



# New 2018 Regulations for Charter Halibut Anglers

NMFS announces new regulations for the charter halibut fishery in Southeast (Area 2C) and South-central (Area 3A) Alaska for 2018.

## Regulations Applicable to Both Areas

- *Sport fishery season dates:* February 1 through December 31, 2018.
- *Filleting halibut:* No person shall possess on board a vessel, including charter vessels and pleasure craft used for fishing, halibut that have been filleted, mutilated, or otherwise disfigured in any manner, except that each halibut may be cut into no more than 2 ventral pieces, 2 dorsal pieces, and 2 cheek pieces, with enough skin on each piece to identify whether the piece is from the light side or dark side of the fish.
- *Skipper and crew prohibition:* Skipper and crew may not harvest halibut during a charter vessel fishing trip.
- *Logbook signature requirement:* Charter vessel anglers must sign the logbook at the end of the charter vessel fishing trip to verify the numbers of halibut caught and kept.
- *Allowable gear:* Charter vessel anglers may use a single line with no more than 2 hooks attached or a spear to fish for halibut. No other gear types are allowed.
- *Possession limit:* The possession limit is two daily bag limits.
- *Transporting halibut in excess of possession limit:* Halibut in excess of the possession limit may be transported on a vessel that does not contain sport fishing gear, fishing rods, hand lines, or gaffs.
- *Carcass retention requirement:* If a size-restricted halibut is filleted on board the charter vessel, the entire carcass, with head and tail connected as a single piece, must be retained on board the charter vessel on which it was caught until all fillets are offloaded.
- *Tagged halibut exemption:* Halibut with an external IPHC tag will not count against sport daily bag limits or possession limits, can be retained outside of sport fishing seasons, and are not limited to size restrictions.

## Area 2C (Southeast Alaska)

- *One fish daily bag limit:* Charter vessel anglers may catch and retain one halibut per day.
- *Reverse slot limit:* Retained halibut must be less than or equal to 38 inches or greater than or equal to 80 inches in length. This reverse slot limit allows anglers to keep halibut less than approximately 19 pounds and greater than 208 pounds, after the head and guts have been removed.

## Area 3A (South-central Alaska)

- *Two fish daily bag limit:* Charter vessel anglers may catch and retain two halibut per day.
- *28-inch maximum size limit on one fish:* Charter vessel anglers may keep one fish of any size per day and one fish that is no more than 28 inches in length. The 28-inch maximum size limit allows anglers to keep a second fish that weighs approximately 7 pounds, after the head and guts have been removed.
- *Trip limit:* Charter vessels may only take one trip during which charter vessel anglers retain halibut per day. Charter halibut permits may only be used for one charter halibut fishing trip per day during which charter vessel anglers retain halibut.
- *4-fish annual limit:* Charter anglers may catch and retain no more than 4 halibut in a calendar year on charter vessel fishing trips in Area 3A. This annual limit does not apply to halibut caught while fishing without a guide, charter fishing in Area 2C, or halibut caught as GAF. Anglers are required to record halibut caught on charter vessel fishing trips in Area 3A on the back of the fishing license or harvest record card.
- *Wednesday closure:* Charter vessel anglers may not catch and retain halibut (except GAF) on Wednesdays.
- *Tuesday closure:* Charter vessel anglers may not catch and retain halibut (except GAF) on six Tuesdays in 2018: July 10, July 17, July 24, July 31, August 7, and August 14.

This guide summarizes regulations for charter halibut fisheries in Alaska. If you are required to comply with the regulations, you should consult and rely on the actual regulatory text. Please refer to the regulations under [50 CFR 300](#) or contact NMFS at 907-586-7228 or 907-586-7225. Links to other information are available on the NMFS Alaska Region website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sport-halibut>.

## Guided Angler Fish (GAF)

Charter vessel operators who choose to participate in the GAF program may offer their clients the opportunity to harvest up to two halibut of any size per day. GAF may also be used to exceed the 4-fish annual limit and to charter fish on Wednesdays in Area 3A. Special regulations apply for GAF halibut.

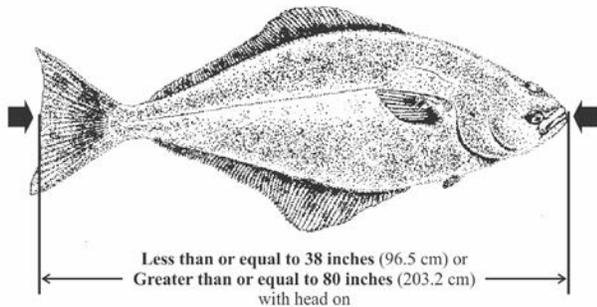


Figure 1. Recreational reverse slot limit for halibut retained on board a charter vessel in Regulatory Area 2C.

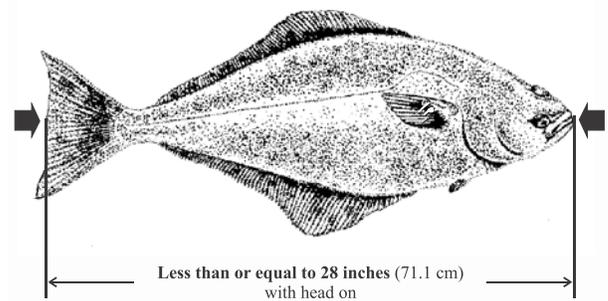


Figure 2. Recreational maximum size limit for one fish in the two-fish bag limit for halibut retained on board a charter vessel in Regulatory Area 3A. If only one halibut is retained, it may be of any size.

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Want to help select charter halibut annual management measures?  
Join the Council's **Charter Management Implementation Committee!**  
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<http://www.npfmc.org/committees>

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