

**TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORDER NO. 017-007**

Under the provisions of Parks and Wildlife Code, §§12.027, 43.045, 43.0722, 44.003, 45.002; 47.031, 65.0071, 66.017, 71.010, 76.1031, 77.0361, 78.108, and 81.301, the Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department ORDERS the adoption, on an emergency basis with less than 30 days' notice, of new 31 TAC §57.979, to extend the period of validity of specific licenses issued by the department, beginning September 1, 2017 and continuing until September 30, 2017.

Following the landfall of Hurricane Harvey in Aransas County on August 25, 2017, many counties experienced record-breaking precipitation levels and catastrophic flooding or were otherwise impacted, forcing the department to close licensing offices. For certain licenses that must be purchased or renewed in person, these affected licensing offices often provide the most convenient and timely location for license purchase or renewal. Because the department's license year is the same as the state fiscal year (September 1 of one year through the immediately following August 31), it is possible that some licensees who for whatever reason had not purchased or renewed their licenses by August 25 have therefore faced considerable difficulty in purchasing or renewing those licenses in time for the new license year that begins September 1.

Under Parks and Wildlife Code, §12.027, if the commission or the executive director finds that strict compliance with existing department rules would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with a disaster declared by the governor, the commission or the executive director may adopt emergency rules as provided by Chapter 2001, Government Code.

The Executive Director finds that compliance with existing department rules governing certain licenses would hinder necessary action in coping with the disaster caused by Hurricane Harvey. Department personnel on the Texas Gulf coast are significantly and critically involved in disaster response, search and rescue, and recovery operations; diverting any of those energies to license issuance activities would be a hindrance to those activities. Attempting to open and operate department offices in these areas would similarly hinder efforts to cope with the disaster.

For these reasons, the director finds that adoption of this rule on an emergency basis on less than 30 days' notice as provided by Parks and Wildlife Code, §12.027, is necessary and in the best interest of the State of Texas.

The Executive Director also hereby authorizes publication of a Notice of Adoption of Emergency Rulemaking in the *Texas Register*.

This order is issued pursuant to §12.027 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code and is effective immediately.

Signed this the 1st day of September, 2017.



Carter Smith
Executive Director
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department