



## Nevada Big Game Draws Frequently Asked Questions

### What's Changed Recently or New in the Past Few Years:

- Newly offered junior antelope horns shorter than ears hunt will be available for the first time beginning in 2025.
- Want to be taken off the alternate list? Now applicants who select to be an alternate can be removed from that list if they decide a last-minute tag will not work for them. Customers wishing to be removed can send that request to NDOW by heading to [www.ndowlicensing.com](http://www.ndowlicensing.com) and submitting a ticket through the green Help button.
- Customers who sign up to be an alternate will be automatically opted in to receiving text messages from the Department. As an alternate tag is assigned to a customer, they will receive a text message notification of their awarded alternate tag.
- Junior bonus points will now be consolidated into the general bonus point categories. CGR 524 was approved by the Board of Wildlife Commission in March 2025 with a regulation change that removes the distinction between junior and general hunt bonus points allowing for a single species point category to be used for hunts that offer a junior option. Bonus points from a single point category for either mule deer, antelope or wild turkey will be earned and spent as tags are drawn regardless of if they are drawn for a junior hunt or the general hunt.

## Table of Contents

What's Changed or Recently New in the Past Few Years:.....	1
How do Bonus Points Work in Nevada? .....	3
Party Hunts.....	4
Alternates.....	5
Main Draw.....	6
General Applications .....	7
License Validity.....	8
Specialty Tags (Silver State and PIW).....	9
Return A Tag Options.....	11
If I Draw a Tag, When Will I Receive My Tag? .....	11
Harvest Questionnaires .....	12
Waiting Periods .....	12

## How do Bonus Points Work in Nevada?

- A bonus point is an extra draw number assigned to an application. Bonus points increase draw odds by giving the applicant an extra chance to pull a low enough number to be assigned a tag.
- Bonus points can be accumulated for all species and classes available in the big game draw. Each hunt category has its own set of bonus points but not every hunt category can accumulate points. For example, Elk has three different categories of bonus points: Antlered Elk, Antlerless Elk, and Spike Elk. Elk Depredation hunts do not accumulate points. Management hunts also do not accumulate points.
- If an applicant is unsuccessful in the draw, the application automatically converts into a bonus point to be used in the following year's draw (given that the applicant has an active hunting or combination license on file at the time of the draw). Bonus points can also be purchased in place of submitting an application if an applicant does not wish to obtain a tag during the upcoming season.
- An active hunting or combination license is required in order to obtain a bonus point. Only one bonus point per species and class can be obtained in the year the license is active. Customers will be prompted to purchase a license when submitting their application or to purchase only if successful in drawing a tag. **Choosing to purchase only if successful will not earn a customer a bonus point.**
- Bonus points are squared to equal the randomly draw numbers an applicant is assigned in a draw, plus one extra number for your original application.  $(BP^2) + 1 = \# \text{ of chances to receive a low draw number}$ .
- Bonus points are lost if an applicant misses two consecutive years of applying for the hunt category.
- Bonus points are residency agnostic, meaning that if your residency changes, your bonus points go with you. **Note that some hunts are only offered to a resident.** If a person cannot apply for a hunt due to hunt closures or residency changes, previously acquired points will remain static until the applicant is able to again apply for the hunt connected to the bonus points.
- 11-year-old juniors who will turn 12 before the opener of the last hunt of the season may purchase a bonus point.
- Party hunt bonus points are factored into party hunt applications by averaging the bonus points across all party members, rounded to the nearest whole number, squaring the number, and adding 1.  $(\text{total party member's BPs} / \text{party members})^2 + 1 = \# \text{ of draw numbers assigned to the party hunt}$ . **The most ideal situation for all members of a party is applying with other members who have a similar amount of bonus points.**

- If a tag is returned to the Department by a member of a party hunting application, party hunt members will **NOT** receive their BPs back unless **ALL** members of the party return their tag before the season opens. A party hunt member may receive their bonus points back if the return was due to a medical, death, or military reason.
- Bonus points cannot be purchased by an applicant in a waiting period.
- Bonus point applications for ALL big game species will be offered for sale in second draw. Only applicants who did not apply and earn a point or draw a tag in the main draw will be able to purchase a bonus point in the second draw. Applicants are limited to earning one bonus point per species, per license year.
- Juniors may only apply for either junior mule deer or general antlered mule deer in the same application season to prevent a single applicant from receiving multiple bonus points in the same category within a calendar year.

