

# MARYLAND YOUTH HUNTER EDUCATION CHALLENGE



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The Maryland Youth Hunter Education Challenge, Inc.  
The Friends of the National Rifle Association,  
And  
The National Rifle Association, Hunter Services Department

Hosted by

Potomac Fish and Game

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

A PROGRAM OF  
**THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION**

**Revised 2025**

**MARYLAND YOUTH HUNTER EDUCATION CHALLENGE PROGRAM**

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

This program gives hunter safety students across Maryland an opportunity to build upon the foundation provided by the Maryland Hunter Safety course and to further develop their skills and knowledge which will result in safer, more responsible hunters afield.

The Maryland Youth Hunter Education Challenge is divided onto Eight (8) events or activities:

### **Shooting Events:**

1. Archery Challenge
2. Muzzleloading Challenge
3. Shotgun Challenge
4. Light Hunting Rifle Challenge

### **Responsibility Events:**

5. Hunter Responsibility Exam
6. Hunter Safety Trail Challenge
7. Orienteering Challenge
8. Wildlife Identification Challenge

**EVENTS:** There will be eight scoring events at this year's Challenge. The eight scoring events may be deleted or shortened based on time restraints. Each event will count equally in determining the top team and individual participants. Each participant and team will compete in each of the events.

## SAFETY RULES:

These rules provide for the efficient and orderly operation of the MD YHEC. Many local range regulations exist for one reason alone – Safety. Others serve a dual purpose – smooth range operation and safety.

It is your responsibility as a participant, coach, and MD YHEC official to become familiar with the rules.

Safety procedures must be strictly adhered to at the Maryland YHEC. Team and individual sponsors must assure that safety rules are followed during all practice sessions that will be held in preparation for the MD YHEC. Safety violations that occur during practice sessions for the MD YHEC will result in a team being declared ineligible to participate in the MD YHEC.

In addition to the posted safety rules of the host organization, the following safety rules will be followed during the MD YHEC.

1. When not in use, all firearms and bows will be stored in a gun or bow rack at each activity.
2. Firearms used for events must be returned to the teams locked trailer or locked vehicle (truck with lockable cap) until all events have concluded.
3. Any firearm that malfunctions 2 times during an event will be deemed unsafe and an alternate firearm or state firearm will be used for the remainder of the event.
4. All firearms must be in a case when being carried from the team's trailer/vehicle to the event.
5. All bows used for event must be cased and stored in owner's vehicle until event has concluded.
6. Firearms, bow equipment and any accessories will be inspected, including cleanliness which may cause the firearm to malfunction, by an event official prior to the start of each event. Firearms that do not pass inspection will be tagged and may not be used at any time during the MD YHEC event.
7. Actions will remain open except when on the firing line, ready to fire.
8. All firearms must have a safety device with the exception of traditional muzzle loaders. The safety will remain on at all times except when ready to shoot.
9. All firearms and drawn bows will be pointed in a safe direction at all times.
10. All firearms must be unloaded except when on the firing line and the participant is ready to fire.
11. Participants should know and obey all range commands.
12. Participants and their coach should arrive at each activity at least 10 minutes prior to relay time to receive activity orientation.
13. Unless directed by the range officer, only one shell or cartridge will be placed in a firearm at one time.
14. Eye and ear protection must be worn at all times while on the firing line and is the responsibility of each participant. Participants must provide eye and ear protection.
15. Coaches will accompany all participants in possession of firearms to and from the team trailer, as well as to and from event Site.
16. Participants must be prepared in the use of their firearm and archery equipment. Any participant not prepared in the use of their equipment may be disqualified by the event director and receive a zero score for that event.
17. Any participant in possession of ammunition, except on the firing line, shall be disqualified from the YHEC event.
18. All changes to the safety rules shall be reviewed and approved by the host club prior to the change taking effect.

19. Any team or team member found riding inside or in the back of any vehicle that is NOT authorized by MD YHEC Committee, in advance, will be disqualified from the entire MD YHEC event.
20. The use of Personal Golf carts and ATVs are prohibited at the MD YHEC.

### **GUN SAFETY RULES:**

#### **Fundamental rules for gun handling are:**

1. Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
2. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
3. Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to shoot.

#### **When using or storing a gun, always follow these rules:**

1. Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
2. Know how to safely use the gun.
3. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
4. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
5. Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.

