Fact Sheet 2026

NOAA FISHERIES

Alaska Region

Restricted Access Management Division

Alaska's Subsistence Halibut Special Permit Program

What are halibut special permits?

Special permits allow halibut fishing to help teach, celebrate, and share halibut with others. There are three kinds of special permits available to Alaska Native Tribes and certain communities.

Educational Permit

This permit allows Tribes to catch halibut for educational programs about traditional fishing practices.

For example, the educational program might take students on a fishing trip to learn how to catch, clean, and share halibut.

Ceremonial Permit

This permit allows Tribes to catch halibut for special events.

For example, a Tribe might use this permit to catch fish for a traditional gathering, celebration, funeral, or other event.

Community Harvest Permit

This permit is limited to a single vessel for communities to catch halibut for everyone to share. It helps provide food to people who need it.

For example, a rural community might use this permit for community food distribution.

How do I get a subsistence permit?

1. You must have a Special Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC). Learn more at or apply at: http://bit.ly/3H95ZBe
2. Download a fillable pdf application form for a Subsistence Halibut Special Permit - New Application/Renewal at: http://bit.ly/4fPYPio
3. Submit the completed form to:
   - **Email:** RAM.Alaska@noaa.gov
   - **Mail:** NMFS, Alaska Region RAM Division, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668
   - **Fax:** 907-586-7354
3. **Applications take approximately 2-3 weeks to process.** Applicants receive a copy of the permit by mail.

Have Questions?

- See back page for frequent questions and resources.
- **Email:** RAM.Alaska@noaa.gov
- **Call:** (800) 304-4846 (option 2)

Photo Credit: Amilee Wilson

Did you know?

Some Alaskan rural residents can fish for halibut with special permits. These permits help local Tribes and certain communities catch and enjoy halibut.

Frequently Asked Questions: Halibut Special Permit Program

Photo Credit: NOAA Fisheries

How long is each special permit valid and can they be renewed?

- **Educational Permit:**
  - 30 days from the date issued, as shown on the permit.
  - After expiration, can be applied for again at any time.
- **Ceremonial Permit:**
  - 30 days from the date issued, as shown on the permit.
  - After expiration, can be applied for again at any time.
- **Community Harvest Permit:**
  - 1 year from the date issued, as shown on the permit.
  - After expiration, can be applied for again at any time.

What is the catch limit for each type of special permit?

- **Educational Permit:** 25 halibut
- **Ceremonial Permit:** 25 halibut
- **Community Harvest Permit:** Limited to a single vessel with no catch limit.

Am I required to keep a log of the halibut catch?

Yes. A harvest log must be submitted for each special permit on or before the permit's expiration date. Logs can be submitted by email, fax, or mail to NOAA Fisheries RAM division (see contact information on left).

- Ceremonial or Educational Harvest Log: http://bit.ly/4mUn8hq
- Community Harvest Permit (CHP) Log: http://bit.ly/45ogf1S

Who is eligible to receive a community harvest permit?

An eligible rural community or Alaska Native Tribe can appoint one or more individuals from its respective community or Tribe to harvest subsistence halibut from a single vessel under reduced gear and harvest restrictions. Note:

- In Area 2C or 3A only if the applying community is listed as eligible under 50 CFR 300.65(g)(1) and no Alaska Native tribe exists in that community).
- To an Alaska Native Tribe in Area 2C or 3A only if the applying tribe is listed as eligible in Area 2C or 3A under 50 CFR 300.65(g)(2).
- Interactive Subsistence Map for Non-subsistence and Rural Areas: http://bit.ly/47BhWdB
  - Zoom in on the map to find your location. Right click on the map to determine the type of fishing area.

What are the requirements for individuals to fish under a community harvest permit?

- Eligible communities or Alaska Native Tribes may appoint one Community Harvest Permit Coordinator per community or Tribe.
- Community harvest permits will be sent to the applicant, who will serve as the community coordinator.
- The community harvest permit, as well as a valid individual Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate (SHARC), must be onboard the fishing vessel and in the fishers possession when fishing.

Contact

NOAA Fisheries Restricted Access Management (RAM) Division

- **Mail:** NMFS Alaska Region RAM Division, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668
- **Email:** RAM.Alaska@noaa.gov
- **Fax:** 907-586-7354
- **Call:** (800) 304-4846 (option 2)

Additional Resources

- **Learn more on our website:** http://bit.ly\44TkPVD
- **Download applications and logs:** http://bit.ly/3H95ZBe