



## **ODFW's new electronic licensing system (ELS)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Updated November 8, 2018**

ODFW's new electronic licensing system (ELS) will allow customers to store their licenses, tags and validations online on their smart phone or tablet. Customers can also choose to carry paper documents, but will be able to purchase and print these documents from home using regular paper. The new system will also allow for electronic tagging of fish and game using an app that will work even when offline.

#### **When will the new ELS system take effect?**

The new system including a mobile app for smartphones and tablets will launch Dec. 1, 2018, when 2019 license sales begin. Some additional functionalities to the system will come later.

#### **Will I still be able to buy licenses and tags at the store and at ODFW offices?**

Yes, but stores and offices will not need special computer equipment or paper. They will use the Internet and regular printer paper.

#### **Is the cost of tags and licenses changing due to the new system?**

No. Also, customers who have been purchasing documents online or by mail/fax order and receiving them by mail will no longer need to pay a \$2 shipping/handling fee because these documents can now be printed at home.

#### **Why is ODFW doing this?**

To provide better service to customers, reduce our operating costs and modernize our licensing system. Customers will be able to buy and print their documents directly from home, 24 hours a day, without waiting for them to be mailed like under the current system. Or, customers can choose to buy and immediately use an electronic document, keeping licenses/tags/validations on their smartphone instead of in their pockets. The move to the new system is expected to save \$2 million per year, thanks to the elimination of specialty paper and computer equipment and overall lower cost of the system. The system will also allow ODFW and Oregon State Police to look up licensing information while in the field and offline, which is not possible under the current system.

#### **Will the tags/validations I print hold up as well as the specialized paper from the old system?**

Yes, with a little extra care, such as keeping them in a Ziploc/plastic bag or some other waterproof carrier.

## **How do I tag a big game animal or turkey in the new system?**

***It depends on which option you select at time of tag purchase:***

Paper tag: Validate your tag by writing in ink the harvest date/time and Wildlife Management Unit where the harvest occurred. Place paper tag in a plastic bag to protect it from the elements and attach it to the carcass.

Electronic tag (cell phone or tablet): Validate your tag electronically with an app that will work even when offline. Then take the confirmation number from the app plus your name, ODFW ID, Date of Birth, harvest date and write it on anything that will stand up to the elements (like duct tape, trail ribbon or piece of paper in plastic bag), affix it to the animal like a traditional tag and keep it attached to the carcass in transport, as you would a paper tag.

Note that for other fish and wildlife requiring tagging (Western Ore. fee pheasant and salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, halibut), hunters and anglers who choose electronic tagging will only need to record their harvest in the app, which works when you are offline.

## **Do I still have to report my hunt (mandatory reporting) even if I'm using electronic tagging?**

Yes and reporting will remain a separate step under the new system as this data is handled separately. Hunters who are using electronic tags will be prompted to report as soon as they notch their tag on the app. Hunters using a paper tag will need to report online at MyODFW.com.

## **How do I record my salmon/steelhead/sturgeon/halibut (combined angling tag)?**

Paper tag: Validate your angling tag or harvest card by writing in ink all required information like the species code, mark if hatchery or wild fish (for salmon and steelhead), the location code of where the fish was harvested, the month and the date.

Electronic tag: Use the app that will work even when offline and provide required information.

## **Can I have both an electronic and paper version of my license or tag?**

No. You will need to choose either electronic or paper at the time of purchase. However, customers who choose paper will have the option of changing to electronic during the season.

## **What happens if my phone dies and I can't show my electronic license, tag or validation?**

Just like today, hunters and anglers will be required to have and display a license and tag upon contact by ODFW or OSP. It will be the hunter or angler's responsibility to ensure they always have enough battery or an external battery source to power their phone so they can validate their harvest and show their license or tag. Note that even when they are in the field and without cell reception, ODFW and OSP will also be able to see information about licenses/tags/validations you purchased and to check your confirmation number (which indicates you have electronically tagged your big game animal).

Big game hunters using the electronic tagging system must also put a piece of duct tape, trail ribbon or something on their animal (must include their name, DOB, ODFW ID #, confirmation number and harvest date) and keep it attached to the carcass.

**How many copies of my paper big game tag, turkey tag, combined angling tag, hatchery harvest card/tag or fee pheasant tag can I have?**

Each customer will be allowed to print one tag and it will be unlawful to make copies. Each reprinted tag is unique and only the most recent reprint from the system is valid. OSP and ODFW staff will have the ability to scan the barcode on a printed tag to confirm it is valid. If you lose your tag and need a reprint, you will need to go to a license sales agent or ODFW office and pay \$2 for a reprint.