### **ARCHERY SAFETY RULES:**

#### **Fundamental rules for archery/bow handling are:**

1. Do not nock an arrow on the bow string until ready to use.
2. Always keep the bow with a nocked arrow pointed in a safe direction.
3. Never draw a bow when nocked until ready to shoot
4. Always keep field points or broad heads covered until ready to shoot

**\*Broad heads are prohibited in the MD YHEC\***

#### **When using or storing a bow, always follow these rules:**

1. Be sure the bow is safe to operate.
2. Know how to safely use the bow and equipment.
3. Use only the correct arrows and equipment for your bow.
4. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
5. Store bows and other archery equipment so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.
6. Never dry fire a bow.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION:**

Any person 18 years old or younger who has completed a recognized Hunter Education Course in North America is eligible to participate in the Maryland YHEC. Participants may register as individuals or with a five-member team. Each individual or team must have a sponsoring coach or organization.

## **MARYLAND YHEC DIVISIONS:**

1. **SENIOR DIVISION:** are those participants that are age 15 through 18 years of age on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> will be eligible for the MD YHEC as a senior participant. Participants who are 18 years of age and younger may enter in the Senior Division.
2. **JUNIOR DIVISION:** are those participants that are 14 years of age or younger on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> will be eligible for the MD YHEC as a junior participant.

## **TEAMS:**

A **team** must have five (5) members to receive team awards. Members of teams will also be eligible for individual awards. Out-of-state teams will be eligible for individual and team awards.

## **ALTERNATES:**

An alternate may be registered and are limited to one (1) additional person per team. This person would participate as a team member only in case of sickness or a no show of a team member. Alternates may be eligible for awards with the team that the participant is an alternate for. (If the alternate starts the challenge with a team then he/she must finish with that team and will be eligible only for that team's awards.)

**Teams may not leapfrog Alternates.**

**Example – If a member of “Team B” is listed as an Alternate on “Team A” and is used, “Team B” may not fill that spot with another Alternate.**

## **INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS:**

Participants not part of a team will be allowed to participate in the challenge contest. These participants will not be eligible for team awards but will be eligible for individual awards. Individuals not part of a team must have at least one sponsoring coach or organization. Alternates will be allowed to participate as individuals. If an alternate starts in the Individual category, he or she must finish in the Individual category. Individuals and alternates may be placed in a five (5) person squad by the YHEC staff.

## REGULATIONS:

1. Safety will be the first and foremost consideration during all activities.
2. Participants and spectators assume all risk of personal injury or property damage as noted on the required release form accompanying registration materials.
3. Participants violating any safety rule may be given one warning. A second safety violation by said participant shall result in disqualification of that individual!
4. The protest committee shall make the final determination as to whether a participant continues to participate in the challenge. If a safety violation is severe, the protest committee may not give a warning, and the participant may be disqualified from further participation.
5. Individuals may not participate for one another in any activity.
6. Participants, coaches, volunteers and spectators are expected to exhibit behavior above reproach at all times.
7. All participants/coaches and parents/guardians of minor participants must sign a release regarding conduct before the event.

