

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES  
CHAPTER 37 - FRESHWATER FISH REGULATIONS

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## DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

## Chapter 37 - Freshwater Fish Regulations

## 37.01 Method of Taking

It shall be unlawful to fish for or take freshwater fish as defined in 12 M.R.S.A. §6001 (17-A) by any means other than hook and line.

- A. Exception: A person lawfully engaged in the aquaculture of any freshwater fish as defined in 12 M.R.S.A. § 6001 (17-A), shall be exempt from this section provided that that person holds a special license, if required, under 12 M.R.S.A. § 6074.

## 37.02 Prohibitions on the Taking or Possession of Landlocked Salmon, Brown Trout, and Rainbow Trout

- A. It shall be unlawful to take or possess landlocked salmon, brown trout, or rainbow trout, which are less than 14 inches in total length from the coastal waters of the State of Maine. It shall be unlawful to take or possess landlocked salmon, which are greater than 25 inches total length, from the coastal waters of the State of Maine.
- B. Penobscot River: It shall be unlawful to take or possess landlocked salmon, brown trout, or rainbow trout from tidal waters upstream and North of the Penobscot Narrows Bridge and north of the Verona Island Bridge.
- C. A person lawfully engaged in the aquaculture of landlocked salmon, brown trout, or rainbow trout shall be exempt from Chapter 37.02(A) provided that person holds a lease or special license, if required, pursuant to 12 M.R.S. §§6072, 6072-A, 6073-A, 6073-D or 6074.

## 37.03 Bag and Possession Limits for Landlocked Salmon, Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, and Brook Trout

1. It shall be unlawful to take or possess more than five (5) of the above-mentioned species, of which not more than two (2) may be landlocked salmon, two (2) brown trout, or two (2) rainbow trout. All five (5) may be brook trout.
2. A person lawfully engaged in the aquaculture of landlocked salmon, brown trout, or rainbow trout shall be exempt from this section provided that that person holds a special license, if required, under 12 M.R.S.A. § 6074.
3. Any fish captured in inland waters shall be counted against the bag and possession limits in coastal waters.

## 37.04 Minimum Length Limit for Brook Trout

It shall be unlawful to take or possess brook trout which are less than 6 inches in total length from the coastal waters of the State of Maine.

## 37.05 Minimum Length for Black Bass (Largemouth Bass and Smallmouth Bass)

It shall be unlawful to take or possess black bass which are less than 12 inches in total length.

## 37.06 Bag and Possession Limits for Black Bass

1. It shall be unlawful to take or possess more than three (3) black bass from the coastal waters of the State of Maine. Only one black bass may exceed 14 inches in total length.

37.07 Jigging for Certain Freshwater Fish Species

It shall be unlawful to jig for "freshwater fish" as defined in 12 M.R.S.A. § 6001 (17-A) in the coastal waters of Maine. For the purpose of this regulation, "jigging" means "fishing for, catching, or killing with a hook or hooks manipulated in such a manner as to pierce and hook a fish in any part of its body other than the mouth."

37.08 Removal of Heads and Tails

It is illegal to remove the heads or tails from "freshwater" fish as defined in 12 M.R.S.A. § 6001 (17-A) unless the dressed length is equal to or greater than the legal length or unless the fish is being prepared for immediate cooking.

37.09 Bass tournament permits in Maine Coastal Waters

A person or an organization may not conduct a bass tournament or fishing derby for freshwater species in the coastal waters of the State without a permit issued by Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as outlined in 12 M.R.S. § 12505. Approved permits for Maine Coastal Waters will be provided by the license holder to the Maine Marine Patrol Division Office holding jurisdiction over the tournament/derby location.

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