## Party Hunts

- A party hunt is two or more people applying together for the chance to be awarded the same tag on a single application.
- Party hunts can only be created for mule deer, antlerless elk, or antelope with horns shorter than ears.
- The leader of the party selects the party option during the application process. This selection generates a party hunt group number that then can be used by all other members of the party.
- The party hunt group number can be found on the receipt of the party leader or in the party leader's customer account under "Applications and Points."
- Entering the party hunt group number during an application will automatically populate the application with the choices made by the leader of the party hunt.
- The party hunt group number is entered by all members of the party during the application process when prompted if they wish to hunt as an individual or as a party for the party hunt species.
- Applicants who wish to join a party hunt after they have submitted their application can edit their application under their account in the "Application and Points" section. Here an applicant can edit the individual/party status by adding the party hunt group number. **Note that applications will update to match the choices made by the party leader.**
- Adult hunters cannot join a junior hunt party, but junior hunters can apply as an adult and receive a party tag with adult members. Junior hunters can apply for a junior hunt party tag with other junior hunters.

- Nonresident hunters and resident hunters can apply to be in a party hunt together but only for the mule deer species. **Note that some options for resident and nonresident do not match and only choices available to both residencies will allow for both residencies to join a party together.**
- Party hunt bonus points are factored into party hunt applications by averaging the bonus points across all party members, rounded to the nearest whole number, squaring the number and adding 1.  $(\text{total party member's BPs} / \text{party members})^2 + 1 = \# \text{ of draw numbers assigned to the party hunt.}$  **The most ideal situation for all members of a party is applying with other members who have a similar amount of bonus points.** If a tag is returned to the Department by a member of a party hunting application, party hunt members will NOT receive their BPs back UNLESS ALL members of the party return their tag before the season opens. Medical returns are eligible to receive their BPs back.
- Male species applications are awarded first. If an applicant applies for antlered elk and the party for antlerless elk, **the antlered tag could be awarded to the applicant who then would be excluded in the awarded party hunt for antlerless.** This remains true even for the party leader. This does not affect the chances of the party to receive an antlerless tag. Bonus point costs will only be paid for the species of the tag that is drawn. Specialty tags will also exclude a member of a party from drawing a tag with party members.
- Party hunts are collectively successful or unsuccessful. (Unless a party member draws another tag for the same species that makes them no longer eligible for the tag the party applies for – see bullet point above)
- Members of a party can edit their party status through the end of the application period. A leader can disband a party at any time during the application period. If a leader disbands the party, all party member applications will be converted into an individual status with the chosen party hunt options. **It is the responsibility of the party leader and members to communicate on the status of the disbanded party hunt.**
- Party hunts are awarded by lowest draw number followed by remaining quota. If a party of 4 has a low enough draw number to receive a tag but the remaining quota is 2, the collective party will be unsuccessful in the draw.
- Party hunt quotas are respective to resident and non-resident quota pools. If a party of 4 has a low enough draw number and enough resident quota to draw a tag but 2 members are non-resident with a remaining non-resident quota of 1, the party will be unsuccessful in the draw.

## Alternates

- Selecting to be an alternate adds you to a list of hunters willing to accept a tag exactly matching their first-choice application if one should be returned to the Department.

- Alternates are awarded by lowest assigned draw number provided in the Big Game Main Draw.
- An alternate can receive a tag anytime between the results released up until 14 calendar days prior to the opening of the tag's hunt season.
- Customers who sign up as an alternate are automatically opted in to receiving text messages from the Department.
- Alternates receiving a tag will receive a text message from the Department. A customer's default credit card will be charged, and an email confirmation will be sent to the email address stored in their customer account. Tags are mailed from the time of purchase and alternates will receive their alternate tag in the mail within 7 – 10 business days.