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Participants must provide their own firearms, bow and arrows and eye and ear protection. Ammunition will be provided by the challenge officials--however, participants may bring their own ammunition for Shotgun, Rifle and Muzzleloader according to the rules. .50 caliber Muzzle loaders, over and under shotguns, and .22 rifles will be available for those participants unable to provide their own.
2. Parents and other spectators are welcome and encouraged to attend. Spectators are advised to bring eye and ear protection to use during each shooting event.
3. Participants should come to the site location prepared for any weather conditions.
4. Participants are prohibited from using electronic devices including cell phones during events. Participants should turn these items over to their coaches prior to the start of an event. Any participant caught using an electronic device during an event will automatically be disqualified from that event.
5. Dress appropriately including proper footwear. No open toed shoes will be allowed.
6. Teams are expected to participate rain or shine.
7. Unless at an event where the firearm is needed, all firearms will be stored in the team trailer/vehicle until the events are concluded.
8. Archery equipment may be cased and stored in the participants' vehicles.
9. Time will not allow for any sighting in of firearms. This must be done prior to the Challenge.
10. Late arrival to the challenge site may disqualify an individual and/or team from participating and all registration fees paid will be forfeited.
11. Any adaptive equipment to be used or any learning aid necessary to be used by handicapped contestants must be specified on the registration form under Special Needs.
12. At all times while the participants are on the firing line and/or challenge events courses may the participants communicate between other participants, coaches and/or other individuals. No electronic earmuffs.
13. Coaches will accompany all participants in possession of firearms or bow & arrows.
14. Coaches will always be responsible for all team members while at the YHEC site.
15. Any participant in possession of ammunition, except on the firing line, shall be disqualified from the YHEC events.
16. SPARE GUNS –If it is to be used as a back-up firearm (in case of malfunction of a participant's firearm) the coach must take it with him/her. It may be used as a back-up firearm only if it is in the rack at the shooting event. The spare firearm must be placed in the rack at the shooting event when the team arrives at that event and the Director of the event must be told that a back-up firearm is in the rack. If no back-up firearm is brought out to the range, and a malfunction occurs, the participant will have to use the YHEC firearm.
17. For those coaches and participants that choose to furnish their own .22 caliber rim fire cartridges for the rifle event and/or their shotgun shells, they will be placed in separate boxes, labeled with the team's name and coaches name, and have a lock on it. The coach is to bring the locked box with the team's name on it to the event. Coaches may leave the ammo at the event for next team. Please make sure to indicate on the registration form Y for yes you are bringing your own or N for not bringing your own and will use what YHEC provides. R is for rifle, S is for shotgun.
18. All participants will take one combined exam for Hunter Responsibility and Muzzleloading.
19. On Saturday, the first day of the event, all participants will report to the clubhouse at 8:00 a.m. to take the written exam on Hunter Responsibility.
20. Coaches will be expected to remain on the deck area around the clubhouse while testing is in progress.

21. Park in marked designated areas only. Once the event starts all personal vehicles are to remain parked. Transportation to and from events will be provided.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The following regulations and conduct codes are to be adhered to at all times during the MD YHEC program.

### **It is understood that each participant will:**

1. Participate fully in all activities, within their abilities.
2. Exhibit behavior above reproach at all times.
3. Fully cooperate and comply with all established rules, regulations and reasonable request of MD YHEC officers, agents and servants.
4. Wear proper attire. Recognizing publicity attracted by the NRA and its programs, it is important to promote a positive image for the hunting and shooting sports. Clothing worn during the YHEC should be tasteful and appropriate for this type of event. Articles of clothing featuring controversial, questionable or offensive illustrations, slogans or language are prohibited. YHEC staff and Event Directors are empowered to take action necessary to maintain acceptable clothing standards.
5. **Demonstrate good sportsmanship.**
6. **Respect the rules of the hosting club and club members.**

### **It is further understood that staff, participants, coaches, volunteers and /or family members are prohibited from:**

1. Possessing and consuming alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs during the YHEC program.
2. Keeping ammunition, firearms and archery equipment in their onsite housing or camping areas.
3. Evaluating and/or observing an event before actual participation.
4. Videotaping or taking still photographs with the intent of showing participants event layouts, prior to and during participation.
5. Using physical gestures and/or electronic equipment (i.e. walkie talkies, beepers, pagers, two-way, cell phones or other communications equipment) during participation or at the events. (Exceptions are the MD YHEC staff), Coaching (or attempted coaching) from spectator area(s).
6. There will be a 10:30 curfew for all participants; they must be in their personal camping area at that time.

**Any breach of this code may be cause for immediate and permanent expulsion of individual(s) from the MD YHEC program.**



## EVENT RULES AND REGULATIONS:

### .22 RIMFIRE RIFLE

1. Shooting event *may* be conducted in one to three stages. There will be a long range (75 yards or less), a medium range (50 yards), and a short range (25 yards). A participant will be allowed 5 minutes per position with the complete course to be fired in 15 minutes. This time period does not include breaks between shooting positions (Short, Medium and Long Range). The time limit between shooting positions will be at the discretion of the Event Director.
2. At the long-range station, the **prone shooting position may be used, utilizing any of the provided props**. At the medium range station, **use of the sitting position may be utilized**. At the short-range station, **only the standing shooting position will be allowed without the use of any props**. Targets for this event will be NRA life-sized game targets.

