

68A-6.004 Possession of Class I, II, and III Wildlife: Permit Application Criteria.

(1) Permits to possess wildlife in captivity, issued pursuant to Section 379.3761 or 379.3762, F.S., and the provisions of this chapter, shall authorize the keeping of captive wildlife, of the type and number specified in applications approved by the Commission, in accordance with law and Commission rules. Captive wildlife maintained under permit shall, unless otherwise authorized, be maintained only at the facility specified in the permit application and approved by the Commission.

(2) Qualification requirements for a permit to possess Class I or Class II wildlife:

All applicants shall qualify for permits as follows:

(a) Age Requirement: Applicants to possess Class I or Class II wildlife shall be at least 18 years of age.

(b) Applicants shall not have been convicted of any violation of captive wildlife regulations or venomous reptile or reptile of concern regulations involving unsafe housing of wildlife or that could potentially endanger the public; any violation involving the illegal commercialization of wildlife; any violation involving cruelty to animals; or any violation involving importation of wildlife within three (3) years of the date of application.

(c) Experience Requirement for Class I permits:

1. Applicants shall demonstrate no less than one (1) year of substantial practical experience (to consist of no less than 1000 hours) in the care, feeding, handling and husbandry of the species for which the permit is sought, or other species, within the same biological family (except crocodylians which shall be in the same biological order; ratites which shall be in the same biological sub-order; and cougars, panthers or cheetahs which shall remain at the genus level), which are substantially similar in size, characteristics, behavior, habits, care and nutritional requirements to the species for which the permit is sought.

2. For purposes of demonstrating compliance, applicants shall submit documentation of such experience, including:

a. A description of the specific experience acquired.

b. The dates and times the experience was obtained and the specific location(s) where acquired.

c. References of no less than two (2) individuals, no more than one of which may be a relative of the applicant, having personal knowledge of the applicant's stated experience. One of these references must be licensed by the commission for wildlife of the same family and the same or higher class for which the applicant is seeking authorization or a representative of a professional organization or governmental institution. Examples of such organizations or institutions include, but are not limited to, universities, public service agencies, zoological associations, herpetological societies and veterinarians.

d. Additional documentation may include records of prior permits for the keeping of captive wildlife, employment records, and any other competent documentation of the requisite experience.

3. Documented educational experience in zoology or other relevant biological sciences, obtained at the college or technical school level or above, may substitute for up to six months or 500 hours of the required experience.

4. Providing false information to document the applicant's experience, by the applicant or any reference, is prohibited as provided in Sections 837.012 and 837.06, F.S.

(d) Experience and examination requirements for Class II permits:

1. Applicants may qualify for a permit for Class II wildlife by documenting one year of experience (to consist of no less than 1000 hours) as defined in subparagraphs 68A-6.004(2)(c)1.-4., F.A.C., above. If the applicant is unable to document such experience, as an alternative, the applicant may take a written examination. The successful completion of a written examination for the particular species or family, administered by the Division of Law Enforcement, together with the documentation of not less than 500 hours of substantial practical experience (with documentation and compliance procedures as noted in subparagraphs 68A-6.004(2)(c)1.-4., F.A.C., above) in the care, feeding, handling and husbandry of the species or family for which the permit is sought may be substituted for the one-year/1,000-hour requirement. Upon receipt of an application, the Commission shall notify the applicant of the time and

place of the next examination. Applicant scoring at least 80 percent correct on the examination shall be deemed as meeting the examination requirement for the particular species or family.

2. The above requirements shall not apply to applicants for permits to possess ostriches, rheas, emus, cassowaries or coyotes when possessed for purposes other than public exhibition or personal use.

3. The above requirements shall not apply to applicants for permits to possess species of the family *Bovidae* in accordance with Sections 379.3711 and 379.3712, F.S.

(e) Any licensed corporation applying for a permit or authorized to possess Class I or Class II wildlife must have qualified personnel responsible for the care of such wildlife. The corporation must provide documentation of experience for at least one person. Such person shall comply with the requirements defined in subparagraphs 68A-6.004(2)(c)1.-4. and (d)1., F.A.C., above. Such documentation of experience shall be submitted to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Law Enforcement, and subject to approval upon initial application and upon each instance of change in qualified person.

(f) Any person authorized pursuant to Section 379.3761, F.S., to exhibit or sell Class I wildlife shall obtain and maintain a current and valid USDA license, where applicable, pursuant to the Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations of Title 9 CFR (effective January 2017, which is hereby incorporated by reference at <http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-11137>). Such USDA license shall be obtained within 180 days of initial licensing by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Failure to obtain and maintain a current and valid USDA license may result in denial or revocation of any Class I authorizations issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

(3) No permit shall be issued to any person to possess Class III wildlife for exhibition, sale or personal use unless such person can meet the following requirements:

(a) Be 16 years of age or older.

(b) Application for permits to possess Class III wildlife for personal use shall include the satisfactory completion of a questionnaire developed by the Commission that assesses the applicant's knowledge of general husbandry, nutritional, and behavioral characteristics. Such information shall be documented on the Personal Use Application and Questionnaire form FWCDLE_621 (01/07), (effective January 2017, which is adopted and incorporated herein by reference <http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-11138>). Forms may be obtained by submitting a request to: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Law Enforcement, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1600, or at www.myfwc.com/permits.

(c) Applicants for permits to possess capuchin, spider, or woolly monkeys shall meet the age, experience and examination requirements for authorization to possess Class II wildlife.

(d) Be able to provide satisfactory caging facilities as required in the standard caging requirements of this Chapter, within 30 days of notification of tentative approval for a permit.

(e) Ensure that the conditions under which the wildlife will be held shall not constitute a threat to the public or to the animal.

(4) Except as otherwise provided, applicants for permits to possess wildlife in captivity shall specify the location of the facility at which the wildlife shall be kept or possessed. Prior to the issuance of a permit for Class I, Class II, or Class III capuchin, spider or woolly monkeys such facility shall be inspected and approved by Commission personnel prior to the issuance of the permit.

(5) Disaster and Critical Incident Plans: Applicants for permits to possess wildlife in captivity as authorized pursuant to Section 379.3761 or 379.303, F.S., or the provisions of this chapter shall document in writing a course of action to be taken in preparation for disasters or critical incidents. Such course of action shall be documented on the Captive Wildlife Critical Incident/Disaster Plan form FWCDLE_619 (06/09) (effective June 2009, which is adopted and incorporated herein by reference <http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-11136>). Forms may be obtained by submitting a request to: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Law Enforcement, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1600, or at www.myfwc.com/permits. This form shall consist

of two parts. Part A of form FWCDLE_619 shall be submitted at the time of initial application or renewal; and Part B shall be retained in the permittee's files at the facility location and be made available for inspection upon request of Commission personnel and the director of the local emergency management agency for the county where the facility is located.

(a) Provisions of this subsection shall apply to permittees maintaining captive wildlife in Florida.

(b) For permittees where the facility is located out of state, the provisions of this subsection shall apply when such permittee is in travel status with Class I or Class II wildlife. In this instance Part B must accompany the Class I or Class II wildlife while in travel status in Florida and shall describe the course of action to be taken in the event of a critical incident or natural disaster in Florida.

Rulemaking Authority Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const. Law Implemented Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const., 379.303, 379.304 FS. History—New 8-1-79, Amended 6-22-80, 6-4-81, Formerly 39-9.03, Amended 6-21-82, Formerly 39-6.04, Amended 5-10-87, 4-13-88, 7-1-90, 9-1-90, 4-14-92, 2-1-98, Formerly 39-6.004, Amended 1-1-08, 8-27-09, 9-30-19.