

# Social and Economic Survey of Hired Captains and Crew in New England and Mid-Atlantic Commercial Fisheries

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)



### What is the purpose of the survey?

This survey is an effort by the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center to assess the current social and economic conditions of commercial fishing crews (including hired captains) in the Northeast States for which little is known. This is the third wave of the survey (first conducted in 2012/2013, second wave in 2018/2019) and will allow for comparisons to determine how and why commercial crew working conditions may have changed over time. Data to be collected include demographic information on crew, wage calculations systems, well-being, fishing practices, job satisfaction, job opportunities, and attitudes toward fisheries management.

### Why does your participation matter?

We simply do not know much about the experiences of commercial fishing crew members and yet they are a critical part of the commercial fishing industry. The majority of economic and social information collected has tended to focus on vessel owners. The results of this survey will not only help fisheries managers understand what is going on in crew members' lives but also the impacts of management decisions on commercial crew. Your participation is extremely valuable in helping improve and shape fishery management decisions.

### What type of information is being collected?

**Social and economic information** will be collected from commercial crew. Examples of information collected on the survey include: demographic information, job opportunities, job satisfaction, wage system calculations, and well-being.

### Who are we asking to participate?

Survey participants include commercial crew in the Northeast states. Since there is no database of registered crew, participants will be intercepted on the docks at major ports.

## Who is conducting this survey?

**NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center** is conducting this survey. We conduct applied economic and sociocultural research on the management of commercial and recreational fisheries. It is our commitment to perform independent, relevant, and accessible research aimed at providing useful input to the decision-making process in fisheries management.

## When is this survey being conducted?

The survey will be conducted once in the next three years and will take approximately three-four months to complete for all Northeast states.

## How long will this survey take?

The survey will take **approximately 15-20 minutes** to complete. However, times may vary.

## How do I benefit from participating?

Information you share will be anonymous and combined with data from other respondents. It will be used, in aggregate form, in an **assessment to evaluate the current social and economic conditions of commercial fishing crews**.

## How will I be sure my data is anonymous?

**Data collected will be kept anonymous and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form without identification as to its source.** Participation or lack of participation in the survey will remain anonymous. All economic data will be aggregated into statistical form for all reports.

## If you have any questions, contact:

**Northeast Fisheries Science Center**

**Matt Cutler, PhD**

[matthew.cutler@noaa.gov](mailto:matthew.cutler@noaa.gov)

508-495-4731

Interviewer's Name: OMB Control No. 0648-0636

Date: Expiration Date: XX/XX/2027

Port Name:

Start Time:

End Time:

## **Social and Economic Survey of Hired Captains and Crew in New England and Mid-Atlantic Commercial Fisheries**



*Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to (Northeast) Matthew J Cutler, 166 Water St., Woods Hole, MA 02543, Email:matthew.cutler@noaa.gov.*

**Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected 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.**

***In this survey, please tell us about your fishing in the last year.  
The information you provide will remain private and you will not be identified with  
your answers.***

**1.1 What fisheries do you target? Of these, which do you consider your primary fishery in terms of income?**

New England and Mid- Atlantic Fisheries	Check ALL That Apply	Primary Fishery (Check ONE Only)
Lobster	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scallops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Groundfish:		
Am. Plaice Flounder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cod	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Haddock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pollock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Redfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Winter Flounder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Witch Hake	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Sea Bass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bluefish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Butterfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mackerel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monkfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ocean Quahogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Crab	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiny Dogfish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summer Flounder (Fluke)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surfclams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**1.2. On your primary vessel, with what type of contract were you employed?**

- a. Independent contractor (receive 1099 MISC for taxes)
- b. Full-time employee (receive W-2 for taxes)
- c. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**1.3 Do you have any other formal qualifications, including licenses, certificates or training, related to your commercial fishing activities?**

- a. Yes (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No

**1.4. Where is your primary place of residence?**

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What port did you primarily work out of in the last year?**