**Participants with Adjustable scopes will be able to adjust the scopes until the firing line has been called hot at each shooting position.**

### SCORING:

1. Targets will be scored as ten (10) points for shots touching or within the vital area and zero (0) points for shots outside of the vital area.
2. Challenges concerning any scored shot must be made on the range at the time the shot is being scored. Only the participant may challenge the value of the shot, not the team, instructor, coach or spectators and before conferring with the team, instructor, coach and/or spectator.
3. There will be a total of 30 shots in the .22 rim fire Rifle Challenge, with each shot being scored as ten (10) points. The total possible score for this event is 300 points.

### CROSS FIRES:

If a participant's target has been shot more than the rounds fired by that participant, the target has been "cross fired".

1. Event director must determine that the crossfire was unintentionally caused (with no malicious intent) by participants on the firing line. If this is established, the cross fired target will receive the total score of the rounds inside the scoring area (not to exceed the maximum score for that round of shooting). The participant committing a crossfire act will only be scored for the amount of rounds inside their actual target's scoring areas.
2. Should the Event Director find that cross firing was an intentional act by participants to gain unfair advantage, all parties involved will be immediately disqualified from the event and will subsequently receive "DQ" (amounting to "0") under both individual and team scores.

### EQUIPMENT:

1. Participants may only use one rifle throughout the activity, (exception - gun malfunction).
2. Only standard type .22 caliber rifles designed primarily for hunting will be permitted.
3. All action types, except fully automatic, will be permitted. The rifle may not exceed eight pounds eight ounces in weight without a sling and must have a minimum trigger pull of two (2) pounds.
4. Rifles may be equipped with a sling not to exceed 1 ½ inches in width. The sling must remain attached at both ends but may be used as hasty sling when firing.
5. Rifles may be equipped with sporter-type thumbhole stocks (non-adjustable)
6. Sights will be open or peep rear sights with a standard front post and bead, or hunting scopes variable or fixed up to 9X. Shooters may not change guns after firing begins, except in the event of a gun malfunction.
7. All ammunition used in this event will be .22 caliber Long Rifle rimfire cartridges. Participants are allowed to furnish their own ammunition; however, ammunition must be presented to armory officials for inspection prior to participation or will be supplied by the Maryland Youth Hunter Education Challenge officials. If possible, the YHEC will notify participants of the specific type of ammunition once received by the MD YHEC to facilitate advance rifle sight-in.
8. .22 caliber Long Rifle rim-fire (specific brand TBD) will be used at the 2025 MD YHEC.

### **The following will not be permitted for rifle event:**

- A. Adjustment of scopes after the line has been called hot.
- B. Clothing with added padding or stiffness designed to assist the shooter to remain steady
- C. Shooting mats.
- D. Adjustable competition sling swivels.
- E. Kneeling roll
- F. Adjustable or competitive thumbhole stocks.
- G. Palm rests or forearms of stocks exceeding 2 1/4 inches (5.72 centimeters) wide or 2 1/4 inches (5.72 centimeters) deep as measured from the center line of the bore.
- H. Scopes, fixed or variable power optics with capabilities greater than nine (9) power.
- I. Range finders
- J. Peep sights with a rear aperture less than two (2) millimeters.
- K. Spotting scopes, binocular or monocular.
- L. More than one shooting position per shooting sequence.
- M. Shooting sticks or any mechanical shooting rest.
- N. Adjustable range rings on scopes.
- O. Hook butt plate

