



## FEDERAL ATLANTIC TUNAS, SWORDFISH, & ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) CHARTER/HEADBOAT PERMIT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

An Atlantic tunas permit is required to fish commercially for bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye, albacore, and skipjack tunas. An Atlantic HMS Angling permit is required for all owners/operators of recreational vessels fishing for and/or retaining regulated HMS (tunas, sharks, swordfish and billfish) in the Atlantic Ocean, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. An Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permit is required for all charter or headboat vessels fishing for and/or retaining regulated HMS in the Atlantic Ocean, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. A Swordfish General Commercial permit is required to fish commercially for North Atlantic swordfish using either rod & reel, handline, harpoon, bandit gear, or green-stick (except for vessels issued a Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit, HMS Charter/Headboat permit with Commercial Sale Endorsement, or Swordfish Directed, Incidental, or Handgear limited access permits). Vessels fishing commercially for North Atlantic swordfish **AND** regulated Atlantic tunas may obtain one of the following combination permits: Swordfish General Commercial permit/Atlantic tunas General permit; Swordfish General Commercial permit/Atlantic tunas Harpoon permit (except for vessels issued a Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit, HMS Charter/Headboat permit, or Swordfish Directed, Incidental, or Handgear limited access permits); Please complete the attached application/renewal form and return to the address indicated at the bottom of the form. If your application/renewal, including payment, is complete, your permit will be mailed, emailed, faxed, or available to print (depending on your preferred delivery method) within 3 business days. Questions on the permit application/renewal process, call (888) USA-TUNA (872-8862); for HMS fisheries regulations: (978) 281-9260, (301) 427-8503 or (727) 824-5398; for Fishing Vessel Safety Act regulations see phone numbers below.

The following information is provided to help you complete the application/renewal form.

- *You may select only **ONE** permit or permit combo category per permit application. You may change this category when: a) renewing a permit; or b) within 45-calendar days from the date of issuance to correct any potential errors in the permit category provided the vessel has not landed bluefin. Therefore, once you have obtained your permit check it immediately to ensure its accuracy.*
- A permit may be owned by more than one person, but the owner information should match the owner information on the vessel's state registration or U.S. Coast Guard documentation. If more than one person is listed, please indicate the person who will be the primary point of contact for the permit.
- If you would like your permit faxed or emailed, please indicate the appropriate information in Section 1 and select that option in Section 5. If you would like to print your permit from your printer via the Internet (<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov>) once the permit is processed (approximately 3 business days), select the print option in Section 5.
- If your vessel is unnamed, write "unnamed" in the space for Vessel Name in Section 2.
- The vessel's homeport refers to the port where the vessel is located for most of the year. The principal port refers to the port where the majority of the vessel's landings occur. The vessel's home and principal port may be different.
- If your vessel is constructed of more than one material, choose "other". Please check only one box.
- You do not need to submit copies of state registration or U.S. Coast Guard documentation, as NMFS no longer requires submission of copies with the permit application. However, a copy of the vessel's valid U.S. Coast Guard documentation or, if not documented, a copy of its valid state registration must be carried on board the vessel and must match the information on the Atlantic tunas or Atlantic HMS permit.
- For vessels owned by a partnership or corporation, you do not need to submit a copy of the letter of partnership or articles of incorporation, but you are advised to maintain the corporate or partnership document in your files and must furnish the document to NOAA Fisheries Service upon request.
- For Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permits, you do not need to submit a copy of a captain's license as NOAA Fisheries Service no longer requires submission of a copy with the permit application. However, while persons aboard a vessel that has been issued an Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permit are fishing for or are in possession of Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish, and/or billfish, the operator of the vessel must have a valid Merchant Marine License or Uninspected Passenger Vessel License, issued by the U.S. Coast Guard; **this license must be carried on board the vessel.**
- Commercial vessels are subject to the Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988. For information, contact the U.S. Coast Guard office in your district:
 

Maine to New York	(617) 223-8315	South Carolina to Florida	(305) 415-6868
New Jersey to North Carolina	(757) 398-6554	Gulf of Mexico	(504) 589-4554

## **INFORMATION REGARDING PERMIT CATEGORIES AND ENDORSEMENTS**

### **NEW for 2018 - SHARK ENDORSEMENT:**

The shark endorsement is required for permit holders that wish to fish for or retain any sharks while recreationally fishing under an HMS Charter/Headboat, HMS Angling, Atlantic Tunas General category, and/or Swordfish General Commercial permit. In order to receive the shark endorsement, you must first watch an online video regarding shark identification and take an educational quiz. For more information on adding the shark endorsement, please visit <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/> or call 1-888-872-8862.

### **COMMERCIAL CATEGORIES:**

Commercial size tuna taken under any of these categories may be sold. See commercial compliance guide at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/guides/index.html> for applicable minimum size limits and other regulations.

