

Code affected: 01.00-R

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS COMPLETELY
(Attach additional pages if needed)

SHORT TITLE OF THIS RULE: Code 01.00-R – Administrative Hearing Procedure

5. What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to the **agency** to implement this rule? There is no additional cost to implement the rule.

Explain the financial benefit to the agency from implementing this rule: N/A

Current Fiscal Year: \$0

Next Fiscal Year: \$0

Financial Benefit to Agency: None

6. Do alternative means exist for accomplishing the objectives of the rules that might be less burdensome to small business? Yes: No: ☒ X

Why were such alternatives not proposed: N/A

7. Compare this rule with federal and state counterparts: N/A

01.00-R – Administrative Hearing Procedure

- A. Any person whose hunting and fishing rights, privileges, or related licenses have been suspended or revoked by the Commission; who has been denied a Commission-issued license, permit, tag or stamp, or application or rights and privileges attached thereto; or who has received notice of intent to suspend, revoke, or deny the same may request an administrative review hearing only by notifying the Commission in writing within 20 calendar days after receipt of the notice of suspension, revocation, denial, or notice of intent thereof. The request for a hearing must include a valid, current mailing address (or email address) at which the person will receive notice of the date and time of the hearing and any other notices, and the person must notify the Commission of any change of address during pendency of the hearing. The Commission will presume delivery of all notices correctly addressed and mailed to any address that is provided pursuant to a hearing request or, if none is provided, to the address to which the original notice was mailed. Otherwise, the suspension, revocation or denial shall, without further notice, become effective on the 21st calendar day after the receipt of the notice described herein.
- B. Upon timely receipt of the hearing request, the Commission shall appoint a hearing officer and notify the person requesting the hearing (at the address provided or, if none was provided, to the address to which the original notice was mailed) of the date, time, location, and nature of the hearing. Hearing requests received after the deadline for receipt shall be denied unless the person requesting the hearing can show good cause in writing for the untimeliness of the hearing request, in which case the Commission shall appoint a hearing officer and notify the person requesting the hearing of the date, time, location, and nature of a hearing for the limited purpose of determining the person's eligibility for an administrative review hearing. If the hearing officer determines that the hearing request was timely or was untimely but for good cause, the requested hearing shall be held immediately thereafter.
- C. All hearings shall be conducted in-person at the Commission's main headquarters unless the hearing officer determines an exception is necessary for compelling reasons demonstrated in writing at the time the request for hearing is submitted. The Commission shall cause a record to be made of the proceedings.
- D. Hearings shall be conducted in an informal manner and without necessity of adherence to the rules of evidence required in judicial proceedings. Both the Commission and the person requesting the hearing shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to submit evidence in open hearing, compel the attendance of witnesses and to cross-examine any witness at the hearing. Irrelevant, immaterial or unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded by the hearing officer. Notice may be taken of generally recognized technical or scientific facts within the Commission's specialized knowledge, and the Commission's experience, technical competence and specialized knowledge may be utilized in the evaluation of the evidence.

- E. Except as stated otherwise herein, the hearing officer shall suspend hunting and fishing licenses, rights, and privileges as set forth in Code 01.00-L beginning on the date specified in the hearing officer's final decision.
1. The hearing officer may reduce the suspension term by up to 1/2 if, after consideration of the person's violation record and evidence admitted at the hearing, the hearing officer makes all of the following findings of fact:
 - i. The person's hunting or fishing rights, privileges, or any related licenses have not been suspended or revoked by the Commission or a court of competent jurisdiction within the previous 15 years; and
 - ii. The person's suspension is not based on any Class 5 offense **or Code 05.37**.
 2. Any reduction granted shall be contingent upon the person successfully completing a Commission-approved hunter education course, boating education course, or both, and submitting written proof of the same to the Commission no later than 120 calendar days after suspension. The suspension reduction shall not become effective unless and until the Commission has received proof of completion of the courses.
 3. The hearing officer may modify the suspension to allow the person to retain licenses, rights, and privileges to (a) hunt, if no hunting-related offenses formed the basis of the suspension or (b) fish, if no fishing-related offenses formed the basis of the suspension, provided that the person's hunting and fishing licenses, rights, and privileges have **never-not** been suspended or revoked by the Commission or a court of competent jurisdiction for fishing- or hunting-related offenses **within the previous 15 years**.
- F. In matters not concerning the suspension or revocation of hunting and fishing rights, privileges, and related licenses, the hearing officer shall affirm, rescind, or modify the suspension or revocation of the license, permit, tag or stamp, or the denial of the application based upon the evidence admitted in the record of the proceedings.
- G. Decisions of the hearing officer shall be final and shall include findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a final decision. The parties shall be served either personally or by mail delivery to the address used to mail the hearing notice (or to any updated address a party provided during the hearing) with a copy of the final decision, which shall become effective immediately upon delivery.
- H. Any aggrieved party may, within 30 days after service of the final decision, file a petition for review in the circuit court of Pulaski County or the county in which they reside if they reside in Arkansas. Unless ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, the Commission shall not stay implementation of the final decision during the pendency of any appeal of that decision.

