



STATE OF ALABAMA
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THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL COPY OF THE LAWS OR REGULATIONS. THIS EXPLANATION OF THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS IS CORRECT AS OF THE DATE SPECIFIED. BEFORE TAKING PART IN THIS FISHERY PLEASE CALL 251-861-2882 OR 251-968-7576 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.OUTDOORALABAMA.COM FOR UPDATED INFORMATION. IT IS THE FISHERMANS RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS IN EFFECT AT ANY GIVEN TIME

SUMMARY OF ALABAMA COMMERCIAL BLUE CRAB LAWS AND REGULATIONS

- LICENSE:** (Expires September 30th)
Commercial Crab License.....\$51.00
(Non-residents pay the same fee as that charged Alabama residents to conduct the same activity in the applicant's state of residence, or not less than twice the amount of resident license).
1. Any person taking crabs for commercial purposes or using **more than (5) crab traps must first obtain and have in possession a "crab catchers" license.**
 2. **No person, firm, or corporation shall take, catch, sell, transport, or possess blue crabs that measure less than five inches (5") carapace width** as measured from the tip of one lateral spine to tip of the opposite lateral spine, **except:**
 - (1) **Possession** by commercial crab fishermen of crabs of **less than 5" carapace width is prohibited with the following exceptions:**
 - a. **Exemption from minimum size** limit for soft-shelled and pre-molt crabs, if taken **solely for the purpose of shedding** and held in separate containers marked "peelers" or "busters".
 - b. **Exemption from minimum size limit for licensed live bait dealers** when crabs are **sold for bait.**
 - c. **Exemption** from minimum size limit **for crabs in work boxes** aboard the commercial crab fisherman's vessel (maximum of two work boxes to sort crabs allowed).
 - (2) Possession by a dealer of **crabs of less than 5" carapace width** is prohibited except that **pre-molt crabs** in possession of, or held by, a dealer for sale or processing as soft-shell crabs, are exempt from minimum size limit if identified as pre-molt crabs, and held in separate containers marked "peelers" or "busters".
 3. It is **unlawful to take crabs from traps belonging to another** without **written authorization** from the owner.
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4. Each commercial crab trap **shall be marked** with at least one (1) buoy no smaller than six (6) inches in diameter. At least one-half (1/2) of the buoy shall be white. Each buoy shall be **marked** with the fisherman's **identification number** (assigned to fisherman by MRD and remains the same for subsequent years). Buoys must be attached to the traps by use of **weighted line** to prevent the line from floating. **Plastic bottles are prohibited** for use as a commercial crab trap buoy. **Owner trap verification number must be painted or affixed to each side of the vessel used to harvest crabs from said traps.**
5. It is **unlawful to remove commercial crab traps** from the water or remove crabs from commercial crab traps during the hours **from sunset to one (1) hour before sunrise the following day.**
6. It is **unlawful to set** or place a crab trap **in the access canals to Heron Bay (west of and adjacent to State Hwy. 193) or within 300 feet of any navigational channel** marked by a lawfully established system of waterway markers **or within 300 feet** of any public **boat launching ramp or public pier, Heron Bay Cutoff, or the mouth of West Fowl River, Weeks Bay, Fish River, Magnolia River, any man-made canal,** or in any manner so as to prevent ingress or egress to or from any pier, wharf, dock, marina, or boat launching ramp.
7. (a) **It is unlawful to set or place any commercial trap used for the taking of crabs or other seafood in the following rivers, creeks, bayous, bay, canal, or their tributaries:**

Mobile County

Mobile River
 Dog River
 Theodore Industrial Canal
 Fowl River
 Northwest arm of Heron Bay
 Heron Bayou (Long Bayou)
 Bayou Codeine
 Bayou La Batre

Baldwin County

Blakeley River*
 Fly Creek
 Fish River
 Magnolia River
 Bon Secour River (north of channel markers 7 & 8)
 Wolf Creek
 Sandy Creek
 Miflin Creek
 Hammock Creek
 Roberts Bayou
 Soldier Creek
 Palmetto Creek
 Old River (between Ono Island and Perdido Key)

* North of the charted position of Blakeley River Channel marker #18

(b) It is **unlawful to set** or place commercial traps used for the taking of crabs or other seafood **in any man-made canal** (including, but not limited, to the following on Dauphin Island:

Quivera Bay	Colony Cove
Polaris Lagoon	Spanish Bay
Port Royal Lagoon	Barcelona Bay
Lafitte Bay	Confederate Bay
Indian Bay	Salt Creek (Heron Bayou)
Indian Canal	Government Cut
Buchanan Bay	Billy Goat Hole
Columbia Bay	

8. It is **unlawful to set** or place crab traps in any waters in the Mobile Delta **north of Interstate Highway 10 eastbound lane and/or State Highway 90 Battleship Parkway** (whichever is the southernmost highway).
9. **Crab traps shall not exceed twenty-seven (27) cubic feet in volume.**

10. **All containers** of Alabama crabs in possession of commercial crab fishermen or processors **must be tagged**, marked, or otherwise identified with the catcher's full **name**, **identification number**, and **date harvested**.
11. **Crabs imported** for commercial purposes **from another state** must have been taken and shipped pursuant to that state's laws and regulations. **Containers** of crabs **must be marked** or otherwise identified as required by the laws and regulations in that state. (A **bill of sale** or other proof of purchase showing the nonresident dealer's or fisherman's name and address, pounds or number of containers purchased, and date of purchase **must be maintained at the place of business for one year**.)
12. Commercial crab **fishermen** taking crabs from the waters of another state **may import** those crabs into the State of Alabama provided the **crabs were legally taken**, licensed, and transported pursuant to that state's laws and regulations. **Containers** of crabs **must be marked** or tagged **with** the fisherman's full **name**, commercial crab fisherman's **license number** issued by that state, and the **date of harvest**.
13. Licensed **commercial shrimp boats without a commercial crab license may possess**, in waters open to commercial shrimping, **no more than one 5-gallon container** of legal size crabs **per boat**. If the operator of a commercial shrimp boat possesses a valid commercial "crab catchers" license, he or she is required to comply with all laws/regulations relating to the taking, possession, or sale of crabs for commercial purposes.
14. **Crab traps which are no longer serviceable or in use must be removed from the water by the owner**. No person shall intentionally damage or destroy crab traps or the floats or lines attached thereto.
15. **Any unidentified, improperly marked, or illegally placed crab trap(s) is considered a nuisance and will be confiscated**.
16. **Any commercial crab license(s), invoices, tags, or other information required by law or regulation must be immediately available for inspection, upon request, by a conservation enforcement officer or other authorized agent**.



This information sheet has been prepared for general information purposes only. **Regulations are subject to change**. For information updates and copies of laws/regulations, you may phone the Dauphin Island office at 251-861-2882 or the Gulf Shores office at 251-968-7576.