

**MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR DEER HUNTING
2025-2026 SEASON**

Hunting on lands managed by the Monmouth County Park System is subject to all the rules and regulations of the Park System, including the Administrative Procedures outlined below. Each permitted hunter is responsible for knowing all rules, regulations, and procedures.

Permit Requirements

- In order to apply for a Park System hunting permit, a \$40.00 non-refundable application processing fee must be paid by cash, check, or credit card.
- A current New Jersey hunting license and a hunter education program course completion card for each type of hunting must be produced to register for the permit. A registrant must sign a hold harmless agreement.
- All Park System permits will expire at the end of the 2025-2026 State deer hunting season.
- The Park System reserves the right to limit the number of permits issued and the number of hunters at one site at one time.
- All hunters shall be required to complete an end-of-season Deer Harvest Report. Failure to submit a complete and accurate report by the deadline will result in the denial of a permit for the following year.
- Failure to comply with the rules and regulations and administrative procedures may result in the revocation of the Park System hunting permit, suspension of privileges in a future season or seasons, issuance of a Park System warning, summons, and/or notification to New Jersey Fish and Wildlife of non-compliance.
- The permit holder is responsible for reporting any observed violation of the rules and regulations and administrative procedures to Park System personnel.
- A harvest incentive of \$20 reduced fee will be applied to the 2026-2027 deer management permit when a harvest of three (3) or more deer is confirmed with state confirmation numbers provided on 2025-2026 End-of-Season report.

New Jersey Licenses and Permits

- The Park System's deer hunting permit is not a substitute or replacement for required New Jersey hunting licenses and permits.

***Antlerless Harvest Requirement**

- All hunters must harvest an antlerless deer on a Monmouth County Park System property prior to taking an antlered deer in any Category 1 area. Antlerless harvests must be reported to MCPS via the online form to be eligible for buck harvest.
- No antlerless harvest requirement exists in Category 2 areas.

Safety Zones

- Signs will be posted at all areas open to hunting.
- Maps provided by the Park System are intended only as general guides to the areas.
- A minimum 150' safety zone is in effect in all Park System hunting areas, except as otherwise noted on maps. A 450' safety zone is in effect adjacent to schools and playgrounds.
- The Safety Zone Waiver gives permission to the permit holder, when in a tree stand, to possess a loaded firearm within 450 feet (Category 2 parks only), or a nocked arrow within 150 feet of the following Park System buildings, as indicated on the hunting maps:

- Charleston Springs Golf Course – Golf Center (after 12/25/25), north pump house, south course maintenance area, southwest of track
- Clayton Park – Park System buildings on south side of 526
- Crosswicks Creek Park Lower Reach – Park System buildings along south side of Polhemustown Rd, barn 1765
- Freneau Woods Park – maintenance buildings on Greenwood Rd
- Hartshorne Woods Park – cabin, Rocky Point area
- Holmdel Park/Ramanessin section – all Park System buildings
- Hominy Hill Golf Course – maintenance area
- Howell Park Golf Course – Golf Center (after 12/25/25) and rain shelters
- Huber Woods Park – Timolat Farm section, north of Bowne Rd
- Manasquan River Greenway – Howell Park Golf Course maintenance complex, all Park System buildings on Bergerville Rd Tract, Southard Ave, and Casino Dr, ranger residence on West Farms Rd.
- Metedeconk River Greenway – all Park System buildings on Fort Plains Rd and Ford Rd Tract
- Perrineville Lake Park – Park System buildings off Witches Hollow Rd
- Shark River Golf Course maintenance, workshop, and cart storage buildings
- Shark River Park – all Park System buildings on Shark River Station Tract, and Shark River Golf Course maintenance, workshop, and cart storage buildings
- Thompson Park – Longbridge Annex area, Challenge Course shed, picnic shelter, and playground
- Turkey Swamp Park – Nomoco Activity Area (after 11/17/25), family campground, including playground (after 11/17/25), maintenance complex, Park System buildings on Drift Rd

Tree Stands

- Stands and access devices are left at the hunter's risk in all hunting areas.
- Placement of stands does not ensure the exclusive use of an area for hunting.
- Hunters may place only one tree stand per tree.
- Bel-Aire Golf Course, Hominy Hill Golf Course, and Wickatunk Recreation Area are designated carry-in/carry-out areas where tree stands must be removed daily.

Parking

- Vehicle parking within the county park areas is limited to those parking areas designated on the Park System's deer hunting area maps. Refer to maps for special restrictions applicable at some areas.
- Gated areas at parks are governed by posted hours. All vehicles must be removed prior to the posted closing time.