### **SHOTGUN CHALLENGE:**

1. Each participant will shoot a minimum of 25 rounds from a standard trap house, skeet house, hunters clays course, 5 stand clays course or any combination of the 4 clays courses. The Hunters Clays Course layout will vary depending on the available topography. The shooting station will make use of available cover to best depict running animals, bird flight and shooting obstacles. The Hunters Shotgun Challenge will be conducted with participants taking shots at clay targets and the sizes of the clay targets may vary depending on the different situations. Clay targets may be thrown in any combination to better depict a hunting situation such as poison pair with the poison bird located in different positions.
2. Each team will be allowed up to 25 minutes to complete the shotgun event after the first team member has started shooting.
3. Any team not completing the event within the time limit will receive a zero score for the remainder of the event.
4. When ready for a target, **all participants must use a two-handed ready position for their shotgun and must hold the butt plate below shoulder height. Exemptions may be made at the coordinator's discretion.** After calling for a target, a delay of up to 5 seconds may occur before the clay target is released. Shotguns may not be shouldered before the target is visible. Shotguns shouldered before the target is visible will be considered a loss and no score given. This will occur even if the target showed a visible sign of breakage.
5. In order for a target to be scored as a hit, a shooter must hit the target and a piece must break off. Targets deflected or redirected in flight (but with no visible breakage) will be scored lost. The scorer will call out "LOST" for a missed target.
6. The score judge will be sole judge of whether or not a target is broken. Officials may ask assistance from the trap puller or a range official if they feel their assistance is required. Any challenges by the shooter to the call must be made immediately and will be determined by the trap operator, scorer and/or range officer. Only the participant may challenge the value of the shot, not the team, instructor, coach or spectators. Targets broken by the trap or another obstruction will not be scored. These are illegal targets and will be re-thrown for the participant, regardless of whether or not the participant fires at the target.
7. Based on the scorer's judgment, should a target hit an obstruction (i.e. tree or tree limb) before the participant has had ample time to fire, a new target will be thrown. However, should the participant have ample time to fire (in the scorer's judgment), and fails to do so before the target hits an object near the end of its path and breaks, the target will be scored "lost".
8. Shotguns may not be larger than 12 gauge. All action types except fully automatic and release triggers will be allowed in this event. Shotguns may have adjustable cheek stocks or butt plates and may not be adjusted once the participant has started the shotgun challenge. Double targets may be thrown in some instances; therefore, the shotgun should be capable of holding two shot shells.
9. Participants may not change firearms or chokes after beginning the course, except in the event of a malfunction.

**All ammunition provided by the YHEC Committee will be factory target loaded shells for both 12 and 20-gauge shotguns. The Shotgun Ammunition will be Low Brass with the shot size between 7 ½ and 8 and not over 1250 (FPS) velocity. Those choosing a gauge other than 12 or 20 are required to furnish their own shells. Please specify gauge on entry form for All Participants.**

**Teams may furnish their own ammunition for this event as long as it falls within the parameters listed above. Twelve (12) and twenty (20) gauge ammunition will be available for those that do not wish to bring their own. Specify gauge on entry form and if you are bringing your own shot shells.**

### **SCORING:**

1. Targets will be scored as a hit or lost. Zero (0) points will be awarded for a "LOST" target. Hits will be scored according to the total possible hits divided by the total number of shots for this event.
2. There will be a minimum of 25 shots in the Shotgun Challenge, with each shot being scored. Scoring will be determined by the total of shots divided into the total hits a participant scores will determine the score for each hit. The total possible score for this event is 300 points.
3. If there is a malfunction a new target will be thrown. Ammunition malfunction or trap or trap operator failure is considering a malfunction.
4. Participant error, failure to load a gun, failure of a gun to fire (other than defective ammunition) or failure of a gun to reload will not be a malfunction and targets will be scored a "lost".

### **The following will not be permitted for the Shotgun event:**

- A. Release triggers
- B. Shot size larger than 7 1/2
- C. Shot smaller than 8
- D. Ventilated rib heights .5 inches or more, measured from the top of the barrel

### **ARCHERY CHALLENGE:**

1. Participants will walk through a field archery course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate shooting situations while bow hunting.
2. The archery event will be conducted similar to the rifle shooting event. Participants will take shots at targets varying in distance up to 40 yards.
3. All bows will be tested by the Director for poundage and the draw weight will be written on the card that is carried by the participant to each station. Seniors **MUST** pull at least a 30-pound bow – no exceptions. Juniors who do not pull a 30-pound bow will not shoot at the large game target. Instead, they will have another small game target, near the location of the large game target. If the Junior participant pulls a 30-pound bow, they will be permitted to shoot at the large game target.
4. Targets will be life sized game targets with scoring areas directly over vital areas of the game species.
5. There will be a minimum of five targets.
6. Participants must complete the course within the schedule time frame of the event. A time limit of up to 45 seconds can be applied at each station. Anyone not completing the course within the scheduled time frame for the event will receive a zero score for the remainder of the event.
7. Participants should be prepared with enough arrows to complete the course.
8. Participants unable to complete the course due to lost arrows will receive a zero score for the remaining targets.

### **SCORING:**

1. Targets will be scored prior to the arrows being pulled.
2. Scoring will be as the following:
  - a. 10 points for arrows in the 10 ring
  - b. 8 points for arrows in the vital area
  - c. 5 points for arrows in the remaining scoring area
  - d. 0 points for a total miss.
3. All arrows touching the line marking the edge of greater scoring area shall be given the higher score.
4. Challenges must be made on the range before the arrow is pulled. Only the participant may challenge the value of the shot, not the team instructor, coach or spectators.
5. There will be a total of 30 arrows shots in the archery challenge.
6. When using a tree stand participants must demonstrate proper tree stand safety techniques. Participants will be assessed penalty points for improper tree stand safety techniques.

