



SPONSOR: Rep. Lee & Sen. Simpson & Sen. Connor;
Reps. Hocker, Kenton, Manolacos, D. Short, Bolden,
Carson, Jaques, Mitchell; Sens. Bunting, Ennis

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
146th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 375

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 7 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO FREE ACCESS TO STATE PARKS,
AND FREE HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES AND PERMITS FOR CERTAIN VOLUNTEERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 4701(a)(5), Title 7 of the Delaware Code, by adding thereto a new subparagraph, designated
by underlining, to read:

§ 4701. Powers and duties.

(a) The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control may:

(5)(A) Establish and collect such user charges, which shall approximate and reasonably reflect all costs
necessary to defray the expenses of the Department for the use of the facilities and services it provides in areas it
administers. The Department shall, in addition, establish and impose a schedule of fees for entrance to state parks and for
surf fishing vehicles and snowmobiles on said lands, with the concurrence and approval of the General Assembly. The
Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control shall establish the period and areas on which
park fees and user charges shall be imposed. The Secretary shall annually prepare a schedule of park entrance and surf
fishing vehicle and snowmobile fees pursuant to this section and submit the same as part of the Department's annual
operating budget proposal. All of the fees collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the General Fund of this
State and designated solely for park operations and maintenance; provided, however, that no fee shall be imposed on any
recognized veteran's service organization for the use of any state park or portion thereof for purposes of patriotic or
memorial services, provided that advance written notification of not less than 15 days is given to the agency and does not
conflict with other previously scheduled activities within the park;

(E) A resident who is an active Delaware volunteer firefighter, an active Delaware volunteer emergency
medical technician (EMT), or a life-member of a Delaware volunteer fire department is entitled to receive an annual pass
granting the resident free admission to all Delaware State parks.

(i) “Active Delaware volunteer firefighter” means a person who is a member of a Delaware volunteer fire department and who responds to at least 20 percent of that department’s annual alarms and/or crew calls as a non-paid firefighter.

(ii) “Active volunteer emergency medical technician” or “EMT” means a person who is a member of a Delaware volunteer fire department or a Delaware volunteer ambulance company and who responds to at least 20 percent of the department’s or company’s annual emergency medical service calls as a non-paid EMT, EMT-C, or EMT-P, as described in 16 Del.C. § 9701(11), (12), and (13) respectively.

(iii) “Life-member of a Delaware volunteer fire department” means a person who is a member of a Delaware volunteer fire department and who has been awarded Life Membership status by that department.

(iv) To qualify for a free annual pass to Delaware State parks pursuant to this subparagraph, a firefighter, EMT, or life-member must submit annually to DNREC’s issuer of park passes a letter on official fire department or ambulance company letterhead, signed by the department’s or company’s president and authenticated by the president of the Delaware Volunteer Firefighter’s Association. The letter must explain how the person qualifies for a free annual park pass under this subparagraph.

Section 2. Amend § 502, Title 7 of the Delaware Code, by adding thereto a new subsection, designated by underlining, to read:

§ 502. Exceptions to requirements for license.

(a) Residents and nonresidents may fish if they are the operator of a vehicle with a surf fishing vehicle permit as long as the vehicle is located on a designated Delaware state park surf fishing beach without being licensed hereunder.

(m) A resident who is an active Delaware volunteer firefighter, an active Delaware volunteer emergency medical technician (EMT), or a life-member of a Delaware volunteer fire department is entitled to receive annually, without charge, licenses to hunt and fish and a surf fishing vehicle permit.

(1) “Active Delaware volunteer firefighter” means a person who is a member of a Delaware volunteer fire department and who responds to at least 20 percent of the department’s annual alarms and/or crew calls as a non-paid firefighter.

(2) “Active volunteer emergency medical technician” or “EMT” means a person who is a member of a Delaware volunteer fire department or a Delaware volunteer ambulance company and who responds to at least 20 percent of the department’s or company’s annual emergency medical service calls as a non-paid EMT, EMT-C, or EMT-P, as described in 16 Del.C. § 9701(11), (12), and (13) respectively.

49 (3) “Life-member of a Delaware volunteer fire department” means a person who is a
50 member of a Delaware volunteer fire department and who has been awarded Life Membership status by
51 that department.

52 (4) To qualify for free hunting and fishing licenses and a surf fishing vehicle permit
53 pursuant to this subsection, the firefighter, EMT, or life-member must submit annually to DNREC’s
54 issuer of licenses and permits a letter on official fire department or ambulance company letterhead, signed
55 by the department’s or company’s president and authenticated by the president of the Delaware Volunteer
56 Firefighter’s Association. The letter must explain how the person qualifies for free hunting and fishing
57 licenses and a surf fishing vehicle permit under this subsection.

SYNOPSIS

Delaware volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) are the first responders to all types of emergencies in the State. They provide fire extinguishment, fire prevention, life safety education, and emergency medical and rescue services. They respond to calls for help from the citizens of Delaware for all types of fires, hazardous materials incidents, vehicle crashes, emergency medical service calls, building collapses, and thousands of other emergency and non-emergency calls. They are truly Delaware’s first responders. They do this day after day, any time, day or night -- for no compensation. They do this fully knowing that they may be injured, or even killed, in the line of duty. In order to reward them, this bill is offered as an incentive for them to continue with the fine service they provide to the citizens of Delaware. The bill gives free annual passes to Delaware State parks to active Delaware volunteer firefighters, active EMTs, and life-members of volunteer fire departments, along with free hunting and fishing licenses and surf fishing permits.