General

- The Park System reserves the right to adjust hunting areas and boundaries at any time.
- The Park System reserves the right to engage in property care and maintenance activities that may interfere with hunting.
- Sunday hunting is prohibited in all Park System areas.
- At all Category 1 parks, field dressing of deer is prohibited within 50 feet of maintained Park System service and access roads, parking lots, and marked trails.
- Confiscated and abandoned property will be declared surplus and disposed of after six months if not claimed, consistent with the Park System's Lost and Found Policy.

Category 2 Special Requirements

The following special procedures apply within those park areas identified as Category 2 parks on the table of Areas Open for Deer Hunting:

- Hunters must check in at the designated parking lots 30 minutes before the start of legal shooting. In order to avoid disruption of the hunt, hunters will not be permitted to enter the hunting area after the start of legal shooting, or to re-enter the area during the hunting period if they choose to leave.
- Harvesting of antlered and antlerless deer shall be in compliance with New Jersey Fish and Wildlife Regulations.
- Field dressing of deer harvested in Hartshorne Woods Park and Thompson Park shall only occur off-site or at an area designated by the Park System.
- All parking shall be in designated parking lots only. All access shall be through designated parking lots only.
- Stand set-up will not be permitted the day of the hunt.
- Minimum distance of 50 yards between all tree stands.
- Hunters are REQUIRED to self-report the day and time of set up. Reports can be filled out on a smartphone in the field or on a computer. See website or scan QR code to access the Category 2 set-up form.

SUPPLEMENTAL RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING PUBLIC DEER HUNTING ON LANDS MANAGED BY THE MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM AS ADOPTED BY THE MONMOUTH COUNTY BOARD OF RECREATION COMMISSIONERS ON JANUARY 22, 2024, BY RESOLUTION NO. R-24-1-22=37

BE IT RESOLVED by the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners that the following rules and regulations have been adopted for the regulation, operation, and control of white-tail deer in accordance with the Board's Monmouth County Park System Deer Management Program so as to assure a healthy forest on the property controlled by the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners. The Deer Management Program is managed by the employees of the Monmouth County Park System (hereafter referred to as the Park System). These rules and regulations are supplemental to the Rules and Regulations Governing the Use of County Park and Recreation Areas adopted by the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners by Resolution No. R-24-1-22=56 as the same may be from time to time amended, and which are incorporated herein by reference and which, together with these rules and regulations, are collectively hereinafter referred to as "the Rules and Regulations."

These supplemental Rules and Regulations apply to individuals who are granted a deer hunting access permit for designated Monmouth County Park System lands.

State Game Code:

1. All New Jersey codes, rules, regulations, zones, license and permit requirements applicable to the hunting of deer and administered by the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife shall apply. Where Park System rules, regulations, and procedures are more restrictive, they will be enforced, in addition to all applicable New Jersey codes, rules, and regulations.
2. In addition to State requirements for hunter orange, bow hunters must wear hunter orange to and from their tree stands if the season overlaps with a shotgun or muzzleloader season at that park location.

Permit Requirements:

3. An annual access permit issued by the Park System is required to hunt on designated Park System-managed land. The access permit must indicate the type of hunting allowed by the permit (shotgun, muzzleloader, and/or bow). An individual will not be issued more than one access permit per season.
4. The Park System's annual access permit must be carried on a permitted hunter's person while hunting in a designated Park System hunting area. In addition, in accordance with State requirements, a current New Jersey state hunting license and/or current applicable New Jersey state deer hunting permits must be displayed on a permitted hunter's person while hunting in a designated Park System hunting area.
5. Persons less than 18 years of age will not be issued a Park System access permit.
6. A non-permitted person is prohibited from accompanying a permitted hunter while hunting.

Antlerless Harvest Requirement:

7. All hunters must first harvest an antlerless deer on Monmouth County Park System property prior to taking an antlered deer in any Category 1 area. Antlerless harvests must be reported to MCPS via the online form to be eligible for harvesting an antlered deer. It is prohibited to injure or kill any other animal in any park or area at any time.

Driving Deer:

8. Driving of deer by a hunter or any other individual is prohibited.

Safety Zones:

9. A hunter is responsible for being aware of and complying with all Park boundaries, safety zones, and restricted areas.
10. A hunter must obey all posted signs. Hunting is prohibited in any safety zone or restricted area.

Hours:

11. A hunter must not be in the park for more than 60 minutes before the legal shooting time, and for more than 60 minutes after the legal shooting time.
12. A hunter who must remain in the park for more than 60 minutes after the end of permitted hunting in order to track a deer or find a lost person must inform a park ranger directly by cell phone or in person, or must leave a visible, legible note at his or her parked vehicle.

