

Becoming a GAME WARDEN



Georgia Department of Natural Resources

LAW ENFORCEMENT – *Off the Pavement*

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What is a Game Warden?

The **DNR Law Enforcement Division** is looking for self-motivated men and women with a good work ethic and a desire to protect Georgia's beautiful natural resources and to provide a positive public safety presence for our citizens.

Are you looking for a challenging and exciting career, where you can enjoy the outdoors, serve the public and work on a team where you are valued and appreciated? Have you ever considered becoming a Game Warden?

A Game Warden is a Peace Officer certified by the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council and is employed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to enforce wildlife, environmental, boating and other State and Federal laws, rules and regulations.

Patrols are made by boat, aircraft, ATV and on foot. Game Wardens conduct hunter and boater education classes and informative presentations for interested groups concerning hunting, fishing, boating, anti-littering and environmental laws.



Qualifications for Employment

Game Warden Minimum Qualifications

Associates / Technical degree from an accredited college or university.

OR

Completion of equivalent coursework (90 quarter hours or 60 semester hours) from an accredited college or university.

NOTE: Certificates and/or accumulated hours from a technical college, without an associate's degree, do not qualify.

NOTE: Applicants must be at least 21 years of age and meet all requirements for POST Certification.

In addition to the above minimum qualifications:

Applicants who are not POST Certified must pass the POST Entrance Exam to be considered for a Game Warden position. A copy of the test scores must be included with the application when applying for a Game Warden position.

Applicants who are POST Certified must provide a copy of their POST Certification Certificate when applying for a Game Warden position.

Game Warden Preferred Qualifications

Preference may be given to:

- Applicants who are currently POST Certified.
- Applicants who already possess experience and knowledge in the areas of hunting, fishing, boating and other related outdoor activities.
- Applicants with an Associate's degree, or higher, with a major in a related field such as Wildlife Management, Criminal Justice, Natural Science or Forestry.

Necessary Legal Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be at least 21 years of age;
- Be a citizen of the United States;
- Be eligible to obtain a valid Georgia Driver's License at the time of appointment

Medical Standards

Vision: Minimum distant vision of 20/60 correctable to 20/40 in each eye.

Hearing: Hearing loss not greater than 24dBA average of 500, 1000 and 2000 frequencies in the better ear.

POST Entrance Examination

Applicants who are POST Certified must provide a copy of their POST Certification Certificate when applying for a Law Enforcement position with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

POST Entrance Examination Information

Applicants who are not POST Certified must pass the POST Entrance Exam to be considered for Law Enforcement positions within DNR. As of January 1, 2009, the **ASSET** and **COMPASS** exams are the official POST Entrance Exams for law enforcement candidates. The **ASSET** and **COMPASS** exams are administered through the Technical College System of Georgia at various Technical Colleges throughout Georgia.

Since September 1, 2016, the **ACCUPLACER** test has been the official POST Entrance Exam for law enforcement candidates. The **ACCUPLACER** test is administered through the Technical College System of Georgia at various Technical Colleges throughout Georgia. The **ACCUPLACER** test is a computer-based exam that provides immediate results. This test measure reading, writing and numerical skills.

Scores from the **ASSET** exam, **COMPASS** exam, **ACCUPLACER**, **SAT**, **ACT** and **CPE** are accepted. Below are the minimum scores required for satisfying OCGA 35-8-8 regarding completion of the POST Entrance Examination:

TEST PORTION	ACCUPLACER	ASSET	COMPASS	SAT	ACT	CPE
Reading	55	38	70			
Writing	60	35	32			
* Numerical	34	35	26			
Verbal or Critical Reading / Reading				430		75
Verbal or English and Reading					18	
Math				400	16	75
English						75

* - This score is used for evaluation purposes only and does not determine whether a candidate successfully passes the exam.

Applicants who are not POST Certified are required to provide a copy of their test results when applying for a Game Warden position with DNR.

POST Entrance Exam Information, including testing locations, can be found on the Careers page of the DNR LED website at www.gadnrle.org/careers.

There is a \$15 - \$25 fee to take either of these exams. This fee is payable at the exam location.

