



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
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MarineFisheries Advisory

2026 Commercial Striped Bass Fishery to Open on June 16

Massachusetts' 2026 commercial striped bass fishery will open on Tuesday, June 16 with a 683,773-pound quota. This year's quota and other fishing limits are unchanged from 2025, although revisions have been made to permitting. This advisory serves as a reminder of those rules.

A valid Massachusetts 2026 commercial fishing permit and striped bass endorsement are required to participate in the commercial striped bass fishery. Striped bass endorsements became limited entry in 2026 (i.e., available as renewals only). The renewal deadline has passed and all available 2026 striped bass endorsements have been issued.

The open fishing season will commence with two open fishing days—Tuesdays and Wednesdays—and be closed from Thursday through Monday. If at least 30% of the quota remains available after July 31, Thursdays will be added, resulting in open fishing days of Tuesday–Thursday beginning on August 1. Similarly, if any quota remains after September 30, Mondays and Fridays will be added, resulting in open fishing days of Monday–Friday beginning on October 1. Additional notices will be sent to confirm the opening of any additional days.

The commercial minimum size is 35" total length. Total length is measured as the greatest straight-line length from the anterior most tip of the jaw, with the fish's mouth closed, to the farthest extremity of the tail, with the tail squeezed together. The release of previously retained legal sized fish for larger fish ("high-grading") is prohibited. Gaffs and other injurious tools may not be used to remove undersized fish from the water or to aid in their release. Commercial fishers may eviscerate (gut and bleed) striped bass at sea, but the fish must be otherwise landed whole and in-the-round and may not be mutilated in any manner that would interfere with their measurement.

The daily limit is 15-fish for boat-based permit holders fishing onboard the vessel named on the permit, and 2-fish for all other commercial fishing activity. The daily limit is both a possession and landing limit and applies regardless of number of permits held, number of commercial fishers onboard a vessel, or number of trips taken in a day. Rod-and-reel and handline gear are the only gears authorized to harvest striped bass in Massachusetts. The retention, possession, and sale of striped bass caught by other gears is prohibited. It is unlawful to possess, land, or sell striped bass in Massachusetts that were caught unlawfully in another jurisdiction (e.g., fish that were caught in Federal waters or from another state's waters where commercial striped bass fishing is prohibited).

On closed commercial fishing days, all striped bass fishing activity must adhere to the 2026 recreational rules: 1 fish per angler in a slot limit of at least 28" to less than 31" (total length with tail squeezed together). Commercial fishing for striped bass may not occur during the same trip as recreational striped bass fishing. The Cape Cod Canal ("Canal") is closed to commercial striped bass fishing. Therefore, all striped bass retained from the Canal or possessed within 1,000 feet of the Canal (unless caught elsewhere and being actively transported to a dealer) must adhere to Massachusetts' recreational striped bass fishing limits.

Commercial fishers may only sell striped bass to a seafood dealer authorized as a primary buyer on an open commercial fishing day. Both the primary buyer and the commercial fisher must be present at this transaction. Dropping off fish at an unattended dealer facility is unlawful. Primary buyers are required to affix a DMF-issued commercial striped bass tag through the jaw and the gill plate of the fish upon primary purchase.

Commercial fishers are reminded of the requirement to [report](#) all striped bass retained under the authority of their commercial fishing permit. This includes all fish sold, as well as any fish kept for personal use. Reports must be submitted every month, even when you don't fish. Failure to report or report on time may result in non-renewal of your striped bass endorsement in 2027.

For more information about the management of marine fisheries in Massachusetts, visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.