

Questions & Answers related to Commercial Fishing and Angling

AS OF DECEMBER 14, 2020, SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS CHANGE

Is ice fishing allowed under the new COVID-19 RED restrictions?

Yes. Outdoor activities such as angling can continue and are not prohibited under the Orders of the Public Health Act.

Outdoor gatherings continue to be restricted to five persons. However, anglers are strongly encouraged to limit their groups to members of a single household.

Anglers who are not from the same household are required to maintain a minimum separation of at least two metres from each other. This means travelling in separate vehicles and/or on separate snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles is recommended. A mask should be worn if anglers cannot physically distance at outdoor locations such as waterbody access points.

Ice fishing shelters are considered to be an indoor space and therefore, are restricted to members from one household per shelter.

For more information, please consult the provincial website for information on current restrictions under the Pandemic Response System:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restartmb/prs/index.html>

Can I continue to commercial fish and sell my catch?

Yes, commercial fishing activities can continue and are not prohibited under the Orders of the Public Health Act. The Manitoba government is opening commercial fishing seasons at appropriate times.

Fishers who are not from the same household are required to maintain a minimum separation of at least two metres from each other, and should not travel in the same vehicle. A mask should be worn if fishers cannot physical distance while fishing or at locations such as waterbody access points or fish sheds.

Commercial fishers are able to travel to sell fish. Travel north of the 53rd parallel is not permitted, except for purposes as described under travel restrictions. Additionally, fishers should follow rules set out by Indigenous communities regarding travel into and out of a community.

Can I continue to sell bait, tackle and other products related to hunting, trapping and angling?

Yes, angling, hunting and trapping products have been categorized as essential items and can continue to be sold by retailers who remain open. However, these businesses are subject to the same restrictions as other retail outlets with respect to not selling non-essential items. In addition, retail businesses must limit occupancy to 25 per cent of the usual capacity and implement measures to ensure that those attending the business can maintain a two metre physical distance from others.

Can I still use angling guide services from licenced angling outfitters?

Yes, licenced angling outfitters can still provide guide services; however, outfitters and guides must follow all public health restrictions.

Outdoor gatherings continue to be restricted to five persons. As such, guided groups must remain at five people or less, including the guide. It is strongly encouraged that groups are limited to members from one household.

Ice fishing shelters are considered to be an indoor space and therefore, are restricted to members from one household per shelter.

Anglers who are not from the same household are required to maintain a minimum separation of at least two metres from each other. This means travelling in separate vehicles and/or on separate snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles is recommended. A mask should be worn if anglers cannot physically distance at outdoor locations such as waterbody access points.

Can I visit a fishing lodge?

Yes, fishing lodges can remain open and are not prohibited under the Orders of the Public Health Act; however, lodges must follow all public health restrictions.

Only members from one household can be in the same cabin/unit.

A mask must be worn in all indoor public areas of the lodge. It is recommended that a mask be worn in public outdoor areas if a distance of two meters cannot be maintained between people not from the same household.

Can I go fishing at a lodge located North of the 53rd parallel?

Travel north of the 53rd parallel is not permitted, except for purposes as described under travel restrictions and under certain restrictions. One of the purposes that travel is permitted is as follows:

A person may travel to a cottage, cabin, provincial park, campground, or hunting/fishing lodge North of the 53rd parallel in Manitoba if they:

- Are not displaying any symptoms of COVID-19;
- Travel as directly as possible to and from their intended destination; and
- Limit their use of local services to the minimum required given the circumstances of their visit.

Only members from one household can be in the same cabin/unit.

For more information, please consult the provincial website for information on current restrictions under the Pandemic Response System:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restartmb/prs/index.html>

Is the ice safe to travel on?

Check ice conditions before going on the ice to make sure ice is thick enough to travel on. Ice thickness can vary from location to location.

What are general ice fishing safety tips?

Dress for the weather as conditions can change quickly. It is recommended you dress in layers. Let someone know where you are going and time you expect to return. Bring a cell phone and safety kit in case of emergency. Bring food and water.

Do I have to dispose of bait after a day of ice fishing within an [Aquatic Invasive Species \(AIS\) Control Zone](#)?

The department and all water resource users have a responsibility to stop the spread of AIS across Manitoba. Anglers must ensure AIS and water is not transferred from one water body to another. As well, set fines for AIS offenses are in effect year-round.

The department recognizes concerns raised by anglers regarding the disposal of bait when leaving an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Control Zone. As the department is conducting a review of the AIS Regulation the Manitoba government's interpretation for bait use in AIS Control Zones as follows:

The AIS Regulation prohibits the removal of bait from the shore of a control zone if it is:

- live
- has been handled (i.e., hooked)
- has come into contact with surface water from the control zone.

It does not matter if you have a valid 3-day live bait Fish Transfer and Use Receipt.

Also water from the bait container must be drained before leaving the shore.

Commercially-supplied dead bait that has not come into contact with water from a water body in an AIS Control Zone can be retained by anglers for future use.

These requirements are in place because water or bait, that has come into contact with the water, from a control zone may be contaminated with AIS (e.g., microscopic life-stages (i.e., Zebra Mussel veligers) or other invasive species so small they can go unnoticed (e.g., Spiny Water Flea)). Moving water or AIS from an AIS Control Zone can contaminate other water bodies and result in fines.

For more information on bait, bait use and AIS, visit Manitoba.ca/StopAIS or call toll free: 1-87-STOP AIS-0.