



Revised 2020 Regulations for Charter Halibut Anglers

NMFS announces *revised* regulations for the charter halibut fishery in Southeast (Area 2C) and Southcentral (Area 3A) Alaska for 2020.

These regulations are effective as of June 15, 2020 and supersede previous regulations.

Regulations Applicable to Both Areas

- *Sport fishery season dates:* February 1 through December 31, 2020.
- *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 the 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.
- *Mixed guided and unguided fishing:* If a fishing vessel retains a mix of halibut that came from both guided and unguided fishing, then the daily bag limits, possession limits, size restrictions, and carcass retention requirements for guided anglers will apply to all the halibut that are retained on board the vessel.

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 45 inches or greater than or equal to 80 inches in length. This reverse slot limit allows anglers to keep halibut less than approximately 43 pounds and greater than 276 pounds, round weight.

Area 3A (Southcentral Alaska)

- *Two fish daily bag limit:* Charter vessel anglers may catch and retain two halibut per day.
- *32-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 32 inches in length. The 32-inch maximum size limit allows anglers to keep a second fish that weighs approximately 14 pounds, round weight.
- *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.
- *No annual limit:* Charter anglers are not subject to an annual limit on the number of halibut they retain. Anglers are no longer required to record halibut caught on charter vessel fishing trips in Area 3A on the back of the fishing license or on a harvest record card.
- *No closed fishing days:* Charter vessel anglers may catch and retain halibut on all days of the week.

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. Special regulations apply for GAF halibut.

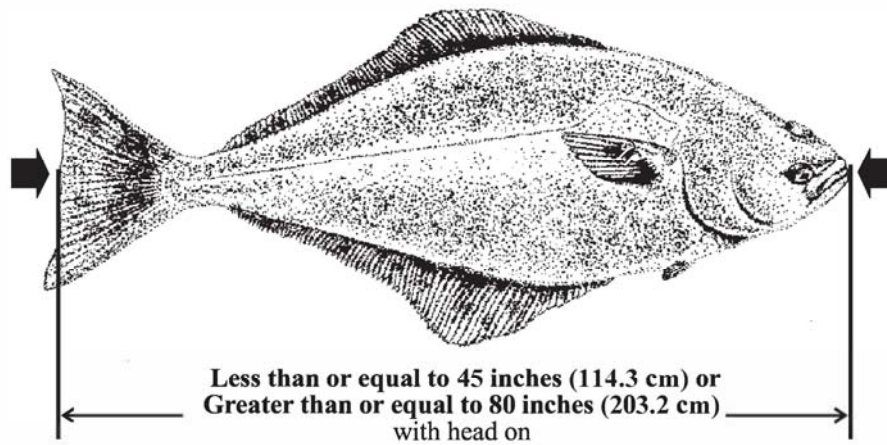


Figure 1. Recreational reverse slot limit for halibut retained on board a charter vessel in Regulatory Area 2C.

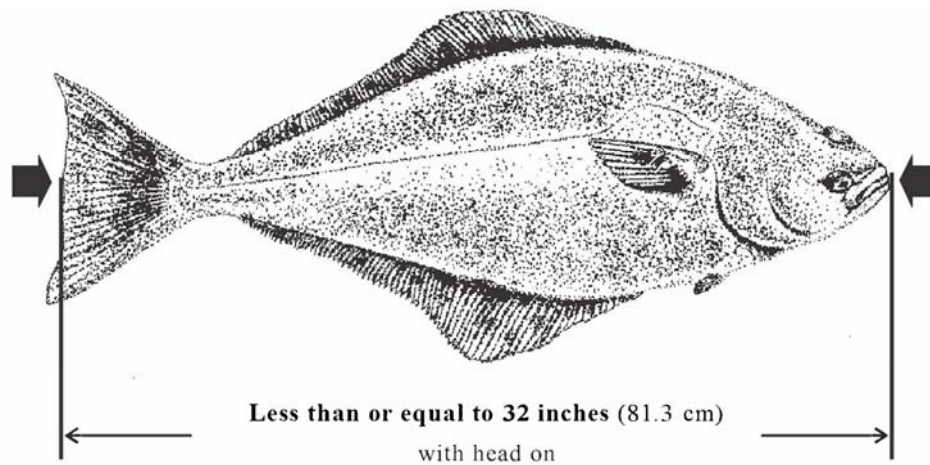


Figure 2. Recreational maximum size limit for one fish in two-fish bag limit for halibut retained on board a charter vessel in Regulatory Area 3A. If only one halibut is retained, it may be of any size.

Want to help select charter halibut annual management measures?
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<http://www.npfmc.org/committees>
