

WAC 220-450-070 Wildlife rehabilitation permits—Requirements and restrictions. (1) **Purpose.** The purpose of the wildlife rehabilitation permit is to ensure that humane care and treatment is provided for wildlife in rehabilitation including all aspects of animal welfare as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation with the goal of relieving suffering and release back to the wild.

(a) All wildlife held under a wildlife rehabilitation permit remains the property of the state held in trust for Washingtonians and is controlled and regulated by the state.

(b) A wildlife rehabilitation permit is required to take, temporarily possess, and transport wildlife for the purpose of rehabilitation, with the following exceptions:

(i) Public transport. Members of the public may capture and transport injured and orphaned wildlife if it is safe to do so to a wildlife rehabilitation facility; the public must transport injured wildlife to a permitted wildlife rehabilitator within twenty-four hours.

(ii) Veterinary care. Veterinarians without a wildlife rehabilitation permit may provide stabilization for transport or euthanize wildlife for humane reasons; veterinarians without a wildlife rehabilitation permit must arrange transport for orphaned or injured wildlife within forty-eight hours to a permitted wildlife rehabilitator.

(2) **Wildlife rehabilitation permits.**

(a) The department may issue a wildlife rehabilitation permit if the applicant:

(i) Is at least eighteen years of age;

(ii) Completes and submits a current application form to the department's wildlife rehabilitation manager;

(iii) Demonstrates completion of at least six months, or one thousand hours, of experience in wildlife rehabilitation under the direct supervision of a wildlife rehabilitator. At least three months, or five hundred hours, of this experience must occur during the spring or summer. This training and experience must be completed within a three-year period. The department, at its discretion, may consider education in wildlife rehabilitation to suffice as a partial substitute for experience;

(iv) Submits to the department a written letter of recommendation from a current primary permittee in good standing and who has not had a suspended or revoked wildlife rehabilitation permit within the last three years and who has two or more years of experience in wildlife rehabilitation;

(v) Submits to the department a signed Principal Veterinarian Agreement form from a veterinarian who is willing to serve as the principal veterinarian for the applicant;

(vi) Successfully completes the Washington state general wildlife rehabilitation examination by correctly answering eighty percent or more of the questions. An applicant who fails the exam may retake it beginning fourteen days from the date of the failed exam; and

(vii) Possesses, is employed by, or volunteers at facilities that have been inspected and approved by the department and meet department standards, and meet current minimum standards for wildlife rehabilitation as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabili-

tation. New wildlife rehabilitation permits must be signed and returned to the department by the permittee no later than fourteen days from the date of receipt.

A new wildlife rehabilitation permit is only valid when signed by the permittee and the department permitting representative.

(b) Veterinarians are exempt from the requirements in (a)(iv) and (v) of this subsection; veterinarians may be partially exempt from the requirements in (a)(iii) of this subsection if their formal education or practical training is in wildlife medicine. Applicants living in states with boundaries contiguous with Washington state whose wildlife rehabilitation activities occur in Washington, for Washington wildlife, and/or has or works for a facility in Washington may apply for a Washington wildlife rehabilitation permit.

(c) The department will determine which species the wildlife rehabilitator is qualified to care for and may condition the permit according to the applicant's training, experience, capabilities, and facilities.

Inactive permit applications. Permit applications greater than three years old from the date of signature will be classified as inactive. Applicant must submit a new complete and current application to be considered. If exam was taken greater than three years from the date of the new application, the applicant must retake the exam.

(d) Wildlife rehabilitators must display the wildlife rehabilitation permit or a copy of the permit in a location at the facility that is visible to the public.

(e) Wildlife rehabilitation permits are valid for up to three years, as long as the information on the permit remains valid and current and the permittee adheres to permit conditions and department rules.

(f) Wildlife rehabilitators must report any permit information changes to the department within ten business days of the change. These changes include:

- (i) Permitted rehabilitator leaving the facility;
- (ii) Subpermittees leaving the facility;
- (iii) Major changes or additions in animal housing and enclosures that would affect number of individuals and/or permitted species;
- (iv) Change in principal veterinarian;
- (v) Facility address;
- (vi) Adding facilities.

