

AN ACT concerning State government.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Department of Natural Resources (Conservation) Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by changing Section 805-535 as follows:

(20 ILCS 805/805-535) (was 20 ILCS 805/63b2.2)

Sec. 805-535. Conservation Police Officers. In addition to the arrest powers prescribed by law, Conservation Police Officers are conservators of the peace and as such have all powers possessed by policemen, except that they may exercise those powers anywhere in this State. Conservation Police Officers acting under the authority of this Section are considered employees of the Department and are subject to its direction, benefits, and legal protection.

Any person hired by the Department of Natural Resources after July 1, 2001 for a sworn law enforcement position or position that has arrest authority must meet the following minimum professional standards:

- (1) At the time of hire, the person must hold (i) a 2-year degree and 3 consecutive years of experience as a police officer with the same law enforcement agency or (ii) a 4-year degree.

(2) The person must possess the skill level and demonstrate the ability to swim at a competency level approved by the Department in an administrative rule. The Department's administrative rule must require the person to use techniques established by the American Red Cross.

(3) The person must successfully obtain certification as a police officer under the standards in effect at that time unless that person already holds that certification and must also successfully complete the Conservation Police Academy training program, consisting of not less than 400 hours of training, within one year of hire.

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, all persons who either (i) have been honorably discharged and who have been awarded a Southwest Asia Service Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, or Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal by the United States Armed Forces or (ii) are active members of the Illinois National Guard or a reserve component of the United States Armed Forces and who have been awarded a Southwest Asia Service Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, or Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal as a result of honorable service during deployment on active duty, are deemed to have met the collegiate educational requirements for a sworn law enforcement position or position that has arrest authority.

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The Department of Natural Resources must adopt an administrative rule listing those disciplines that qualify as directly related areas of study and must also adopt, by listing, the American Red Cross standards and testing points for a skill level equivalent to an intermediate level swimmer.

(Source: P.A. 96-972, eff. 7-2-10.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.