Handling of Firearms:

13. Discharge of a firearm or bow and arrow across maintained Park System trail, service or access roads is prohibited. Firearms and bows and arrows may be discharged across marked trails within a hunting area only if specified on the deer hunting map for that area.
14. Firearms used for hunting and crossbows must be unloaded and cased or socked, except when the hunter is in the tree stand. A bow with a nocked arrow is prohibited except when the hunter is in the tree stand.
15. A firearm, ammunition, bow, arrow, or bolt must not be left unattended at any time.

Tree Stand Requirements:

16. Hunting must be from an elevated tree stands only, which must be attached to the tree at least ten feet above the ground.
17. Only commercially manufactured hang-on, climbing, and ladder tree stands are permitted. Such stands must be attached to the tree by use of a cable, chain, or strap to minimize injury to the tree. Saddle and Sling tree stands are permitted. All rules governing commercially manufactured hang-on, climbing, and ladder tree stands shall also apply to saddle and sling tree stands.

18. A tree stand must not be located within 50 feet of maintained Park System service or access roads, marked trails, or public roads.
19. The hunter's Park System access permit number for the current season must be affixed to the platform of the tree stand in letters at least 2" in size, visible and legible from the ground, on rigid plastic, wood, or metal backing.
20. A hunter must not use another hunter's stand, unless written permission has been given by the tree stand owner and is in the hunter's possession.
21. Tree stands and access devices are permitted to remain in a tree for the duration of the Park System hunting season. Tree stands and access devices are not permitted to be placed before September 15th, or remain in place after March 15th, or after the revocation of a hunter's access permit. Stands used in Category 2 hunting areas shall not be placed more than two weeks prior to the permitted hunting dates and must be removed no later than two weeks from the last day of MCPS permitted hunting in the selected area.
22. A hunter may only leave one tree stand and access device in a tree in a Category 1 hunting area per map. A hunter may also use one additional hang-on, climbing, or ladder tree stand and access devices in that Category 1 hunting area, which must be removed on a daily basis. A hunter may leave or use only one tree stand and access devices in a Category 2 hunting area.
23. Access to and from a tree stand is limited to commercially manufactured screw-in steps, strap-on steps, or climbing sticks. Tree gaff climbers, spikes, and nail-on steps are prohibited. A hunter must adhere to the manufacturer's safety recommendations when using a tree stand, access devices, and safety equipment.
24. A hunter must use a safety harness while in the tree stand and must use a haul line to raise and lower the firearm and/or bow.

Vegetative Clearing and Marking:

25. Selective removal of vegetation is limited to flush hand pruning of brush and small limbs to gain access, improve line of sight, or hang a stand. The vegetation to be pruned shall be no more than 3/4" in diameter.
26. Only reflective tacks, clips, or twist ties may be selectively placed in trees to mark access routes and must be removed within two weeks of the end of the Park System hunting season. Colored flagging is prohibited.

Access and Parking:

27. Trespassing on private property to gain access to a park area open for hunting is prohibited.

28. Hunters must keep off all tees and greens while hunting at any golf course area open for deer hunting.
29. The location for all parking and all access through designated parking lots shall be specified on Park System deer hunting maps or as posted.
30. The vehicle identification tag that is issued with the Park System access permit must be displayed on the driver's side dashboard and must be clearly visible when a hunter is on Park System property for the purpose of participating in the Deer Management Program.

Baiting and Trail Cameras:

31. The use of any type of container or feeder to dispense or hold bait is prohibited.
32. The use of minerals and manufactured supplements is prohibited.
33. A maximum of five (5) gallons of non-manufactured, natural baits, such as fruits, vegetables, and shelled grains, may be used.
34. Baiting is prohibited within all safety zones.
35. Baiting is prohibited for more than two weeks before the park area deer hunting season begins.
36. Trail cameras are prohibited in any Park System area.

Field Dressing:

37. Field dressing of harvested deer is restricted to the designated area when specified on the Park System deer hunting maps or in the Administrative Procedures.

Enforcement Authority:

Employees of the Board of Recreation Commissioners are vested with police authority and empowered to make arrests for violations of County Park Rules and Regulations. The Rules and Regulations for Deer Hunting are supplemental to the Monmouth County Park System Rules and Regulations Governing Public Use of County Park and Recreation Areas and shall be posted in the affected areas. All rules, regulations and guidelines are promulgated in accordance with provisions of New Jersey Revised Statutes Title 40, Chapter 12-6 which reads as follows:

“The Board of Recreation Commissioners shall have full control over all lands, playgrounds and recreation places acquired or leased under the provisions of Sections 40:12-1 to 40:12-9 of this title and may adopt suitable Rules, Regulations and By-Laws for the use thereof, and the conduct of all persons while on or using the same, and any person who shall violate any such Rules, Regulations, or By-Laws shall be deemed and adjudged to be a disorderly person.”