

§ 708.14. Big Game License Tag Drawing System.

(a) General Conditions

(1) Except as otherwise provided, the department shall award license tags for premium deer, bighorn sheep, elk and pronghorn antelope hunts, as described in sections 360(b) and (c), 361, 362, 364 and 363, using a Modified-Preference Point drawing system.

(2) Except as otherwise provided, the Modified-Preference Point drawing system shall award proportions of hunt tag quotas, as specified for each species, using the following drawing methods:

(A) Preference Point Drawings. Tags are awarded based on the following order of priority: an applicant's hunt choice (first choice only for deer), accumulated point totals by species (highest to lowest), and computer-generated random number (lowest to highest).

(B) Draw-By-Choice Drawings. Tags are awarded according to an applicant's hunt choice and computer-generated random number (lowest to highest), without consideration of accumulated points.

(3) Except as otherwise provided, applicants unsuccessful in receiving a tag for premium deer (based on first choice selection), bighorn sheep, elk or pronghorn antelope hunts shall earn one (1) preference point for use in future Big Game Drawings.

(4) To earn and accumulate a point for any species, a person shall comply with all application requirements for that species as specified in sections 708.1, 708.9, 708.10 and 708.11 including the following conditions:

(A) Applicants for premium deer license tags, pronghorn antelope license tags, or elk license tags shall be at least 12 years of age on or before July 1 of the license year for which they are applying.

(B) Applicants for Nelson ~~big horn~~ bighorn sheep license tags shall be at least 16 years of age on or before July 1 of the license year for which they are applying.

(C) Applicants shall possess a valid annual California hunting license valid for the hunting season requested.

(D) Applications for bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope and elk hunts shall include the appropriate nonrefundable processing fees as specified in Section 702.

(E) ~~Any applicant~~ Applicants shall apply for a premium deer license tag, bighorn sheep license tag, pronghorn antelope license tag and elk license tag through the department's Automated License Data System terminals at any department license agent or department license sales office by June 2 each year.

(F) Each applicant who submits a premium license tag, as noted in (E) above, through the department's Automated License Data System terminals at department license agents and department license sales offices shall receive a "big game drawing receipt" printed from the terminal. The receipt shall contain the customer's name and permanent identification number, proof of entry into the big game drawing for the license year, hunt choices for each species, accumulated preference points for each species, and Party Identification Number.

(G) Except for apprentice deer hunt applicants, applicants shall not submit more than one drawing application for each species during the same license year.

(b) Party Applications, Residency

(1) No more than six persons shall apply together as a party for premium deer license tags. Applicants for premium deer license tags may be residents or nonresidents.

(2) No more than two residents shall apply together as a party for elk license tags. Nonresidents shall not apply as a party for elk license tags.

(3) No more than two residents shall apply together as a party for pronghorn antelope license tags. Nonresidents shall not apply as a party for pronghorn antelope license tags.

(4) Applicants shall not apply as a party for bighorn sheep license tags.

(5) Each year upon application, each applicant shall specify if the applicant is applying as an individual, a party leader or joining an existing party.

(6) Applicants applying as an individual or as a party leader shall be assigned a Party Identification Number from the department's Automated License Data System terminal at the time of application each year. Applicants shall be assigned a Party Identification Number for each species.

(7) To apply as a party, the party leader shall apply first and provide ~~his/her~~ their assigned Party Identification Number to the other party members.

(8) Applicants joining an existing party shall provide the Party Identification Number of the party leader when ~~he/she applies~~ they apply to join the party.

(9) Applicants joining a party shall be assigned the same tag choices in the same order of preference as the party leader.

(10) All party members shall be awarded tags according to the choices selected by the party leader.

(c) No applicant shall earn more than one (1) preference point per species, per drawing, for use in future drawings. Preference points are accumulated by species and shall not be transferred to another species or another person. Preference points are not zone or hunt specific.

(d) Except as otherwise provided, successful applicants receiving tags for their first choice premium deer, bighorn sheep, elk or pronghorn antelope hunts shall lose all preference points for that species.

(e) For party applications, the department shall use the average preference point value of all party members (total preference points for the party divided by number of party members) as the basis for consideration in the drawing for that species. Point averages shall not be rounded.

(f) Except as otherwise provided, persons who do not wish to apply for an antelope, elk, bighorn sheep or premium deer tags, may earn one (1) preference point for any or all of these

species, by submitting the appropriate application(s), as specified in sections 708.1, 708.9, 708.10 and 708.11, and selecting the point code number for that species, as defined by the department, as the hunt choice (first choice only for deer) through the department's Automated License Data System terminals at any department license agent or department license sales office. Persons applying for a preference point in this manner shall be subject to the same application requirements as regular drawing applicants as specified in subsection 708.14.

(g) The department shall maintain records of preference points earned by individual applicants based on the identification number assigned to each customer by the department's Automated License Data System. The customer's identification number, Get Outdoors ID (GO ID), will be printed on each drawing receipt issued by the Automated License Data System. Applicants shall notify the department's License and Revenue Branch in Sacramento, in writing, of any changes or corrections regarding name, mailing address, or date of birth.

(h) Persons not applying for premium deer, bighorn sheep, elk, or pronghorn antelope hunts through the department's Big Game Drawings for five (5) consecutive years shall have their preference points for that species reduced to zero (0). For the purposes of this subsection, persons whose applications are disqualified from drawing shall be considered the same as persons not applying. Applying for preference points as described in (f) above, will keep an applicant's file active.