POST Entrance Examination Access Form

POST Entrance Exam applicants must take a completed copy of the **POST Entrance Exam Access Form** to the testing location when taking the exam. This form can be found on the Careers page, within the POST Entrance Exam link, of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources LED website at www.gadnrle.org/careers.

POST Entrance Examination Testing Locations

The POST Entrance Exam Technical College Location Listing can be found on the Careers page, within the POST Entrance Exam link, of the DNR LED website at www.gadnrle.org/careers.

Testing varies by location, please contact the test site directly to get testing information, directions, etc.

REMINDER: Applicants must take the POST Entrance Exam Access Form with them to the test location.

ACCUPLACER Exam Sample Questions and Information

An **ACCUPLACER** test sample questions for students is available by visiting:
<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/accuplacer/accuplacer-sample-questions-for-students.pdf>

Selection Process

The selection process for Game Warden employment is designed to evaluate an applicant's suitability for a career with DNR.

The Law Enforcement Division (LED) accepts applications throughout the year and will enroll selected Cadet(s) in the Game Warden Academy at the earliest possible date.

Background Investigation

All applicants are subject to a background investigation. An applicant must not have been convicted of any crime, for which the punishment has been imprisonment in a Federal or State prison, nor shall he/she have been convicted of sufficient misdemeanors to establish a pattern of disregard for the law.

Each applicant must successfully pass a polygraph examination. The polygraph examination will consist of a series of questions, dealing with substance abuse and criminal activity.

Physical Skills

All applicants must pass a physical agility test demonstrating physical skills, which are used in the performance of duties as a Game Warden.

The physical agility test consists of the following events:

¾ mile run in less than 7:42

¾ mile obstacle run in less than 9:17

20-yard swim - t-shirt and swimsuit

Oral Interview

Each applicant must compete for current vacancies before a panel of experienced Game Wardens. The panel will ask each applicant a series of questions to determine the applicant's experience and knowledge in the areas of hunting, fishing, boating and related outdoor activities. The applicant's appearance, demeanor, verbal skills and ability to make sound judgment will also be assessed during the interview.

Medical Evaluation, Drug Screening and Psychological Evaluation

All applicants must successfully pass a thorough medical examination by a licensed physician. All medical standards must be met in the areas of vision, hearing, ENT, cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, rectal, hernia, genital/urinary, back and neck, extremities, nervous system, emotional stability and laboratory analysis.

Body Art, Tattoos, Brands, Images, Expressions

Body art, tattoos, brands or images that are visible or may become visible while on duty or in uniform are prohibited.

Body piercing which is visible anytime while on duty and/or in uniform is prohibited.

The display of any unprofessional or offensive image, phrase or other expression, or excessive tattoos shall not be tolerated.

For the purpose of this section, “display” includes:

- May become visible during member’s work activities, and or
- The image, phrase or other expression is found on any clothing item or accessory worn by the member at any time

Unprofessional or offensive shall include but not limited to:

- Depictions of nudity, violence or criminal activity
- Sexually explicit/vulgar art, words, profane language
- Symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group, i.e. swastikas, etc.
- Initials, symbols or acronyms that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations or activities e.g. AB, KKK, SS, street gang names, and/or symbols

Illegal Drug Use

Any of the following will disqualify a person from employment in a sworn position with the DNR, LED:

- Current illegal drug use
- Deliberate misrepresentation of illegal drug history in connection with the application and employment process
- Illegal sale, distribution, transporting, possession, or manufacturing (to include growing) of any drug
- Illegal use of any drug while employed in any law enforcement or criminal justice position or while employed in any position which carries a high level of responsibility or public trust
- Deliberate association of a personal nature within the past one (1) year with persons who use or possess illegal drugs in the presence of the applicant
- Deliberate association will be determined by: Number of instances, Circumstances of incident(s), and/or Applicant’s response or lack of response to the incident(s).
- Use or illegal possession of marijuana or any cannabis derivative within three (3) years of the application date
- Any pattern of marijuana, or any cannabis derivative, use or illegal possession that suggests un-rehabilitated substance abuse
- Use or illegal possession of any illegal drug or combination of illegal drugs, other than marijuana or any cannabis derivative, within ten (10) years of the application date

- Use or illegal possession of any illegal drug or combination of illegal drugs, other than marijuana or any cannabis derivative, more than five (5) times
- Any pattern of drug use that suggests un-rehabilitated substance abuse
- Use of any prescription drug prescribed to another will be evaluated by the LED Director

Conditional Employment

Applicants selected to fill Law Enforcement positions must accept Conditional Employment with DNR. The terms of this Conditional Employment are as follows:

- The applicant must possess sufficient physical, mental, and emotional condition, as determined by a psychological evaluation and a medical history and examination, necessary to perform the essential functions of the above position.
- The applicant must successfully complete the 23-week Game Warden Academy that includes POST Basic Law Enforcement Course Training.

