



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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Maine's 132nd Legislature recently passed L.D. 1722, *An Act to Amend the Laws Governing the Regulation of Aquaculture Leases*, which was signed into law on June 20, 2025. The bill makes changes to certain aspects of the lease renewal process. A link to a copy of the complete bill is available at the end of this message under "Additional Resources."

DMR has compiled a summary of key changes as a courtesy, so stakeholders are aware of how the recent changes will be implemented for purposes of participating in aquaculture lease renewals.

Key Changes:

- Lease renewals are no longer adjudicatory, so there is no longer an option to request a public hearing. However, there is still a 30-day public comment period, which is the opportunity to submit feedback on the renewal request as it relates to applicable criteria.
- The change applies to all renewal applications that were pending at the time the bill was enacted on June 20, 2025. This means that any pending lease renewal requests will not have a public hearing including those that were previously noticed and received hearing requests.

Implementation:

- Pending lease renewal applications that were noticed prior to June 20, 2025, and received one or more hearing requests will be re-noticed under the new law in the coming weeks.

- The Department has updated the pending lease renewal table to reflect which renewal proposals are subject to re-notice. The table is available at the end of this message under “Additional Resources.”
- The purpose of the re-notice is to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to submit additional feedback as a public hearing will not be held. Any prior comments that were received will also be considered as they relate to the lease renewal criteria.
- Re-notice will be processed in accordance with applicable laws governing notice, which did not change. Existing law provides that notice of a complete renewal application and opportunity to comment be published in a newspaper that circulates in the area where the lease site is located, sent to the municipality, and riparian landowners whose shorefront property boundaries are within 1,000 feet of the lease site. The Department will also send re-notices to subscribers of aquaculture notices via GovDelivery.
- Pending lease renewal applications that are noticed after June 20, 2025, will reflect the law change.

How to Prepare:

- All lease renewal requests are evaluated in consideration of applicable lease decision criteria. If you are interested in commenting on a renewal request, please read the decision criteria first and then submit a comment specific to one or more of the criteria. The lease renewal criteria are available at the end of this message under “Additional Resources.”
- Written comments must be received on or before the deadline listed in each notice. Please review each notice for applicable deadlines and submit written comments in accordance with the notice instructions.

- If you wish to receive notice of aquaculture lease proposals, including lease renewals, please sign up to receive GovDelivery aquaculture updates. Information on how to subscribe, including subscriber lists is available at the end of this message under “Additional Resources.”

Additional Resources:

Copy of L.D. 1722:

This weblink will redirect you to a complete copy of the bill.

<https://legislature.maine.gov/backend/App/services/getDocument.aspx?documentId=120506>

Table of Pending Lease Renewal Applications:

This weblink will redirect you to a table of pending lease applications, including renewals. Please be sure to reference the second table on this webpage as it contains renewal applications. The renewal table has been updated to reflect the proposals that will be re-noticed in the coming weeks.

<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/maine-aquaculture-leases-and-lpas/pending-lease-applications>

Lease Renewal Decision Criteria

This weblink will redirect you to a webpage that includes the lease renewal criteria including more information about the lease renewal process.

<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/public-participation-in-aquaculture-leasing#Renewal,%20Transfer,%20Amendment,%20and%20Expansion%20of%20Standard%20Leases>

GovDelivery Aquaculture Lease Notices

This weblink will redirect you to a webpage where you can subscribe to receive free notifications of aquaculture lease proposals. If you are already a subscriber, you can also update your subscriber preferences.

When signing up for aquaculture notices, you can subscribe to the list titled “Aquaculture Notices and Updates” to receive notifications for proposals coast-wide, or a county specific list if you prefer to receive notifications for proposals within a specific region.

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MEDMR/subscriber/new>