## Main Draw

- Bonus points are squared to equal the randomly drawn numbers an applicant is assigned in a draw, plus one extra number for your original application.  $(BP)^2 + 1 = \# \text{ of chances to receive a low draw number}$ .
- Draw numbers are assigned to each bonus point and the lowest number of those assigned points are used on the application. Numbers are assigned randomly from 1-100 million. The lowest number assigned to an application is analyzed for potential draw success.
- Draw numbers are not assigned in sequential order but can range from anywhere between 1-100 million.
- Quotas are totaled by adding up every opportunity for a species to be assigned as a tag. This is the maximum number of times a species can be awarded as a tag to an applicant. Ex) All antlered, antlerless, depredation, spike hunts + all tags available in every unit + all season options + all weapon type options = total quota for elk.
- Tags are awarded to applications beginning with the lowest draw number. Certain applications are evaluated and awarded before others. The order of awarded applications are as follows:
  1. Silver State
  2. Partners in Wildlife
  3. Junior Mule Deer Antlered/ Antlerless
  4. Assigned simultaneously in no particular order [Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Ram, California Bighorn Sheep Ram, Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep Ram, Elk Antlered, Antelope Horns Longer than Ears, Mule Deer Antlered, Mountain Goat, Bear, Moose Antlered]
  5. Assigned simultaneously in no particular order [Elk Depredation Antlered, Management Bighorn Sheep Ram]
  6. Assigned simultaneously in no particular order [California Bighorn Sheep Ewe, Nelson (Desert) bighorn Sheep Ewe, Elk Antlerless, Antelope Horns Shorter than Ears, Junior Antelope Horns Shorter than Ears, Mule Deer Antlerless]

7. Spike Elk

8. Elk Depredation Antlerless

- Once an applicant is awarded a tag for a species, all other chances to be awarded a tag for the same species are made ineligible. An applicant can only receive one tag per species. Ex) if an applicant draws an antlered elk tag, all applications for depredation, antlerless or spike elk become ineligible.
- Management Desert Bighorn Wilderness and One-Horn Ram Hunt. These management hunts are separate hunt categories and will not preclude an applicant applying for this hunt if they are restricted in applying for another nelson bighorn ram hunt (i.e., if an applicant is in the waiting period for a standard nelson bighorn ram tag, they are still eligible to apply for this management hunt). These management hunts are proposed to be a once-in-a-lifetime hunt and therefore being awarded the tag would exclude the successful applicant from applying again in future years. As stated in NAC 502.4187, Sec. 5 – The Department shall not award bonus points for depredation hunts or management hunts; Sec. 6 – As used in this section, “management hunt” means a hunt established to seek harvest of additional wildlife within a population. Consequently, bonus points will not be employed. Applicants can apply for these hunts in addition to other ram tags but can only draw one Nelson sheep tag per year. These hunts will be considered after the general ram hunts in the draw order.

## General Applications

- Customers can link accounts to one another. To link or unlink a customer to or from your account, visit the “Link Customer Accounts” section in an account. **Linked accounts can only be controlled through the primary customer’s account.** If you wish to be unlinked from another individual, you must contact the primary account holder and request that they unlink you.
- Each applicant will need to apply and purchase licenses under their own account and with a separate charge, regardless of linked accounts.
- Customers can add additional credit cards to their account by selecting the Payment Methods section. Expired cards cannot be edited but must be deleted and added anew. Some items in a customer’s account can be set to auto-renew, the default credit card will be the one that is charged at the time of auto-renewal or tag draw.
- A license is valid for 365 days from the date of purchase. One bonus point per hunt category, per year can be earned under a single valid hunting/combo license. **Applicants should be aware of what day their license expires when considering bonus points.**
- Once an application is submitted, editing an application can be done in a customer’s account page under “Application and Points” up until the close of the application period. Withdrawal and re-submission of an application would be needed if the change to the application causes additional fees. Ex) If an application for a bonus point was submitted and wished to be changed to a tag

application, the bonus point application would need to be withdrawn and re-submitted as an application for a hunt. **Application fees are non-refundable and must be paid for every application submitted.**

- Unit choices will show the number of tags allotted to that unit during the last season. Newly created units will show 0 tags.
- Deferred tags from the previous hunt season are subtracted from the Commission approved quotas and will not be awarded through the draw process. This process prevents the overallocation of tags.
- If awarded a tag, harvest return cards are mandatory regardless of a successful take during the season and regardless of whether the tag was hunted on.
- Applicants will be prevented from applying for a species if they did not submit a harvest return card for last season. Customers can complete the return card found in their account, pay \$50 to lift the penalty and proceed with the current year's application.
- If a customer fails to submit their return card by the close of the big game application period, they will be prevented from receiving any big game tags for the following year.
- Applicants are prompted to allow or not allow their draw results made public. This option asks for their name and awards tag to be shown in a list of the year's big game draw results.
- Applicants are prompted to allow or not allow their information to be shared with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. This option asks for their name and personal information to be shared with 3<sup>rd</sup> party entities who request it from the Department for personal or business use.
- Quotas for resident and non-resident are set in Commission Policy 24 at approximately 90% resident – 10% non-resident.
- Applicants can choose up to 5 different units and seasons per hunt category so long as there are 5 different choices available.
- Laws regarding child support mandate that any person who is required by federal law to have a social security number must provide the number to obtain a business, occupational or recreational license. Federal Law – Public Law 104-193; NRS 502.063, 503.5833, 504.390.

