

WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §20-2-5J

§20-2-5j. Leashed dogs for tracking mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, a person who is legally hunting and reasonably believes he or she has mortally wounded a deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear may use leashed dogs to track and locate the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. The hunter is also permitted to use a dog handler of leashed dogs to track and locate the mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. The hunter or the dog handler shall always maintain physical control of the leashed dogs.

(b) The act of tracking a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear with a dog is hunting and the hunter and handler are subject to all applicable laws and rules. It is unlawful for a hunter or dog handler to track deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear with leashed dogs under the provisions of this section unless he or she is in possession of a valid hunting license issued pursuant to this article or is a person excepted from licensing requirements pursuant to this article, and all other lawful authorizations as prescribed in this article. The hunter shall accompany the dog handler and only the hunter may kill a mortally wounded deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear. However, any hunter who is physically unable to accompany the handler in the tracking and locating of the mortally wounded deer, elk, wild turkey, boar, or bear may designate the handler to kill the deer, elk, wild turkey, boar, or bear when located by the handler. The deer, elk, turkey, wild boar, or bear shall count toward the bag limit of the hunter who fired the initial shot.

(c) Any dog handler providing tracking services for profit must be licensed as an outfitter or guide pursuant to §20-2-23 of this code.