Training

Cadets will attend 23 weeks of mandated law enforcement training at the DNR Academy located at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, GA. Upon successful completion of this training, the applicant will be POST Certified and will become a Game Warden.

The next step in the training process is a six-month probationary field-training program. Game Wardens also receive annual in-service training updates consisting of a minimum of 20 hours each year.



Career Progression

The Career Path of a Game Warden includes:

- Game Warden 1
- Game Warden 2
- Game Warden 1st Class
- Game Warden 1st Class 2
- Game Warden Corporal
- Game Warden Sergeant
- Game Warden Lieutenant
- Game Warden Captain
- Game Warden Major

Job Summary / Promotion Criteria

Game Warden 1

Under supervision, interprets and enforces the state laws, rules and regulations provided for the conservation and protection of natural resources. This is the entry/training level of the Game Warden job series.

Game Warden 2

Under general supervision, interprets and enforces the state laws, rules and regulations provided for the conservation and protection of natural resources.

Promotion Criteria - At least one year of experience as a Game Warden 1 and completion of the Ranger Academy and the Field Training Officer (FTO) Program.

Game Warden 1st Class

Under broad supervision, interprets and enforces the state laws, rules and regulations provided for the conservation and protection of natural resources.

Promotion Criteria - Three years of experience with at least one year as a Game Warden 1 and at least two years as a Game Warden 2.

Game Warden 1st Class 2

Under limited supervision, interprets and enforces the state laws, rules and regulations provided for the conservation and protection of natural resources.

Promotion Criteria - Eight years of experience with at least one year as a Game Warden 1, at least two years as a Game Warden 2 and five years as a Game Warden 1st Class.

Assignments

Applicants for Game Warden positions must be willing to work anywhere in the state of Georgia. Assignments vary from county responsibilities to boating safety positions on lakes and reservoirs and coastal saltwater.

Additional Information

For additional information on becoming a Game Warden, please call the DNR Training Academy in Forsyth, GA at (478) 993-4540 or e-mail the Academy at:

DNR.Training.Academy@dnr.ga.gov

Written inquiries must be submitted to the DNR Training Academy at:

**DNR Training Academy
1000 Indian Springs Drive
Forsyth, GA 31029**

DNR Law Enforcement Division

Law Enforcement Employment Standards

Employment in a state law enforcement agency involves public trust. The Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division will employ only those persons whose conduct, character, and behavior does not discredit them or the Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division. The DNR LED employment process will address the integrity, ethical conduct, honesty, prejudices, financial responsibility (credit), and past behavior of all applicants. We employ the following standards for the hiring of candidates for POST Certified positions.

Any of the following will disqualify persons from employment in a POST Certified position with the DNR, LED:

A. GENERAL

1. Deliberate misrepresentation, falsification or omission on any application, preliminary interview questionnaires, polygraph, work history, background documents, or pre-employment documents.
2. Deliberately making inaccurate, misleading, false, or fraudulent statements during the employment process
3. Conduct or activity which reflects a disregard for local, state, or federal laws or which conflicts with the standards of behavior or ethical principles of the DNR, LED
4. Delinquency on education or government loans unless the applicant is on an approved payment plan
5. Personal state or federal tax liability unless the applicant is on an approved payment plan
6. Failure to meet required educational or professional licensing or certification.

B. CRIMINAL HISTORY

Candidates will be removed from consideration for employment upon discovery of:

1. Sufficient misdemeanor convictions to establish a pattern of disregard for the law
2. Any felony conviction
3. Any outstanding criminal charge pending adjudication
4. Current criminal probationary status
5. Admission to, or discover of, involvement in any crime of a serious or aggravated nature
6. Ongoing criminal activity or history of criminal activity other than minor traffic offenses.