LEGAL NOTICE

The regular monthly meeting of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission will be held beginning at 8:00 a.m. Thursday, June 19, 2025, at the Golden Glo Studio located at 1238 Country Club Road, Camden, AR 71701. At that time, regulations and business pertaining to the operation of the Game and Fish Commission and other fiscal and administrative matters will be considered and acted upon. Additionally, Committee meetings attended by Commissioners and agency staff members will be held throughout the day on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, beginning at 12:00 p.m. at the Golden Glo Studio located at 1238 Country Club Road, Camden, AR 71701. All interested persons are invited to attend these meetings.

The Commission meeting on June 19th will be live-streamed and a link for easy viewing access will be available on the agency website. Please visit the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission website at <https://www.agfc.com> for additional up-to-date details as the meeting dates draw closer.

Items on the agenda for the June 19, 2025 meeting will include discussion and/or adoption of proposed regulations that previously were considered at the May 14-15, 2025 Commission Meetings, plus consideration of various Hunting and Fishing Regulations and regulations pertaining to the Enforcement Division of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, including but not limited to:

- Provide that persons convicted of violating Code 05.37 (regarding disorderly conduct while hunting, fishing or trapping) shall not be eligible to have their license suspension term reduced by the Administrative Hearing Officer (Code 01.00-R).
- Permit the Administrative Hearing Officer to modify a person's license suspension to allow hunting if there were no hunting-related offenses, or fishing if there were no fishing-related offenses, provided that the person's hunting and fishing licenses, rights, and privileges have not been suspended or revoked within the previous 15 years (Code 01.00-R).
- Create a resident combination hunting/fishing guide license for \$350 (Code 03.14 & Addendum D1.01).
- Prohibit and penalize harassment and public disorder of hunting, fishing or trapping activities (Code 05.37).
- Modify boating restrictions on certain WMAs and NWRs by increasing the penalties for negligent operation from Class 2 to Class 3 & for reckless or intentional operation from Class 3 to Class 4 (Code 20.27).
- Modify wild turkey season dates (Addendum A1.02).
- Modify wild turkey season dates and limits on WMAs (Addendum C1.04).
- Modify Turkey Zone Descriptions (Addendum E1.02).
- Create an exemption from the 16-inch length restriction for largemouth bass on Lakes Barnett, Brewer, and Poinsett during agency-approved fishing tournaments (Addendum N1.02).
- Discussion of access restrictions during duck season on WMAs.

All persons wishing to be heard on these subjects should submit comments in writing to this office before the start of the June 19, 2025 meeting (preferably by 4:30 p.m. on the day before). Any

request to make an oral presentation at the meeting should be submitted in writing to this office on or before June 9, 2025. Copies of any proposed rules or regulations may be obtained at the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission main office and at www.agfc.com, or through a written request mailed to the address below.

If you need assistance to participate in this public meeting due to a disability as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact AGFC's ADA Coordinator in Human Resources at 501-382-3813 at least three (3) business days prior to the scheduled meeting to request an accommodation. Every reasonable effort will be made to meet your request.

DOUG SCHOENROCK, DIRECTOR
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Game & Fish Commission Building
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

Chris Racey
Interim Director

Ben Batten
Deputy Director



Brad Carner
Deputy Director

Spencer Griffith
Deputy Director

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

John P. Marks
General Counsel

Christian N. Parks
Sr. Assistant General Counsel

James R. Brown
Assistant General Counsel

Dalton B. Swindell
Assistant General Counsel

May 16, 2025

Arkansas Register
Arkansas Secretary of State, Rules & Regulation Filing
500 Woodlane Drive, Room 26
Little Rock, AR 72201
Via email only: arkansasregister@sos.arkansas.gov

RE: Legal Notice for Proposed Rules or Regulations – May 2025 meetings

Dear Arkansas Register:

Included are nine (9) proposed regulation changes that will be published in the Legal Notice to the Arkansas Democrat Gazette on May 18-20, 2025. Should you have any questions or comments concerning this filing, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Milligan or me at (501) 382-3807 at your convenience.

Sincerely,

John P. Marks
General Counsel

JPM/srm
Attachment

cc: Ms. Rebecca Miller-Rice, Bureau of Legislative Research
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Ms. Sheri Thomas, Bureau of Legislative Research
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The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's mission is to conserve and enhance Arkansas's fish and wildlife and their habitats while promoting sustainable use, public understanding and support.