## EQUIPMENT:

1. Shooters may use only one bow for this event except in the case of a malfunction.
2. Only hunting type compound, recurve, or long bows will be permitted.
3. All participants will be required to carry a minimum of 6 arrows in a quiver (not in pockets or by hand). 12 arrows are recommended.
4. Single pin adjustable sites are allowed however they are only allowed to be adjusted prior to the first shot at a target. You may not adjust the site after the first shot at a target is made.
5. Bows may be equipped with hunting type sights. Self-adjusting sights may be used (i.e. Sight Master).
6. Only target or field arrows will be permitted.
7. Binoculars

## The Following Will Not Be Allowed for the Archery Challenge:

- A. Extended sight bars that measure farther than **six (6)** inches from the back of riser of bow to the front of the sight.
- B. Manually adjustable sights may have no more than six sight pins or be adjusted to more than six sight positions.
- C. More than one stabilizer.
- D. Stabilizers over twelve (12) inches.
- E. Range finders.
- F. Electronic range finding sites.
- G. Crossbows.
- H. Broadhead hunting tips.
- I. Arrows shafts that do not have target or field points.
- J. Monocular or spotting Scopes.
- K. Shocker points.
- L. Bludgeon points.
- M. Magnified peep site.
- N. Drawing of bow in any direction other than parallel to the ground.

## MUZZLE LOADING:

1. Muzzle loaders and equipment (including lead balls and patches) will be available for participants.
2. Black powder, percussion caps and 209 primers will be provided by the MD YHEC. All other accessories needed such as musket caps, disks and specialty accessories must be provided by the participant and presented to the Range Officer.
3. Shooters may use only one muzzle loader rifle throughout this event (exception-muzzle loader malfunction).
4. Any flintlock, disk, musket cap, percussion or 209 primer type muzzleloader **.54 caliber or smaller** rifles will be permitted. .50 caliber muzzle loaders and accessories will be available for use during the event. Those participants choosing to use another caliber (**i.e. .40, .45, or .54**) are required to furnish their own accessories with the exception of black powder and caps. (patches, round ball (swage).
5. Muzzle loaders may have a set trigger; Set triggers may not be set until ready to fire.
6. Muzzle loaders may be equipped with a sporter type thumbhole stock. (non-adjustable).
7. Muzzle loaders may be equipped with a sling not to exceed 1 ½ inches in width.
8. Sights will be open or peep.
9. Muzzle loaders may be loaded with a single projectile, patched balls or pure lead bullets and black powder or a substitute (i.e. Pyrodex, Triple 7) **30 or 60 grains** or equivalent.

## CROSS FIRES:

**If a participant's target has been shot more than the rounds fired by that participant, the target has been "cross fired".**

1. Event director must determine that the crossfire was unintentionally caused (with no malicious intent) by participants on the firing line. If th is is established, the cross fired target will receive the total score of the rounds inside the scoring area (not to exceed the maximum score for that round of shooting). The participant committing a crossfire act will only be scored for the amount of rounds inside their actual target's scoring areas.

2. Should the Event Director find that cross firing was an intentional act by participants to gain unfair advantage, all parties involved will be immediately disqualified from the event and will subsequently receive “DQ” (amounting to “0”) under both individual and team scores.

### **SCORING:**

1. Participants will shoot minimum 5 shots with a 25-minute time limitation. Participants must complete the course within the schedule time frame of the event.
2. All powder will be pre-measured for each shooter.
3. All muzzleloaders provided by the MD YHEC will be right-handed.
4. MD YHEC staff working the event will direct each participant in the safe loading of a muzzle loader.
5. Each shot if touching the line or inside the vital area will be scored a hit, any shot outside the vital area will be scored a zero.
6. The Muzzleloading Event has a maximum possibility of 300 points. (200 points shooting the events, 100 points written).
7. Challenges concerning the scored shot must be made on the range. Only the participant may challenge the value of the shot, not the team instructor, coach or spectators.
8. If a participant’s target has been shot more than the rounds fired by that participant, the target has been “cross fired”.