**Will I have to pin my location or provide a photo when I tag my fish or animal electronically?**

Customers will have the option of either pinning the location of their harvest or providing the wildlife management unit or fishery location code. ODFW recognizes the potential sensitivity of personal hunting and fishing locations and will be evaluating options to address confidentiality issues associated with the new system. Photos will not be accepted through the ELS reporting system.

**Will my information be moved from the current system to the new system?**

If you have purchased an annual hunting or fishing license since 2016, have hunting preference points on file or have certifications or other statuses that remain in effect for an extended period of time (such as Pioneer status, disabilities permit, Northwest Goose permit, or license suspension) then your information will be migrated into the new system. Older customer information that does not meet these criteria will be archived in a separate system.

**How do I verify my account in the new system?**

Hunters and anglers who have big game preference points or other certifications/statuses that remain in effect (Pioneer license, disability permit, Northwest Goose certification, license suspension) or have purchased an annual license in the last three years need to verify their account in ODFW's new licensing system before purchasing their first document.

You can verify your account online at MyODFW.com, in the app or at a license sales agent or ODFW office. Provide your last name, date of birth and one of the following pieces of information:

- 1) Hunter/Angler ID# (now called the ODFW ID#) which is printed on all licenses and tags from 2018 and prior years;
- 2) Phone number associated with account; or
- 3) Email associated with account.

If you do not have a phone number or email associated with account and don't know your Hunter/Angler ID#, call or email ODFW ([odfw.info@state.or.us](mailto:odfw.info@state.or.us) / (503) 947-6000) or visit a license sales agent and ask them to find you in the system.

Customers who did not purchase an annual license in 2016, 2017, or 2018 and don't have preference points or other statuses in effect can just open a new account by choosing "I am a new customer or have not purchased an annual license in the last 3 years."

**Will I be required to have an email address?**

All customers age 12 and over who purchase licenses/tags online or choose electronic tags are required to have a unique email address (not shared by anyone else with a MyODFW account, including a parent or relative) for their account. Customers who purchase paper tags at license sale agents or ODFW offices will be encouraged (but not required) to include an email address in their profiles.

The unique email address is one way customers can be found and identified in the new system and tied to their specific licensing information. Also, with the new system, ODFW is switching its primary communication method with customers from mail to email for cost savings and efficiency. Customers who provide an email can opt out of receiving certain ODFW emails if they choose.

**Will the new system use a Hunter/Angler ID like the current one?**

The current Hunter/Angler ID will become the "ODFW ID" in the new system. Accounts that are moved into the new system will keep the existing Hunter/Angler ID number, but it will now be called the ODFW ID. Customers whose information did not migrate will need to create a new profile and will get a new ODFW ID.

**Can I purchase a federal duck stamp on the new system?**

No because this is not an item sold by ODFW. Purchase your duck stamp at a post office or another location that sells them (such as an outdoor retailer or national wildlife refuge), or buy online at <https://www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp/e-stamp.php> and use immediately.

**Will I still be able to order documents by mail or fax order?**

Instead of mail order, customers will be able to purchase and print license products at home, so the mail/fax order method will be phased out.

**Will my data be secure?**

Yes, the new system will meet all data security requirements, including encryption of personally identifiable information in transit and at rest. Personally identifiable information and financial information will not be collected by or stored in the system that you will interact with to access your license and other products. The information will be stored, using full encryption for both in transit and at rest data, in a separate system that has no direct access point for the general public.

**Have license sale agents been told about the new ELS and do they plan to continue to sell licenses?**

Yes, ODFW has informed current license sales agent about the new ELS and will be in regular communication with them before and after the launch. The majority of agents have agreed to continue to sell ODFW licenses/tags under the new ELS. Many retailers have told us they prefer to use their own equipment, which the new system allows, so as not have to print using a special terminal or special paper. One of ODFW's goals will be to ensure that license sales agents can still be found throughout the state.

**Are other states using this type of electronic licensing?**

Yes. Several states (including GA, FL, OH, AR) currently provide a paperless tag option. The vendor ODFW is using for the new system (JMT) also manages the license sales system for the states of Idaho and Washington.

ODFW regularly communicates with other state fish and wildlife agencies about best management practices for licensing systems and spoke with 22 other states before making a final decision on the new license sales system.

*This FAQ will be continually updated with new information about the ELS before the system launches on Dec. 1, 2018. You can also email a question you don't see answered here to [ELS.Project@state.or.us](mailto:ELS.Project@state.or.us)*