(g) The department may refuse to issue a wildlife rehabilitation permit to an applicant if within the last ten years of the date of the application the applicant:

- (i) Was convicted of a fish or wildlife offense; or
- (ii) Was convicted of any offense involving animal or child cruelty, neglect, or abuse.
- (iii) Found guilty of practicing veterinary medicine without an active license, as determined by the veterinary board of governors.
- (iv) Fails to meet any of the above requirements.

(3) **Cervid endorsement.**

(a) A person must possess a cervid rehabilitation endorsement to house and rehabilitate cervids;

(b) Must have completed hands-on training hours for one complete season March through October focused on cervid wildlife rehabilitation with a current primary permittee endorsed for cervid rehabilitation, and submit to the department a written letter of recommendation from that primary permittee;

(c) Must attend the cervid training provided by the department, which may include updated training at time of permit renewal; and

(d) Possess department inspected approval facilities suitable for cervid species listed on the permit and as required by department rules and the current standards as stated in the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation.

(4) **Large-carnivore rehabilitation endorsement.** A person must possess a large-carnivore rehabilitation endorsement to rehabilitate large carnivores. Large carnivores are brown bear, black bear, cougar, wolf, bobcat, and lynx. The department may issue large-carnivore endorsements to wildlife rehabilitators who:

(a) Have at least five hundred documented hours, of direct safety, handling, and medical care in a current wildlife rehabilitation practice with large carnivores; at the discretion of the department and on a case-by-case basis, wildlife biologists professionally employed as a large carnivore biologist with five hundred or more hours of documented experience may substitute a portion of the required hours for direct handling and experience;

(b) Have received and documented training in large-animal restraint techniques, including demonstration of proper catchpole use and immobilization-drug administration;

(c) Submits to the department a written letter of recommendation from a current primary permittee in good standing and who has not had a suspended or revoked wildlife rehabilitation permit within the last three years and who has two or more years of experience in large-carnivore rehabilitation;

(d) Successfully completes the written large-carnivore rehabilitation examination by correctly answering eighty percent or more of the questions. An applicant who fails the exam may retake it beginning fourteen days from the date of the failed exam; and

(e) Possess department-inspected and department-approved facilities suitable for large carnivores as required by department rule and the current standards as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation.

(5) **Raptor rehabilitation endorsement.** A person must possess a raptor rehabilitation endorsement to rehabilitate raptors. The department may issue raptor rehabilitation endorsements to wildlife rehabilitators who:

(a) Demonstrate five hundred hours direct practice with and handling of raptors;

(b) Successfully complete the written raptor rehabilitation examination by correctly answering eighty percent or more of the questions. An applicant who fails the exam may retake it beginning fourteen days from the date of the failed exam;

(c) Possess department-inspected and department-approved facilities suitable for raptor housing and rehabilitation as required by department rule and as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation; and

(d) Submits to the department a written letter of recommendation from a current primary permittee in good standing and who has not had a suspended or revoked wildlife rehabilitation permit within the last

three years and who has two or more years of experience in raptor rehabilitation.

(6) **Raptors-only rehabilitation permits.** The department may issue raptor-only rehabilitation permits that allow a person to rehabilitate only raptors and no other wildlife. To qualify for these permits, an applicant must:

(a) Demonstrate five hundred hours direct practice with and handling of raptors;

(b) Successfully complete the raptor rehabilitation reexamination by correctly answering eighty percent or more of the questions. An applicant who fails the examination may retake it beginning fourteen days from the date of the failed exam;

(c) Submits to the department a written letter of recommendation from a current primary permittee in good standing and who has not had a suspended or revoked wildlife rehabilitation permit within the last three years and who has two or more years of experience in raptor rehabilitation and who agrees to advise the applicant in performing raptor rehabilitation; and

(d) Posses department inspected and approved facilities suitable for raptor housing and rehabilitation as required by department rule and as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation.

(7) **Oiled-wildlife rehabilitation endorsement.**

(a) A person must have an oiled-wildlife endorsement or written department approval to retain oiled wildlife. If the primary permittee does not possess an oiled-wildlife endorsement, the permittee must transfer the oiled wildlife to a primary permittee who has an oiled-wildlife endorsement, or obtain department approval to retain the oiled wildlife.

