

**CERTIFICATION OF PEREMPTORY RULES  
FILED WITH THE  
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY**

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
(Name of Agency, Commission, Board, or Department)

certifies that the attached hereto is a true and correct copy of:

Rule No. and Title: 220-3-.30 Saltwater Fish Creel, Bag, Possession And Size Limits

which was duly amended by peremptory rule making

On this: Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-2-4, 9-2-7, 9-2-8, 9-2-12.

Dated this: Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Christopher M. Blankenship  
Christopher M. Blankenship  
Signature of Certifying Officer

**REC'D & FILED**  
JUN 17, 2025  
LEGISLATIVE SVC AGENCY

220-3-.30

**Saltwater Fish Creel, Bag, Possession And Size Limits.**

(1) Individuals fishing in the waters of the State of Alabama are limited to the following daily bag limits and possession limits for recreational and commercial purposes:

Spotted seatrout	6
Red drum	3 No person who is subject to the jurisdiction of the State of Alabama shall possess a red drum in federal waters
Red snapper	2
Gray snapper	10
<del>Vermillion</del> <u>Vermilion</u> Snapper	10
Flounder	5 (Commercial limit is 40 per person or 40 per vessel, <u>Commercial gillnet is 80 per person or 80 per vessel</u> )
Sheepshead	<u>8</u>
<u>Snook</u>	<u>10 (Commercial limit is 1)</u>
Spanish mckerel	15
King mackerel	3
Greater amberjack	1
Striped bass when caught in areas under Marine Resources Division jurisdiction as provided in Rule 220-2-.42	2
<del>Grouper</del> <u>Groupers</u>	4 fish in aggregate (No more than 2 red grouper and no more than 2 gag grouper included in aggregate)
Cobia	1 (not to exceed 2 per vessel) (Commercial limit is 1, not to exceed 2 per vessel)
Florida pompano	3 (Commercial limit is 3)
Gray triggerfish	1 (Commercial limit is 16 per vessel)

Tripletail	3 (Commercial limit is 3)
Yellowfin tuna	3
Atlantic sharpnose shark	1
Bonnethead <u>shark</u>	1
All other shark species	1
<u>Skates and Rays</u>	<u>3 (Full retention when using bow, spear, or gig and it shall be unlawful to remove the tail from any released skate or ray)</u>

Recreational and commercial harvest of the following species is prohibited: Atlantic angel shark, Atlantic manta, Basking shark, Bigeye sand tiger shark, Bigeye six gill shark, Bigeye thresher shark, Bignose shark, Caribbean reef shark, Caribbean sharpnose shark, Dusky shark, Galapagos shark, Largetooth sawfish, Longfin mako shark, Shortfin mako shark, Narrowtooth shark, Night shark, Sand tiger shark, Smalltooth sawfish, Smalltail shark, Sevengill shark, Sixgill shark, Spotted eagle ray, Whale shark, White shark, Nassau grouper, and Goliath grouper ~~-(Jewfish)-~~.

.

Recreational and commercial harvest of the following sharks is prohibited, with the listed exceptions: Sandbar (unless the fisherman possesses a NOAA Fisheries sandbar shark research permit) and Silky (unless ~~the fisherman possesses a Federal Atlantic~~ aboard a vessel with a NOAA Fisheries Shark Directed or Shark Incidental commercial ~~-shark~~ vessel permit) ~~-~~.

There is a 20-fish aggregate bag limit for reef fish species (as defined in Rule 220-3-.46) for which there is no other bag limit.

(2) It is unlawful to have in possession for commercial or recreational purposes fish ~~taken~~ harvested from Alabama waters smaller than those stated below, provided that in the recreational possession limit of ~~three (3) Red drum, one (1) Red drum may exceed the maximum size and in the possession of~~ six (6) spotted seatrout, one (1) may exceed the maximum size. In addition, no Red drum, lesser amberjack or banded rudderfish may exceed the maximum length.

-

Spotted seatrout	15 inches <del>total length but not over</del> to 22 inches total <u>length slot limit</u>
Red drum	16 inches <del>total length but not over</del> to 26 inches total <u>length slot limit</u>
Red snapper	16 inches total length (recreational) 13 inches total length (commercial)
Gray snapper	12 inches total length
Vermillion snapper	10 inches total length
Lane snapper	<del>8</del> <u>10</u> inches total length
Flounder	14 inches total length
Sheepshead	12 inches fork length
King mackerel	24 inches fork length
Greater amberjack	34 inches fork length (recreational) 36 inches fork length (commercial)
Lesser amberjack	14 inches to 22 inches fork length slot limit
Banded rudderfish	14 inches to 22 inches fork length slot limit
Striped bass	16 inches total length When caught in areas under Marine Resources Division jurisdiction as provided in Rule 220-2-.42
Gag grouper	24 inches total length (recreational) 24 inches total length (commercial)
Black grouper	24 inches total length
Red grouper	20 inches total length (recreational) 18 inches total length (commercial)

Yellowfin grouper	20 inches total length
Scamp	16 inches total length
<u>Snook</u>	<u>28 inches total length</u>
Cobia	36 inches fork length
Florida pompano	12 inches total length
Gray triggerfish	15 inches fork length (recreational) 14 inches fork length (commercial)
Tripletail	18 inches total length
Tarpon	60 inches total length (requires permit)
Atlantic sharpnose and Bonnethead <del>shark</del> <u>sharks</u>	no minimum size
Great hammerhead shark	78 inches fork length
Smooth hammerhead shark	78 inches fork length
Scalloped hammerhead shark	78 inches fork length
<del>Shortfin mako shark</del>	<del>71 inches fork length (Male)</del> <del>83 inches fork length (Female)</del>
All other shark species	54 inches fork length (recreational) 30 inches dressed length - head and tail removed <del>Commercial</del> ( <u>commercial</u> - no minimum size)
Yellowfin tuna	27 inches curved fork length
Bigeye tuna	27 inches curved fork length