**ATLANTIC HMS CHARTER/HEADBOAT:** Owners of charter boats or headboats used to fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish, and billfish must obtain this permit. **NEW FOR 2018** - A Charter/Headboat *Commercial Sale Endorsement* is required for all owners who wish to sell their HMS catch. Note that U.S. Coast Guard commercial fishing vessel safety requirements apply to Charter/Headboat permit holders with the Commercial Sale Endorsement. For bluefin tuna, anglers aboard Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat-permitted vessels with the Commercial Sale Endorsement may collectively fish under either the Angling or General Category daily retention limit, but not both on the same day. Commercial size tunas taken aboard vessels permitted in the Atlantic HMS Charter/ Headboat category with the Commercial Sale Endorsement may be sold to licensed dealers only. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, bandit gear, green-stick, and spearguns (recreational only, no bluefin).

**ATLANTIC TUNAS TRAP:** Vessel owners who conduct trap operations that may result in the incidental taking of large medium and giant BFT must obtain this permit. Note that only one bluefin per year may be retained. Authorized gear: pound nets and fish weirs.

**ATLANTIC TUNAS GENERAL:** Vessel owners who harvest Atlantic tunas, including large medium and giant bluefin, by handgear and plan to sell the tuna must obtain this permit. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, harpoon, greenstick, and bandit gear.

**ATLANTIC TUNAS HARPOON:** Vessel owners who conduct a commercial harpoon fishery only for Atlantic tunas, including large medium and giant bluefin, must obtain this permit. Vessels permitted in the Harpoon category may not participate in the General category fishery. Authorized gear: Harpoon.

**SWORDFISH GENERAL COMMERCIAL:** Vessel owners who harvest Atlantic swordfish commercially and do not hold a Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit, HMS Charter/Headboat permit, or limited access swordfish permit must obtain this permit. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, harpoon, greenstick, and bandit gear.

### **RECREATIONAL CATEGORY:**

Atlantic HMS taken under the Angling category size and retention limits MAY NOT be sold. See recreational commercial compliance guide at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/guides/index.html> for applicable minimum size limits and other regulations.

**ATLANTIC HMS ANGLING:** Private recreational vessels used to fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish, and billfish must obtain this permit. All bluefin must be reported within 24 hours of landing to NMFS by calling (888) 872-8862 or accessing the <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov> website. If bluefin are landed in the states of North Carolina or Maryland, they should be reported to a reporting station prior to removing fish from the vessel. Information about the state harvest tagging programs, including reporting station locations, can be obtained in North Carolina by calling (800) 338-7804 and in Maryland by calling (410) 213-1531. Authorized gear: rod & reel (including downriggers), handline, and spearguns (except for bluefin).

For further information regarding the HMS permits on this form please call the Greater Atlantic Regional Office HMS Management Division at (978) 281-9260.

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:** Collection of information through annual permitting serves three purposes: (1) it provides current information on the vessel owners participating in the Atlantic tuna fisheries; (2) it provides an up-to-date sampling frame that is the basis for fleet size calculations used for catch and effort estimates in fisheries that do not require mandatory reporting, thus enabling the U.S. to meet international obligations to report catch statistics for Atlantic tunas; and (3) aids NOAA Fisheries Service in the enforcement of fishery regulations. Public reporting burden for this initial permit application of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completed & reviewing the collection of information. Permit renewals are accomplished by using an automated phone system at (888) 872-8862 or by accessing the web site at [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com). Public reporting burden for renewal by telephone or web is estimated to average 6 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: National Marine Fisheries Service, F/SF1, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Providing the requested information in the permit application is mandatory for managing the Atlantic tuna fisheries in accordance with the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 971 et seq.) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). It is agency policy not to release confidential information, other than in aggregate form, as the Magnuson-Stevens Act protects (in perpetuity) the confidentiality of those submitting information. Summaries of permit information by category may be released. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. This is an approved information collection under OMB #0648-0327 and expires July 31, 2018.

## Privacy Act Statement

**Authority:** The collection of this information is authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C 1801 et seq. and the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950. The authority for the mandatory collection of the Tax Identification Number (TIN) is 31 U.S.C. 7701.

**Purpose:** In order to manage U.S. fisheries, the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requires the use of permits or registrations by participants in the United States. Information on NOAA Fisheries permit applicants and renewing holders includes vessel owner contact information, date of birth, TIN and vessel descriptive information. Permit holder information may be used as sampling frames for surveys, as part of NMFS analysis to support NMFS decisions.

**Routine Uses:** The Department will use this information to determine permit eligibility and to identify fishery participants. Disclosure of this information is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. Section 552a), to be shared within NMFS offices, in order to coordinate monitoring and management of sustainability of fisheries and protected resources, as well as with the applicable State or Regional Marine Fisheries Commissions and International Organizations. Disclosure of this information is also subject to all of the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice [COMMERCE/NOAA-19](#), Permits and Registrations for the United States Federally Regulated Fisheries.

**Disclosure:** Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide complete and accurate information will prevent the determination of eligibility for a permit.

### Notice to Customers Making Payment by Check

If you send us a check, it will be converted into an electronic funds transfer (EFT). This means we will copy your check and use the account information on it to electronically debit your account for the amount of the check. The debit from your account will usually occur within 24 hours, and will be shown on your regular account statement.

You will not receive your original check back. We will destroy your original check, but we will keep the copy of it. If the EFT cannot be processed for technical reasons, the copy will be processed in place of your original check.