

§ 113-276.2. Licensees and permittees subject to administrative control; refusal to issue or reissue, suspension, and revocation of their licenses and permits; court orders of suspension.

(a) This section applies to the administrative control of:

- (1) Persons, other than individual hunters and fishermen taking wildlife as sportsmen, holding permits under this Article;
- (2) Individuals holding special device licenses under G.S. 113-272.2(c)(1), (1a), (2), and (2a);
- (3) Individuals holding collection licenses under G.S. 113-272.4;
- (4) Individuals holding captivity licenses under G.S. 113-272.5 and G.S. 113-272.6; and
- (5) Persons holding licenses under G.S. 113-273.

(b) Before issuing any license or permit to persons subject to administrative control under this section, the Executive Director must satisfy himself that the person meets the qualifications set by statute, rule, or his administrative guidelines. If the person fails to meet the qualifications or if the Executive Director learns of some other cause for believing that issuing the license or permit would be contrary to the best interests of the conservation of wildlife resources, he must refuse to issue the license or permit.

(c) Before reissuing any license or permit to any person subject to administrative control, the Executive Director must review all available information and apply the same standards that governed initial issuance of the license or permit before he may reissue it.

(d) Upon refusing to issue or reissue a license or permit under this section, the Executive Director must notify the person in writing of the reasons for his action and inform him that if he is dissatisfied with the Executive Director's decision he may commence a contested case on the refusal by filing a petition under G.S. 150B-23 within 10 days of receiving the notice. The notice must be personally served by a law enforcement officer or an agent of the Wildlife Resources Commission or sent by mail with return receipt requested.

(e) The Executive Director shall revoke a license or permit issued to a person subject to administrative control if he finds that the person does not meet the qualifications for the license or permit, has committed a substantial criminal violation of this Subchapter or a rule adopted under the Subchapter, or has seriously or persistently failed to comply with the terms and conditions upon which the license or permit was issued. Before revoking a license or permit, the Executive Director shall notify the licensee or permittee of his findings and his intention to revoke the license or permit. The notice must be personally served by a law enforcement officer or an agent of the Wildlife Resources Commission or sent by mail with return receipt requested. A licensee or permittee who disagrees with the Executive Director's findings may commence a contested case on revocation by filing a petition under G.S. 150B-23 within 10 days of receiving the notice. Revocation or suspension of a license or permit by a court under G.S. 113-277 runs concurrently with a revocation under this section.

(f) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 827, s. 8.

(g) Upon revocation of a license or permit, the Executive Director or his agent must request return of the license or permit and all associated forms, tags, record books, inventories, invoice blanks, and other property furnished by the Wildlife Resources Commission or required to be kept by the Commission solely in connection with the license or permit. If the person needs to retain a copy of the property returned to the Wildlife Resources Commission for tax purposes or other lawful reason, the person may copy items returned if the copies are clearly marked in a manner that they could not be mistaken for the originals. In securing property to be returned or in otherwise closing out the affairs conducted under the license or permit, agents of the Wildlife Resources Commission may enter at reasonable hours the premises of the person in which wildlife resources or items of property pertaining to the license or permit are kept, or reasonably

believed to be kept, to inspect, audit, inventory, remove, or take other appropriate action. Any wildlife resources in the possession of the person which he may no longer possess must be disposed of in accordance with the most nearly appropriate provision of G.S. 113-137. If a person fails to return to an agent of the Wildlife Resources Commission all wildlife resources and other property covered by this subsection; refuses to allow entry by the agent to inspect, audit, remove property, or perform other duties; or otherwise obstructs an agent of the Wildlife Resources Commission in performing his duties under this subsection, he is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. Each day's violation is a separate offense.

(h) No person refused issuance or reissuance of a license or permit under this section, or whose license or permit was revoked, is eligible to apply again for that or any similar license or permit for two years. Upon application, the Executive Director may not grant the license or permit unless the person produces clear evidence, convincing to the Executive Director, that he meets all standards and qualifications and will comply with all requirements of statutes, rules, and reasonable administrative directives pertaining to the license or permit.

(i) The Executive Director is required to make necessary investigations and cause necessary disclosure of information by all persons subject to administrative control, and all applicants for a license or permit that would place them in this category, to determine that the real party in interest is seeking or has been issued the license or permit. Any attempt to circumvent the provisions of this section is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

(j) If the Executive Director determines that the effective conservation of wildlife resources would be seriously impaired by continued unfettered operations or by continued possession of property by the person subject to administrative control, the Executive Director may apply to the appropriate court for an order:

- (1) Placing special reporting and inspection requirements on the person; or
- (2) Impounding some or all of the records or other property associated with the license or permit; or
- (3) Limiting the scope of operations under the license or permit; or
- (4) If there is clear evidence of a serious threat to the conservation of wildlife resources, suspending the operations of the person under the license or permit; or
- (5) Placing other appropriate restrictions, prohibitions, or requirements upon the person. (1979, c. 830, s. 1; 1987, c. 827, ss. 8, 98; 1993, c. 539, ss. 856, 857; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1999-456, s. 31; 2003-344, s. 6; 2019-204, s. 6(q).)