—

(3) It shall be unlawful to use any snag line, trot line, long line or other hook and line device containing more than five (5) hooks in any waters of Alabama under the jurisdiction of the Marine Resources ~~division~~Division as provided by Rule 220-2-.42; provided, however, from 12:01 a.m., January 1 to 12:00 midnight

April 30 of each year, trotlines may be used to take legal species other than saltwater gamefish in those waters in the Marine Resources Division jurisdiction east of the Mobile Ship Channel and north of a line running from Mobile Ship Channel Marker 78 eastward to Blakely River Channel Marker 2, and then due east to the shoreline. For the purpose of this provision, "trotline" means any setline which is less than 300 feet in length with no more than 50 hooks tied at various intervals along its length. A float, no smaller than 6 inches in diameter, marked with the license number of the owner shall be attached to each end of the trotline (the license number shall be at least 1 inch in height and colored to be a definite contrast with the color of the float).

(4) It shall be unlawful to possess in Alabama any species of saltwater fish or seafood product ~~taken~~harvested in ~~Federal~~federal waters or the waters of another state unlawfully in violation of any applicable ~~Federal~~federal or other state creel, possession, or size ~~limit~~limits.

(5) Any vessel or individual required to possess a federal permit to harvest or retain marine aquatic species must possess such permit to possess or land such marine aquatic species in Alabama.

(6) All finfish shall be maintained with head and fins intact through landing. Sharks, swordfish and tuna species may be landed in the form permitted by the ~~Federal Fisheries Regulations~~federal fisheries regulations.

(7) Any finfish possessed in Alabama and harvested in federal or waters of another state that does not have a size, bag or creel limit must abide by Alabama size, bag and creel limits for that species.

(8) Hook requirements for certain saltwater species: Anglers fishing for, retaining, possessing, or landing gulf reef fish species (as defined in Rule 220-3-.46) must use non-stainless steel circle hooks when using natural bait. Anglers fishing for, retaining, possessing, or landing sharks must use non-offset non-stainless steel circle hooks when using natural bait

(9) Possessing, ~~taking~~harvesting, or attempting to ~~take~~harvest flounder~~-harvested~~ in the waters of Alabama for commercial or

recreational purposes from November 1 through November 30 of each year is prohibited.

(10) Captain and crew of Alabama Commercial Party Boats shall not retain bag limits of fish harvested in state waters.

**Author:** Christopher M. Blankenship

**Statutory Authority:** Code of Ala. 1975, §§9-2-4, 9-2-7, 9-2-8, 9-2-12.

**History: New Rule:** Filed December 12, 1995; effective January 16, 1996. **Amended:** Filed August 23, 1996; effective August 23, 1996. **Amended:** Filed February 24, 1997; effective February 24, 1997. **Amended (PE):** Filed March 10, 1998; effective March 10, 1998. **Amended (PE):** Filed July 22, 1998; effective July 22, 1998. **Amended (PE):** Filed June 4, 1999; effective June 4, 1999. **Amended (PE):** Filed March 21, 2000; effective March 21, 2000. **Amended (PE):** Filed May 31, 2000; effective May 31, 2000. **Amended (PE):** Filed December 20, 2000; effective January 1, 2001. **Amended:** Filed July 16, 2002; effective August 20, 2002. **Amended (PE):** Filed December 16, 2002; effective December 16, 2002. **Amended:** Filed July 18, 2003; effective August 22, 2003. **Amended (PE):** January 15, 2004; effective January 15, 2004. **Amended (PE):** January 26, 2006; effective January 26, 2006. **Amended (PE):** April 20, 2007; effective May 2, 2007. **Amended:** Filed June 13, 2007; effective July 18, 2007. **Amended (PE):** Filed May 29, 2008; effective May 29, 2008. **Amended (PE):** Filed September 23, 2008; effective September 23, 2008. **Amended (PE):** Filed May 13, 2009; effective May 13, 2009. **Amended:** Filed July 23, 2009; effective August 27, 2009. **Amended:** Filed May 14, 2010; effective June 18, 2010. **Amended (PE):** Filed April 17, 2012; effective April 17, 2012. **Amended (PE):** Filed July 31, 2013; effective July 31, 2013. **Amended (PE):** Filed March 12, 2014; effective March 12, 2014. **Amended (PE):** Filed April 20, 2015; effective April 20, 2015. **Amended (PE):** Filed April 28, 2016; effective April 28, 2016. **Amended (PE):** Filed March 20, 2017; effective March 20, 2017. **Amended (PE):** Filed January 11, 2018; effective January 12, 2018. **Amended (PE):** Filed July 10, 2018; effective July 10, 2018. **Amended (PE):** Filed July 22, 2019; effective July 22, 2019. **Amended:** Filed June 17, 2019; effective August 1, 2019. **Amended (PE):** Filed August 30, 2019; effective August 30, 2019. **Amended (PE):** Published February 28, 2020; effective February 19, 2020. **Amended (PE):** Published November 30, 2022; effective November 21, 2022. **Amended (PE):** Published June 30, 2025; effective June 17, 2025.

**Penalty:** As provided by law.