(b) The department may issue an oiled-wildlife endorsement to permitted rehabilitators who possess or have permission to use department-approved facilities suitable for oiled-wildlife rehabilitation as required by department rule. For minimum housing/pen and pool requirements for oiled species other than alcids, refer to the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Associations and International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation.

(8) **Permittee-requested permit amendments.** A wildlife rehabilitator may ask for permit amendments for:

(a) Changes to permitted species and capacity by submitting a revised species information page from the department-provided application;

(b) Changes to subpermittees by submitting the wildlife rehabilitation subpermittee application; and

(c) Addition of an education or foster animal by submitting the live animal retention application.

(9) **Wildlife rehabilitation permit renewal.** To renew a wildlife rehabilitation permit, the permittee must submit the following documentation at least thirty days prior to the permit date of expiration:

(a) A current, completed wildlife rehabilitation permit application form; and

(b) Documentation demonstrating at least thirty hours of continuing education during the previous three-year permit period. Continuing education includes:

(i) Documented attendance at state wildlife rehabilitator meetings or at Washington Wildlife Rehabilitation Association conference, or National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association annual symposium;

(ii) A certificate of completion of an International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council online or in-person class or workshop;

(iii) Completion and documented attendance of privately offered wildlife rehabilitation training;

(iv) Completion and documented attendance of wildlife rehabilitation classes at a college or university;

(v) Documented department preapproved training with a currently licensed wildlife rehabilitator; or

(vi) Other continuing education activities as preapproved by the department;

(vii) Renewed wildlife rehabilitation permits must be signed and returned to the department by the permittee no later than fourteen days from the date of receipt;

(viii) A renewed wildlife rehabilitation permit is valid only when signed by the permittee and the department permitting representative.

(10) Reinstatement of expired permits.

(a) A permit expired for less than three years may be reinstated for the facility and species listed on the expired permit as long as the permittee meets the conditions for permit renewal.

(b) Permits expired for three years or more may be reinstated if:

(i) The applicant submits a current and complete department provided wildlife rehabilitation permit application;

(ii) Possesses, is employed by, or volunteers at facilities that have been inspected and approved by the department and meet department standards for treating and housing wildlife for rehabilitation; meet current minimum standards for wildlife rehabilitation as stated in, but not limited to, the most current edition of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and International Rehabilitation Council's Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation;

(iii) The applicant takes and successfully completes the Washington general wildlife rehabilitation examination, the raptor rehabilitation examination, or large carnivore rehabilitation examination, whichever examination is applicable, by correctly answering eighty percent or more of the questions. An applicant who fails the examination may retake it beginning fourteen days from the date of the failed exam.

(11) Out-of-state wildlife rehabilitators. Wildlife rehabilitators who have a current wildlife rehabilitation permit or a comparable permit issued by another state, and who move to Washington state for the purpose of residency and wish to practice wildlife rehabilitation in Washington, must follow the same procedures and requirements as a new applicant for a Washington state wildlife rehabilitation permit.

(12) A violation of this section by a person who engages in wildlife rehabilitation without a department permit is punishable under the appropriate statute for the species being rehabilitated, including RCW 77.15.120 for endangered fish or wildlife; RCW 77.15.130 for protected fish or wildlife; RCW 77.15.400 for wild birds; RCW 77.15.410 for big game; and RCW 77.15.430 for wild animals not classified as big game.

(13) A violation of this section by a person who has a wildlife rehabilitation permit is punishable under RCW 77.15.750(1), Unlawful use of a department permit—Penalty.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.467, 77.12.469, and 77.32.070. WSR 19-06-038 (Order 19-35), § 220-450-070, filed 3/1/19, effective 4/1/19. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047. WSR 17-05-112 (Order 17-04), recodified as § 220-450-070, filed 2/15/17, effective 3/18/17. Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 77.12.240, 77.12.467, 77.12.469, and 77.32.070. WSR 13-18-046 (Order 13-192), § 232-12-841, filed 8/30/13, effective 9/30/13.]