C. FINANCIAL HISTORY STANDARDS

Candidates for employment will be removed from consideration for employment upon discovery of:

1. Poor management of personal finances within the past five years. Debts, pending civil suits, garnishments, dispossessory warrants, bankruptcies, etc., will be investigated to determine a candidate's suitability for employment
2. Failure to provide requested financial documentation of bankruptcies, tax liens, delinquent loans, etc., within the time limit specified by the background investigator

D. DRIVER'S HISTORY

1. Any number of traffic offense convictions and/or pleas of *nolo contendere* sufficient to establish a pattern of disregard for the law. When a pattern is demonstrated, a candidate must not have any violations within three (3) years of the application date
2. Any conviction or plea of *nolo contendere* to Driving Under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol (DUI) within the past five (5) years
3. Any conviction or plea of *nolo contendere* within the past five (5) years for any serious traffic offense, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Fleeing or Attempting to Elude a Police Officer
 - b. Vehicular Homicide (misdemeanor)
 - c. Failure to Stop, Render Aid, or Leave Information
 - d. Racing
4. Five or more convictions and/or pleas of *nolo contendere* within the past two (2) years for any moving violations
5. Applicants must possess a valid driver's license with no restrictions other than corrective lenses
6. Outstanding traffic charges pending adjudication may delay processing of application for employment

E. ALCOHOL

1. Apparent intoxication or the odor of alcoholic beverage about the breath or person of an applicant at any pre-employment appointment
2. Any pattern of use that suggests un-rehabilitated alcohol abuse

F. ILLEGAL DRUG USE

1. Any of the following will disqualify a person from employment in a sworn position with the DNR, LED:
 - a. Current illegal drug use
 - b. Deliberate misrepresentation of illegal drug history in connection with the application and employment process
 - c. Illegal sale, distribution, transporting, possession, or manufacturing (to include growing) of any drug
 - d. Illegal use of any drug while employed in any law enforcement or criminal justice position or while employed in any position which carries a high level of responsibility or public trust
 - e. Deliberate association of a personal nature within the past one (1) year with persons who use or possess illegal drugs in the presence of the applicant. Deliberate association will be determined by:
 1. Number of instances
 2. Circumstances of incident(s)
 3. Applicant's response or lack of response to the incident(s)
 - f. Use or illegal possession of marijuana or any cannabis derivative within three (3) years of the application date
 - g. Any pattern of marijuana, or any cannabis derivative, use or illegal possession that suggests un-rehabilitated substance abuse
 - h. Use or illegal possession of any illegal drug or combination of illegal drugs, other than marijuana or any cannabis derivative, within ten (10) years of the application date
 - i. Use or illegal possession of any illegal drug or combination of illegal drugs, other than marijuana or any cannabis derivative, more than five (5) times
 - j. Any pattern of drug use that suggests un-rehabilitated substance abuse
 - k. Use of any prescription drug prescribed to another will be evaluated by the LED Director.

G. WORK HISTORY

Applicants may be disqualified from employment based upon a review of records and related suitability as determined by the DNR, LED Director or other authorized personnel for any of the following:

1. Failure to provide complete employment history, including complete addresses, phone numbers, and accurate dates of employment
2. Discharge from previous employment(s)

3. Unsatisfactory job performance in previous employment(s)
4. Resignation from previous employment with pending criminal or administrative charges or while under investigation
5. Suspension or revocation of professional certification or license
6. Discipline or citation for a breach of professional ethics or unprofessional conduct
7. Arrest for a felony or misdemeanor when such an incident has a job-related impact
8. Any combination of incidents that demonstrates an unstable work history, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Frequent job changes
 - b. Negative recommendation by previous employer(s)
 - c. Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness
 - d. Negative attitude toward supervision
 - e. Poor job performance based upon lack of willingness or inability to accept responsibility, follow instructions, or fulfill obligations
 - f. Excessive disciplinary actions
 - g. Poor relationships with fellow employees and/or supervisors
 - h. Complaints or reports of workplace violence, harassment or discrimination against another

H. MILITARY HISTORY STANDARDS

Any of the following will disqualify persons from employment with the DNR, LED:

1. Any discharge from military service with less than honorable conditions. General discharges will be investigated to determine candidate's suitability for employment
2. Any disciplinary actions initiated while serving in the military that are determined to impact upon the applicant's suitability for employment

I. BODY ART, TATTOOS, BRANDS, IMAGES, EXPRESSIONS

1. Body art, tattoos, brands or images that are visible or may become visible while on duty or in uniform are prohibited.
2. Body piercing which is visible anytime while on duty and/or in uniform is prohibited.
3. The display of any unprofessional or offensive image, phrase or other expression, or excessive tattoos shall not be tolerated.
 - a. For the purpose of this section, "display" includes:
 1. May become visible during member's work activities, and or

2. The image, phrase or other expression is found on any clothing item or accessory worn by the member at any time.
- b. Unprofessional or offensive shall include but not limited to:
1. Depictions of nudity, violence or criminal activity
 2. Sexually explicit/vulgar art, words, profane language
 3. Symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group, i.e. swastikas, etc.
 4. Initials, symbols or acronyms that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations or activities e.g. AB, KKK, SS, street gang names, and/or symbols.

Game Warden Duties

The following information is provided to give you a realistic understanding of the duties and responsibilities of a Game Warden. Under Georgia law, Game Wardens may exercise the full authority of Peace Officers while in the performance of their duties. To ensure that you understand what you are applying for please read the following carefully.

In the event you are successful and offered a position as a Game Warden that your duties and assignments could include the following:

- Working alone at night in isolated parts of a county without back-up.
- Operating vessels in hazardous waters that include rivers, impoundments, and coastal waters often alone in inclement weather during the hours of darkness.
- Work most Holidays and weekends.
- Be able to present interviews for TV, radio, and other media outlets concerning DNR functions and operations.
- Providing oral presentations to large groups on DNR programs and activities.
- Providing information & education classes to students on hunter education and boating safety issues.
- Detached from your assigned duty station to assist in other parts of the state for extended periods of time for specialized details and operations that may be dangerous.
- Sometimes having to make repairs to assigned equipment in inclement weather without any assistance or aid.
- Provide assistance to other Law Enforcement agencies with traffic accidents, fatalities, domestic violence, search warrants, drug violations, civil disturbances, stakeouts, and environmental disasters, including floods, tornadoes and hurricanes for extended time frames. (Hurricane Katrina)
- Coordinate search and rescue operations on land and the recovery of drowning victims on the water. Must be able to deal with deceased victims.
- Sometimes execute “high risk” arrest and search warrants.
- Remain vigilant and prepared at all times to execute the use of “deadly force” in the event a perpetrator has the ability, opportunity, and places you or a third person in immediate jeopardy of receiving serious bodily harm or death.
- Remain in an “on call” duty status when scheduled in service.
- Maintain proficiency in the use of firearms and defensive tactics.
- Deal with landowner disputes who sometimes criticize you and the department.
- You will be held accountable to a “higher standard” by external customers, the general public, and the Department.
- Enforce laws and regulations dealing specifically with the general public’s leisure time.
- Your Captain and Sergeant will receive complaints on you with regard to enforcement decisions and statements that may or may not be made at the time of arrest or encounter that you will be required to file written and oral reports as to actual events and comments.

- You will be required to operate 4X4 trucks in hazardous conditions and area's launching boats, sometimes having to physically remove a 25 HP out board from the bed of the truck and attach to the transom of the boat.
- You will also be required to operate ATV's in isolated areas.
- You will be required to fly areas in a departmental aircraft as an observer for the pilot.
- Sometimes detached to a region office for office duty which may include cutting grass, operating a weed eater, edger, blower, forklift, etc. In addition, you may have to assist with electrical and carpentry tasks, minor vehicle & boat repairs, answering telephones, and selling licenses to walk-in customers.
- During basic training you will be exposed to intense defensive tactics training and expected to be sprayed with pepper spray.
- During basic training you will be exposed to intense physical exercise, which normally occurs at 5:00 a.m.
- Does your spouse and/or family understand that this is a statewide organization and you will not be given a choice of location assignment? The command staff based on the needs of the organization and the protection of the resource makes these assignments
- You will be required to move and establish a residence in your assigned area.