## License Validity

- The application system will automatically force a customer to renew their license if they are successful in drawing on a hunt that extends past the expiration date of the license. Ex) License expiring 12/10, successful in drawing a tag that has a season through 12/16.

- Customers will be prompted to renew to an adult license (from a junior) or a senior license (from an adult) if they have reached the correct age for that license. Seniors can continue to purchase an adult license if they so choose.
- Customers who DO NOT have an active license when applying will be prompted to purchase a license during the application process or chose to purchase a license only if they are successful in the draw. You must have an active license at the time of the draw to receive a bonus point. **Those who chose to purchase only if successful will not receive a bonus point for an unsuccessful draw application.**
- Customers who have an active license through the draw but expires before the last hunt they applied for AND was awarded a bonus point in the last year's draw as a part of the draw execution will be prompted to renew their current license or renew only if successful. **A customer may only obtain one bonus point per license.** If bonus points were received from the previous year's draw for unsuccessful applications, a new license will be needed to obtain bonus points for the current year's unsuccessful draw applications.
- Customers who have an active license that was NOT awarded in last year's draw but expires before the draw will be prompted to purchase a license during the application process or chose to purchase a license only if they are successful in the draw. **You must have an active license at the time of the draw to receive a bonus point.**
- A valid hunter education certificate attached to a customer's account is needed to purchase a hunting license.
- A license is not required of a resident under 12 years of age but is required for the issuance of tags. NRS 502.010 (a)
- The youth license fund is a donation-based program the covers the cost of a youth license. This program may be active during the big game application period and draw. It is encouraged for youth to renew their licenses at the time their big game applications are submitted to take advantage of the program while supplies last.

## Specialty Tags (Silver State and PIW)

- Specialty tags are additional opportunities to draw a tag outside of the general big game tag application periods. The funds raised through specialty tag purchases are deposited into special accounts designated for wildlife conservation projects. Applicants cannot choose to be an alternate for any specialty tag.
- An applicant can only draw one tag per species, this includes PIW and Silver State tags. A person can be awarded a tag in the big game draw and purchase a tag of the same species outside of the draw, this includes Heritage and Dream tag.

- Party hunts are not offered on specialty tags.
- Partnership in Wildlife (PIW) Tags allows for the ability to hunt the drawn species in any unit with an open season. Seasons follow the general season structure for the awarded species excluding management hunts, depredation hunts, and seasons for different classes such as spike elk. Weapon type allowed for use is dependent upon the season open at the time of hunting. Waiting periods apply and bonus points revert to 0 although are not used to increase an applicant's chance at drawing the tag. PIW tags can be applied for during the big game application period. Maximum quotas are set in NAC 502.428. Funds raised are deposited in the Wildlife Heritage Trust account.
- Dream Tags are obtained through a raffle style drawing that allows for the purchase of unlimited draw tickets. Tickets can be purchased for others. Allows for the ability to hunt the drawn species in any unit with an open season. Weapon type is not restricted. Customers can purchase a Dream Tag ticket regardless of current waiting periods. Tags are offered based on the previous year's Commission approved quota. If a hunt type has 50 quota or more the prior year, it may be offered as a Dream Tag option. The draw is conducted by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party nonprofit organization established through the Community Foundation of Western Nevada. Funds raised are deposited in the Wildlife account and used for the betterment of Nevada wildlife. NRS 502.219. A recipient of a Dream Tag who is issued a tag for the same species through the big game draw must return the tag to the Department before receiving the Dream Tag. A recipient of a Dream Tag who is issued a tag for an antlerless deer, an antlerless elk, or an antelope with horns shorter than its ears through a tag drawing is not required to return the tag to the Department before receiving the Dream Tag. NAC 502.42695. Tickets can be purchased at <https://nvdreamtag.org/>
- Silver State Tags allow for the ability to hunt the drawn species in any unit open for the general hunt season during a longer season structure specified for Silver State tags. Weapon type is not restricted by season. Applicants can apply and obtain a Silver State tag regardless of current waiting periods. Silver State applications do not utilize an applicant's bonus points. Silver State tags can be applied for in the big game application period. Quotas are set and can vary each year. Funds raised are deposited in the Wildlife Heritage Trust account and used for the betterment of Nevada wildlife.
- Heritage Tags can be obtained by bidding auction through a vendor designated by the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commission. Heritage Tags allow for the ability to hunt the species on the tag purchased, in any unit open for the general hunt season during the seasons specified for Heritage tags. Heritage tags have a longer season structure than the general hunts. Weapon type is not restricted. Customers can purchase a Heritage tag regardless of current waiting periods. Funds raised are deposited in the Wildlife Heritage Trust account.

