



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
DEVENS RESERVE FORCES TRAINING AREA
31 QUEBEC STREET
DEVENS, MASSACHUSETTS 01434-4424

16 October 2022

**DEVENS RESERVE FORCES TRAINING AREA
HUNTER STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
HUNTING PROGRAM**

1) PURPOSE: The purpose of this hunting Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document is to establish hunter specific policies and registration procedures for hunting access on Devens Reserve Forces Training Area (“RFTA”).

2) REFERENCES:

- a. 16 USC §670, as amended (Sikes Act)
- b. AR 200-1, Environmental Protection and Enhancement, 2007
- c. Fort Devens Reg. 350-3, Sustainable Range Program, 2017
- d. MGL Chapter 140 §129C
- e. MGL Chapter 131 §36
- f. 321 CMR 3.00
- g. MGL Chapter 21 §17C
- h. AR 190-11 Physical Security of Arms, Ammunition and Explosives
- i. AR 190-13 The Army Physical Security Program
- j. DODI 4715.03

3) APPLICABILITY:

This SOP applies to all persons that hunt, or desire to hunt, on Fort Devens property. This SOP shall remain in effect until formally revised or withdrawn notwithstanding any change to the Garrison’s formal name (e.g., Fort Devens vs. Devens Reserve Forces Training Area) or organization (e.g., Army vs. Army Reserve). This SOP supersedes the previous hunting SOP dated Sep 26, 2018 as it applies to hunters.

4) Hunters and Prospective Hunters:

Hunters and Prospective Hunters (“hunters” or “participants”) must acknowledge and appreciate that participation in the Hunting Program is a privilege, not a right, and always act accordingly. Specific duties include:

- 1) Do not access, or attempt to access, Devens RFTA property without proper authorization.
- 2) Obtain and maintain all permits, licenses, stamps, etc., required by MA and Devens RFTA hunting and gun laws/regulations.
- 3) Submit a complete and accurate registration application in person to the DoD Police (47 Quebec Street, Devens, MA) by the date specified in the Letter of Instruction (LOI)

for the season in which the participant desires to hunt. **New applications are required each season.** Bring a government-issued photo ID, MA hunting license, all applicable documentation of firearm ownership (LTC, FID card, etc.), and, if applicable, a military ID. All weapons (firearms and bows) that will be used to hunt on the Garrison must also be present at the time of registration for serial number verification.

- 4) Comply with the Garrison's process for authorizing participants to hunt on the available days (see **ACCESS**). Do not attempt to hunt on the Garrison without proper authorization.
- 5) If you are a non-military ID bearing civilian: you must acquire an access pass which permits unescorted entry. This must be completed at least 48 hours prior to your authorized hunt(s).
- 6) Check in with Range Control before each authorized hunting day, at the start time stated in the LOI, to receive a safety briefing and Training Area assignment. Comply with all requests from DOD-Police to verify your identity and weapon.
- 7) Bring only one DOD Police-verified weapon (firearm or bow) onto the Garrison, hunt only within the assigned area, and park only in designated spots.
- 8) Demonstrate courtesy and respect to all Garrison staff, the Command, law enforcement, and fellow hunters while participating in the Program.
- 9) Know, understand, and adhere to all local, state, and federal hunting and gun laws/ regulations while participating in the Program.
- 10) Follow all Program-specific rules described in this SOP and current LOI.
- 11) Check out with Range Control after each hunting day no later than the end time stated in the LOI. Report harvested game to Range Control/Natural Resources and the state.

5) RESTRICTIONS:

Program participation is limited to adults 18 years and older. Authorized participants may bring one accompanying minor child aged 12 to 17, but they will observe a single bag limit and share a single firearm/bow. The accompanying minor child must be identified on the registration application. Children under age 12 are not permitted to accompany an authorized hunter.

6) ACCESS:

Specific registration instructions will be included in each LOI, which will be posted on the Garrison website and distributed directly to prospective program participants via mail or email as appropriate. Registration for a hunting season is an expression of interest and does not guarantee access to the Garrison. The Garrison Commander and his/her authorized representatives reserve the right to refuse entry to any person at any time and for any reason.

- a. Authorization to hunt on Devens RFTA property shall be equitably and impartially allocated each season by the Environmental Division in accordance with the lottery system described below. At least five calendar days prior to the first general hunt, Environmental Division will notify participants of their authorized day(s) for the given season. Total allotted hunters and slots are subject to change each season dependent on days available, acreage, safety, training, and wildlife management.
 - 1) 40% of slots in any given hunt will be made available to current service members, military retirees and veterans (any former service member of U.S. Armed Forces discharged under favorable conditions) on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - 2) 40% of slots in any given hunt will first be made available to the general public on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - 3) Any remaining slots available will be drafted through a lottery system.

7) Specific References to allow for public access:

“The Secretary of Defense shall ensure, to the extent reasonably practicable, that outdoor recreation opportunities (including fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife viewing, boating, and camping) made available to the public (Sikes Act sec. 101).”

“Membership in any installation club or organization will not give members priority in participating in hunting, fishing programs, or other consumptive and non-consumptive outdoor recreation opportunities (DoDI 4715.03).”

“DoD lands, waters, and coastal resources shall be made available to the public for the educational or recreational use of natural resources when such access is compatible with military mission activities, ecosystem sustainability, and with other considerations such as security, safety, and fiscal soundness (DoDI 4715.03).”

“DoD installations shall be available to the public for hunting where such programs exist and when not in conflict with mission or environmental and natural resources conservation program goals. Opportunities for public access shall be equitably and impartially allocated consistent with the parameters outlined herein (DoDI 4715.03).”

8) Additional Hunting Program Information:

The Devens Hunting SOP dated Sep 26, 2018 (internal document) is no longer valid or applicable due to inconsistency with the Sikes Act and DoDI 4715.03 mandate for general public access. This SOP supersedes the Devens Hunting SOP dated Sep 26, 2018 as it applies to hunters. For general questions about the program, please contact Kyle Crafts, Natural Resources Manager, via email devens.environmental@army.mil, or by phone at 978-615-6086. For firearm registration-specific questions or to set-up an appointment, contact the DoD Police Lieutenant, 978-615-6063.