



Update on Recreational Gulf of Maine Cod and Haddock Limits:

2017 Limits Are Now in Effect

On May 3, 2017, DMF issued an [advisory](#) to notify anglers that the implementation of the 2017 Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod and haddock regulations was delayed. Despite the 2017 limits for these stocks being published in our [2017 Sportfish Guide](#), the 2016 rules would remain in effect until the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implemented their 2017 limits ([federal notice](#)).

The 2017 federal recreational fishing limits for GOM cod and haddock became effective July 27th. Consequently, DMF filed emergency regulations –effective July 27th - to adjust our state-waters limits for these stocks. The rules published in our [2017 Sportfish Guide](#) are now up to date. The new recreational fishing regulations are described in the tables below, with the changes being made for 2017 in italics.

2017 GOM Cod Fishing Limits

	Private Angler Mode		For-Hire Angler Mode	
	State Rules	Federal Rules	State Rules	Federal Rules
Season	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31 (status quo)	<i>Closed Year Round</i>	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Closed</i>
Bag Limit	1-fish (status quo)	<i>0 fish</i>	<i>0 fish</i>	<i>0 fish</i>
Minimum Size	19 inches (status quo)	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>

2017 GOM Haddock Limits

	Private Angler Mode		For-Hire Angler Mode	
	State Rules	Federal Rules	State Rules	Federal Rules
Season	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31 (status quo)	<i>Apr. 15 – Sept. 16</i> <i>Nov. 1 – Feb. 28</i>	<i>Apr. 15 – Sept. 16</i> <i>Nov. 1 – Feb. 28</i>	<i>Apr. 15 – Sept. 16</i> <i>Nov. 1 – Feb. 28</i>
Bag Limit	<i>12-fish</i>	<i>12-fish</i>	<i>12-fish</i>	<i>12-fish</i>
Minimum Size	17” (status quo)	17” (status quo)	17” (status-quo)	17” (status quo)

Please note that these state rules do not subject private anglers to closed fishing periods. In federal waters, the recreational GOM cod fishery is closed year round and the GOM haddock fishery is subject to seasonal closures during the spring and the fall. The state’s rules for the for-hire fishery mirror federal rules, so these closures apply to anglers aboard permitted for-hire vessels fishing in state waters.

These recreational fishing limits for cod and haddock only apply within the GOM Management Area. This area includes all waters north of 42°00’ and those waters south of 42°00’ within Cape Cod Bay including the Cape Cod Canal. Waters south and east of these parameters fall outside of the GOM Management Area and are subject to different recreational fishing limits for these species. These limits will remain unchanged for 2017.

If you are fishing in or transiting federal waters, you must be in compliance with federal regulations. Federal for-hire permit holders fishing in federal waters may exceed state landing limits on multiple day trips in accordance with federal regulations. Federally permitted for-hire vessels fishing outside of the federal GOM Regulated Mesh Area are permitted to land their cod or haddock, regardless of the location of the port of landing, provided they transit straight through the federal GOM Regulated Mesh Area. Please consult the [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) for further details.

A public comment period and public hearing will be held on these 2017 limits. Please see the [public hearing notice](#) for further detail. For more information regarding cod and haddock management please view our [website](#). The full text of these regulations may be found at [322 CMR 6.03](#). Official copies of the CMR are maintained by the [Secretary of State](#)

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