(i) Any person may appeal incomplete, late and ineligible applications or applications submitted without the appropriate processing fee that were not included in the department's big game drawing and the hunter did not earn a preference point. The appeal shall be in writing and describe the basis for the appeal. The appeal shall be received by the department's License and Revenue Branch in Sacramento, or if mailed, postmarked on or before May 31 of the following year. The department, upon consideration of the appeal, may grant the appeal and award one preference point to the appellant. If the department grants the appeal for a preference point, the appellant shall pay all the applicable fees. The department shall not award a preference point unless the appellant pays all the applicable fees.

(j) Any applicant who was drawn for the applicant's first deer tag choice in the big game drawing (becoming a tag holder) and cannot hunt for any reason may return their entire unfilled tag (including carcass portion) and submit a written request to retain their accumulated preference point total and earn one preference point for deer for that license year. If the request is granted, the tag holder shall retain the preference point total the tag holder accumulated prior to the big game drawing and earn one preference point for deer for that license year. The department shall not refund the fees paid for a resident deer tag. To be eligible for preference point reinstatement, tag holders must meet one of the criteria below:

(1) Before a season starts. The tag holder must return the entire unfilled tag (including carcass portion) with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked prior to the earliest date the tag is valid for hunting. For tags that are valid for both an archery season, and a general season pursuant to sections 360 and 361 of these regulations, the written request must be postmarked prior to the opening date of the earliest season. The department may refund the difference between the fee paid for a nonresident deer tag and a resident deer tag for any nonresident. Party members may return their deer tags only if their points are less than or equal to the

party's point average. For party members who have more points than the party's point average to have their points reinstated, all members of the party must return their tags for point reinstatement.

(2) After a season starts.

~~(A) For the 2021 hunting license year, a tag holder whose hunt zone was inaccessible for sixty-six percent (66%) or more of a hunt season (pursuant to sections 360 and 361 of these regulations) due to a public land closure caused by wildfire may return their unfilled tag with their written request for preference point reinstatement. For tags that are valid for both an archery season and a general season, only the general season shall be considered for the calculation of the percentage of hunt season lost. The tag holder must return their unfilled deer tag with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked prior to May 1, 2022. Requests postmarked on or after May 1, 2022 shall not be considered.~~

~~(B) Commencing with the 2022 hunting license year beginning July 1, 2022, a tag holder whose hunt zone was inaccessible for sixty-six percent (66%) or more of a hunt season (pursuant to sections 360 and 361 of these regulations) due to a public land closure caused by wildfire may return their unfilled tag with their written request for preference point reinstatement. For tags that are valid for both an archery season and a general season, only the general season shall be considered for the calculation of the percentage of hunt season lost. The tag holder must return their entire unfilled deer tag (including carcass portion) with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked on or prior to February 28 of the current license year. Requests postmarked after this date shall not be considered.~~

(k) Any applicant who was awarded an elk, antelope, or bighorn sheep tag in the big game drawing (becoming a tag holder) and cannot hunt for any reason may return their entire unfilled tag (including carcass portion) and submit a written request to retain their accumulated preference point total, earn one preference point for elk, antelope or bighorn sheep for that license year, and seek refund of the tag fee. The tag holder shall pay the nonrefundable processing fee specified in Section 702 with the request. If the request is granted, the tag holder shall retain the preference point total the tag holder accumulated prior to the big game drawing and earn one preference point for elk, antelope, or bighorn sheep. The department may refund the tag fee. To be eligible for preference point reinstatement and/or tag refund, tag holders must meet one of the criteria below:

(1) Before a season starts. The tag holder must return ~~the~~ their entire unfilled tag (including carcass portion) with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked prior to the opening date of the season for which the tag is valid.

(2) After a season starts.

~~(A) For the 2021 hunting license year, a tag holder whose hunt area was inaccessible for sixty-six percent (66%) or more of the hunt season (pursuant to sections 362, 363 and 364 of these regulations) due to a public land closure caused by wildfire may return their unfilled tag with their written request for preference point reinstatement and/or tag refund. The tag~~

~~holder must return their unfilled tag with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked prior to May 1, 2022. Requests postmarked on or after May 1, 2022 shall not be considered.~~

(B) Commencing with the 2022 hunting license year beginning July 1, 2022, a tag holder whose hunt zone was inaccessible for sixty-six percent (66%) or more of the hunt season (pursuant to sections 362, 363, and 364 of these regulations) due to a public land closure caused by wildfire may return their unfilled tag with their written request for preference point reinstatement and/or tag refund. The tag holder must return their entire unfilled tag (including carcass portion) with their written request to the department's License and Revenue Branch, P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, CA 94244-2090, postmarked on or prior to February 28 of the current license year. Requests postmarked after this date shall not be considered.

(I): Apprentice hunters must return all premium first-choice tags to be eligible for preference points reinstatement. All returned tags must meet eligibility requirements for point reinstatement. Tagholders must submit written request along with entire unfilled tags (including carcass portion) for preference point reinstatement.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 219, 265, 270, 275, 331, 332, 1050, 1572, 4302 and 10502, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 110, 200, 201, 203, 203.1, 219, 255, 265, 270, 275, 331, 332, 713, 1050, 1570, 1571, 1572, 3950, 3951, 4302, 4330, 4331, 4332, 4333, 4336, 4340, 4341, 4902, 10500 and 10502, Fish and Game Code.