### **The Following will not be permitted for the Muzzle Loading event:**

- A. Shooting mats
- B. Binoculars, monocular, spotting scopes or telescopic sights.
- C. Range finders
- D. Cans of powder on the line
- E. Kneeling rolls
- F. Adjustable competition sling swivels
- G. Any smokeless or nitro cellulose-based powder
- H. Muzzle loaders larger than .54 caliber
- I. More than one shooting position per shooting sequence.
- J. Wooden ramrods
- K. Metal-jacketed bullet sabots
- L. Mechanical shooting rest
- M. Adapter kits that would change muzzle loaders ignition.
- N. Adjustable or competitive thumbhole stocks

### **HUNTER RESPONSIBILITY CHALLENGE**

The Hunter Responsibility exam will consist of questions, which will be true/false, matching, or multiple choices.

Material for each of the three (3) phases will be taken from the NRA Basic Hunter Education Handbook, The International Bow Hunter Education Manual, The Guide to Hunting and Trapping in Maryland 2015-2016, as well as the Basic Hunter Education Course that each participant completed.

Coaches should make the MD YHEC Coordinators aware if there is any participant who will need the exam read to them.

Coaches will be expected to remain on the deck area around the clubhouse while testing is in progress.

### **The Following will not be permitted for the Hunter Responsibility Exam:**

- A. Hunter Education books
- B. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
- C. Communications between the participants, coaches or other individuals while taking the exam

### **HUNTING ORIENTEERING CHALLENGE:**

1. Participants or teams will be required to use a compass to follow a bearing to a predetermined outdoor skills station. At each station, the participants will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of outdoor skills by answering questions or performing certain tasks.
2. Each participant will be asked to answer compass bearings or other related questions in map compass orienteering. The Orienteering Challenge has a possibility of 300 points. Participants must complete the event within the scheduled frame of the event. Participants not completing the event within the scheduled time will receive a zero score for anything not completed.
3. Only compasses can be used on the Orienteering Challenge course.
4. Each participant is permitted to carry step count card with counts noted for 25, 50, 75 and 100 yards.
5. Participants may bring their own compass but are recommended to use a Silva Explorer 3 or Brunton equivalent type compass. Silva Explorer 3 and Brunton Compasses will be available for the participants to use on the Orienteering Event.

#### **The Following will not be permitted for the Hunting Orienteering Skills Challenge**

- A. Calculators
- B. Orienteering books
- C. Encyclopedias
- D. Written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials
- E. Electronic equipment including but not limited to GPS equipment
- F. Communications between the participants, coaches or other individuals while on the course

### **WILDLIFE IDENTIFICATION CHALLENGE:**

1. Participants will be shown slides and/or walk through a field and/or woodland course in a natural setting. The course is designed to simulate actual wildlife sign encounters while outdoors.
2. The Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge will be conducted with the participants or teams observing animal tracks, mounted animals, tanned hides, wildlife sounds, reading wildlife signs and identifying them from one (1) to fifty (50) yards.
3. Participants will be given a total of 25 minutes to complete the course. Participants not completing the course within the scheduled time will receive a zero score for the remainder of the event.
4. Participants or teams should be familiar with all wildlife including upland game, forest game, waterfowl, furbearer, endangered species and non-game species.

### **SCORING:**

1. Each correctly identified animal, hide, track or wildlife sign will be worth 10 points. An incorrect identification will be scored as zero (0) points.
2. There will be a total of 30 animals, hides, tracks, wildlife signs, or slides in the Wildlife Identification Challenge with a possible score of 300 points.

#### **The Following will not be permitted for the Hunting Wildlife Identification Challenge**

- A. Wildlife identification books
- B. Encyclopedias

- C. Written taped or transcribed information and reference materials
- D. Communications between the participants and coaches or other individuals

