



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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April 23, 2025

Notice of Public Hearing and Comment Period

Repeal Lobster Gauge Size and Escape Vent Rules Scheduled for 2025 - 2029

Under the provisions of G.L. c. 30A, and pursuant to the authority found at G.L. c. 130 §§ 17A, 21, and 104, the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is taking public comment on a series of pending emergency regulations to amend 322 CMR 6.02. The purpose of these amendments is to implement Addendum XXXII to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. In effect, this will repeal those lobster gauge size and escape vent rules adopted in late 2024 for implementation between 2025 and 2029 under Addendum XXVII to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The proposed changes affect commercial fishers, seafood dealers, and recreational fishers. Full text of the regulations may be found on [DMF's website](#) along with additional relevant background information.

Public Hearing and Comment Schedule

DMF will accept written public comment through 5PM on Friday, May 23, 2025. Please submit written comments to Director Daniel McKiernan by e-mail (marine.fish@mass.gov). Additionally, DMF will host a virtual public hearing on Monday, May 19, 2025 at 6PM via Zoom. Please register [here](#) to attend.

Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Lobster Carapace Sizes and Escape Vent Rules (322 CMR). To have state regulations conform to Addendum XXXII to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster, DMF is proposing to adopt the following measures:

1. Repeal all pending minimum carapace size increases for commercial fishers in Lobster Conservation Management Area 1 (LCMA 1) and recreational fishers in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Area. This will maintain the existing 3 1/4" minimum carapace size.
2. Repeal all pending escape vent size changes for commercial fishers in LCMA 1 and recreational fishers in the Gulf of Maine Recreational Area. This will maintain existing minimum escape vent size of 1 15/16" by 5 3/4" rectangular or 2 7/16" diameter.
3. Repeal all pending maximum carapace size changes for commercial fishers in Lobster Conservation Management Area 3 (LCMA3) and Outer Cape Cod (OCCLCMA) and recreational fishers in the Outer Cape Recreational Area. This will maintain the existing 6 3/4" maximum carapace size for LCMA 3 and federal permit holders in OCCLCMA. For state-waters-only OCCLCMA fishers and recreational fishers in the Outer Cape Recreational Area there will be no maximum carapace size.
4. Repeal all pending minimum and maximum carapace size standards for seafood dealers. State-wide dealers will have no maximum carapace size and a minimum carapace size of 3 1/4". Dealers buying directly from commercial fishers are restricted to only buying those lobsters that conform to the LCMA specific minimum and maximum size standards for the commercial fisher.