<b>Specialty Tags</b>	<b>Heritage</b>	<b>Dream</b>	<b>Silver State</b>	<b>PIW</b>
Available in the Main Draw			✓	✓
Can Have Multiple Tags Per Species	✓	✓*		
Weapon Not Restricted with Season	✓	✓	✓	
Longer Season Structure	✓		✓	

Hunt Any Open Unit**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waiting Periods Do Not Apply	✓	✓	✓	
Issued By 3rd Party Vendors	✓	✓		
No Bonus Point Cost	✓	✓	✓	

\* Dream tag holders must turn in their male or either sex tag to the Department if a matching one was obtained for the same year in a draw but can keep the female tag of the same species in the same year.

\*\* Specialty Bighorn Sheep tags have unit closures based on the general tag quotas and harvests of other specialty tag Bighorn Sheep holders.

## Return A Tag Options

- A successful applicant of a tag has 7-days to electronically return their tag to the Department after the draw is conducted and before tags are printed and mailed to customers.
- Physical tags can be returned to the Department up to one business day before the start of the hunt for a bonus point refund.
- Tags returned to the Department will be issued to an available alternate, available to be awarded in the second draw, and finally available for purchase in the First-Come-First-Served program. NAC 502.4215
- Depending on the circumstances surrounding a hunter's inability to hunt on a tag, that person can chose to defer that tag to the next year's season. NAC 502.422
- Tag holders who are diagnosed as terminally ill can choose to transfer their tag to another eligible hunter. NAC 502.422
- Tag holders can choose to transfer their tag to a qualified, non-profit organization who would facilitate the tag being awarded to another individual represented by the organization. Qualifying individuals to receive a tag transfer through this program include youth 12-16 years of age who live in a low-income household or an individual 12 years or older who has a permanent physical disability.

## If I Draw a Tag, When Will I Receive My Tag?

- Tags for successful applicants will be printed after the conclusion of the one-week electronic return period that follows the conclusion of the draw.
- Printing all big game tags takes approximately 1-2 weeks.
- Applicants can expect their tags to be placed in the mail within 3 weeks following the conclusion of the draw and receive their tags around July 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Applicants are advised to ensure the address provided for tag shipping at the time the application is submitted is accurate and current.
- Alternate tags will be shipped to the address provided for tag shipping at the time the application is submitted.

## Harvest Questionnaires

- All successful tag holders are required to submit a harvest questionnaire by January 31 following the tag season regardless of if they were successful in filling the tag. Late hunts ending in February have until February 28/29 to submit.
- Failure to report a harvest questionnaire results in a suspension from applying for the species the following year. This suspension can be lifted by completing the survey and paying a \$50 penalty by the close of the big game application period. Failure to report will result in the denial of all big game tags for 1 year. NAC 502.405
- Turkey harvest questionnaires are due May 31 (or the next business day if May 31 falls on a weekend or holiday) and November 30 (or the next business day if November 30 falls on a weekend or holiday). Turkey tags suspensions can be lifted by paying a \$50 penalty by the close of the spring turkey application period.

## Waiting Periods

- Bighorn Sheep – 10 year
- Bighorn Sheep Ewe – 2 year
- Black Bear – 5 year for successful harvest
- Elk – 7 year
- Mountain Goat – 10 year
- Antelope – 3 year
- Mule Deer – none
- Nelson (Desert) Bighorn Sheep One Horn or Management tag – Lifetime Waiting period
- Moose – Lifetime Waiting Period

## Mandatory Big Game Harvest Inspections

Some species require the inspection of the skull, horns, or hide by a representative of the Department within a given time after the harvest. Timeframes of inspection by a Department representative are as follows:

- Black Bear – within 72 hours of harvest – NAC 502.373
- Bighorn Sheep, regardless of subspecies – within 5 days of harvest – NAC 502.345
- Mountain Goat – within 5 days of harvest – NAC 502.364
- Mountain Lion – within 72 hours of harvest – NAC 502.370
- Moose – within 5 days of harvest – LCB File #R122-23