### **HUNTER SAFETY TRAIL:**

1. The participants will walk through a pre-determined trail designed to simulate actual hunting conditions and situations. The participant will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of hunter safety on this course. Participants may receive an YHEC hunting license and regulations at event check in.
2. Participants will need to bring their shotgun to the event. In the event a shotgun is not available (i.e., being shared with another team member) one will be provided by the event coordinator.
3. Each team will be allowed up to 25 minutes to complete the course. Teams not completing the trail within the scheduled time will receive a zero score for anything not completed. Participants will be allowed 5 seconds at Shoot/Don't Shoot stations to determine if the shot is safe or unsafe. If no decision is made within the 5 seconds, the station will be scored a zero.
4. The Hunter Safety Trail will be conducted with the participants and/or teams moving from station to station with each situation varying greatly. Participants may be tested and scored on the do's and don'ts of firearm safety and shoot/don't shoot situations encountered in a hunting environment. Stations may include, but are not limited to, hunter game situations, target identification, landowner relationships, and safe gun handling in field. Participants may be required to be knowledgeable of game laws and bag limits.
5. Participants may be required to possess a MD YHEC hunting license as designated by the Director of the MD YHEC Event.
6. The regulations listed on the MD YHEC license are obtained from the current Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping.
7. If the MD YHEC Hunting License is required, the license will be issued at registration of the MD YHEC.
8. The hunting license shall be kept in good condition while in the possession of the participant.
9. Upon arrival at the hunter safety trail, Any Participant that fails to have a license in possession (on their person) at the Maryland Hunter Safety Trail event will receive a zero score for the Hunter Safety Trail Event. The participant must have the hunting license in their possession the entire time while on the hunter safety trail until instructed by the Hunter Safety Event Director to return the hunting license.

### **Scoring for the Hunter Safety Trail:**

1. A 10-point penalty can be assessed any time a participant violates safety rules.
2. The Hunter Safety Trail Challenge has a maximum possibility of 300 points plus bonus points maybe awarded and will be scored as individuals.

**Safety Penalties:** Safety infractions may include but not limited to, improper muzzle control, finger on the trigger or unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **The following will not be permitted on the Safety Trail:**

- A. Hunter Education Books
- B. Other written, taped or transcribed information and reference materials.
- C. Cell phone or other electronic devices.
- D. Communications between the participants, coaches or other individuals while on the course.

### **MARYLAND YOUTH HUNTER EDUCATION CHALLENGE SCORING:**

1. Event points are accumulated by correctly answering a predetermined number of questions, making a certain number of hits in a prescribed target area, or correctly completing a prescribed activity. The maximum possible points for each event are 300 points.
2. Ties for all categories, individuals per event, and overall individual scores will be broken. The following tie breaking criteria will be used:
3. In the event of a tie, the individual/team with the highest level of achievement in the Hunter Responsibility Exam will be declared the winner. The final tie breaker will be based on the combined score of the four (4) shooting events.
4. The team score in the overall aggregate challenge will be comprised of the highest scores of the eight challenge events. The Hunter Responsibility Exam, Rifle, Shotgun, Archery, Orienteering, Hunter Safety Trail, Muzzle loading, and Wildlife Identification events combined.

### **CHALLENGES:**

Challenges concerning the value of shots as scored will be resolved as detailed in the section on each activity. Challenges must be done while being scored and only the participant being scored may challenge the score prior to conferring with the team, team instructor/coach and/or spectator. Challenges made by the team, team instructor/coach and/or spectator are not allowed. All decisions on challenges will be final by the Director of that event.

### **PROTESTS:**

Protests are to be in the following order. Protests are to be brought to the attention of the Event Director. If the individual receives no satisfaction, a written protest must then be submitted to the MD YHEC Protest Committee and State MD YHEC Coordinator within 30 minutes of the protest to the event director for review, consideration and final decision. A protest committee will be selected and identified to handle all disputes except those regarding the value of the shots or events as scored. Any questionable equipment, behavior or safety violations will be decided by these officials. All decisions of the protest committee will be final.

### **RULES REVIEW COMMITTEE:**

Any violation of the Rules or Regulations will be reviewed by the Rules Review Committee for a determination of disposition and all decisions will be final.

### **ALIBIS:**

Only range, trap, or ammunition malfunction will constitute an alibi. No alibis will be allowed for firearm, arrow or bow malfunction. In the event of a firearm or bow malfunction, the participants may borrow a firearm or bow and continue the relay. No practice or sighting in will be allowed for the borrowed firearms or bow once the challenge activities have started.

### **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:**

Special activities and events may be held during the challenge to enhance the learning atmosphere. These events will in no way count towards the scoring or awards process.



### **AWARDS:**

An Awards ceremony will take place on the morning on the last day of competition. There will be a 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place Junior and Senior Team winners. Overall individual awards will be given from 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Event awards will be given for 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> place.