

**29.304. Restrictions on hunting and use of firearms by persons under 16 years of age**

(1) PERSONS UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE.

(a) *Prohibition on hunting.* No person under 12 years of age may hunt with a firearm, bow and arrow, or crossbow.

(b) *Restrictions on possession or control of a firearm.* No person under 12 years of age may have in his or her possession or control any firearm unless he or she is enrolled in the course of instruction under the hunter education program and he or she is carrying the firearm in a case and unloaded to or from that class under the supervision of his or her parent or guardian, or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian, or is handling or operating the firearm during that class under the supervision of an instructor.

(c) *Restrictions on obtaining hunting approval.* Except as provided under par. (d), no person under 12 years of age may obtain any approval authorizing hunting.

(d) *Restrictions on validity of certificate of accomplishment.* A person under 12 years of age may obtain a certificate of accomplishment if he or she complies with the requirements of s. 29.591(4) but that certificate is not valid for the hunting of small game until that person becomes 12 years of age.

(2) PERSONS 12 TO 14 YEARS OF AGE.

(a) *Restrictions on hunting.* No person 12 years of age or older but under 14 years of age may hunt unless he or she is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian, or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian.

(b) *Restrictions on possession or control of a firearm.* No person 12 years of age or older but under 14 years of age may have in his or her possession or control any firearm unless he or she:

1. Is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian; or

2. Is enrolled in the course of instruction under the hunter education program and is carrying the firearm in a case and unloaded to or from that class or is handling or operating the firearm during that class under the supervision of an instructor.

(3) PERSONS 14 TO 16 YEARS OF AGE.

(a) *Restrictions on hunting.* No person 14 years of age or older but under 16 years of age may hunt unless he or she:

1. Is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian; or

2. Is issued a certificate of accomplishment that states that he or she successfully completed the course of instruction under the hunter education program or has a similar certificate, license, or other evidence satisfactory to the department indicating that he or she has successfully completed in another state, country, or province a hunter education course recognized by the department.

(b) *Restrictions on possession or control of a firearm.* No person 14 years of age or older but under 16 years of age may have in his or her possession or control any firearm unless he or she:

1. Is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian;

2. Is enrolled in the course of instruction under the hunter education program and is carrying the firearm in a case and unloaded to or from that class or is handling or operating the firearm during that class under the supervision of an instructor; or

3. Is issued a certificate of accomplishment that states that he or she successfully completed the course of instruction under the hunter education program or has a similar certificate, license, or other evidence satisfactory to the department indicating that he or she has successfully completed in another state, country, or province a hunter education course recognized by the department.

1983 a. 420; 1997 a. 197; 1997 a. 248 s. 431; Stats. 1997 s. 29.304; 2005 a. 289; 2009 a. 39; 2011 a. 252, 258.

(4) PARENTAL OBLIGATION. No parent or guardian of a child under 16 years of age may authorize or knowingly permit the child to violate this section.

(4m) HUNTING MENTORSHIP PROGRAM. The prohibition specified in sub. (1) (a) and the restrictions specified in subs. (1) (b) to (d), (2), and (3) do not apply to a person who is hunting with a mentor and who complies with the requirements specified under s. 29.592.

(5) EXCEPTION.

(a) Notwithstanding subs. (1) to (3), a person 12 years of age or older may possess or control a firearm and may hunt with a firearm, bow and arrow, or crossbow on land under the ownership of the person or the person's family if no license is required and if the firing of firearms is permitted on that land.

(b)

1. In this paragraph, " target practice" includes trap shooting or a similar sport shooting activity regardless of whether the activity involves shooting at a fixed or a moving target.

2. The restrictions on the possession and control of a firearm under sub. (1) do not apply to a person using a firearm in target practice if he or she is accompanied by his or her parent or guardian or by a person at least 18 years of age who is designated by the parent or guardian.

**History:**