Port \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Are any members of your family (for example, parents, children, siblings, uncles/aunts, cousins, in-laws) involved in commercial fishing or other fishing-related activities (for example, book-keeping, provisioning vessels, marketing)?**

- a. YES
- b. NO

**4. How long have you been involved in commercial fishing? If less than a year, how many months?**

\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS

\_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS

**5. How many generations of your family have fished commercially including yourself?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Generations

*Within your primary fishery, consider the vessel you worked on the most in the last year.  
Please answer the following questions based on your fishing activities on that primary vessel.*

**6. What was the main port of landing for that vessel in the last year?**

Port \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How many days (24 hour periods) does a typical trip last before returning to port?**

\_\_\_\_\_Days

**8. What was the average size of the crew in the last year (including the captain)?**

\_\_\_\_\_Members

**9. How many hours per day (24 hour period) did you usually work while on a fishing trip?**

\_\_\_\_\_Hours

**10. Was the vessel you worked on most in the last year owner-operated? (Please circle one response).**

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. DON'T KNOW

*In the following questions please tell us how revenues and expenses are distributed amongst crew.*

**11. For your current vessel, how were you paid?**

- a. A share system: revenues and expenses were shared between the boat and crew (CONTINUE)
- b. Other (e.g., per trip, hourly), please specify: (SKIP TO Q14)

**12. For share systems, what were the typical percentages distributed to the boat (the vessel owner) and crew?**

\_\_\_\_\_ % Boat (owner) share  
\_\_\_\_\_ % Crew share  
\_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know

**13. For share systems, which trip expenses were usually deducted? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- a. Fuel/Oil
- b. Ice
- c. Fishing quota or days-at-sea
- d. Food
- e. General fishing supplies (hooks, bags, totes, gloves, etc.)
- f. Bait
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

*In the following questions, please tell us about your fishing activities and employment on your primary vessel.*

**14. What was your position on the vessel in the last year? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY).**

- a. Captain
- b. Deck hand
- c. Engine mechanic
- d. Cook
- e. Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Which of the following was the first crew position you ever had when you began fishing?**

- a. Captain
- b. Deck hand
- c. Engine Mechanic
- d. Cook
- e. Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**16. How were you hired for the vessel you currently work on? (CHECK ONE RESPONSE)**

- a. Word of mouth
- b. Referred by a friend
- c. Related to owner
- d. Related to non-owner crew member (may include hired captain)
- e. Previous work with the same vessel
- f. Advertisement
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**17. How difficult was it for you to find employment on your vessel? (CHECK ONE RESPONSE)**

- a. Very easy
- b. Easy
- c. Neither easy nor difficult
- d. Difficult
- e. Very difficult

**18. As of today, how many years have you worked on your primary vessel?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Years  
\_\_\_\_\_ Months

**19. How many different vessel owners did you work for in the last year?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Vessel owners



**20. About how many miles do you travel from where you live to where your primary vessel docked for the past year? (Please circle only one response).**

\_\_\_\_\_ Miles

*In the following questions, please tell us how you feel about the regulations and management process in your primary fishery.*

**21. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the rules and regulations in your primary fishery. (CHECK ONE RESPONSE PER ITEM)**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. The rules and regulations change so quickly it is hard to keep up.	1	2	3	4	5
b. The fines that are associated with breaking the rules and regulations of my primary fishery are fair.	1	2	3	4	5
c. I feel that the regulations in my primary fishery are too restrictive.	1	2	3	4	5

**22. Have you ever participated in any aspect of federal fisheries management (such as attending meetings, writing letters, or serving on a committee)?**

- a. YES (CONTINUE)
- b. NO (SKIP TO Q24)

*In the following questions, we are interested in commercial fishing as a lifestyle and how satisfied you are.*

**23. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about fishing as a career. (CHECK ONE ITEM PER RESPONSE)**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Fishing is just a job to me.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Leaving the fishing industry is something that I have considered.	1	2	3	4	5



**24. Would you advise a young person to enter fishing?**

- a. YES
  - b. NO WHY?
- 
- 

**25. Would you still be a commercial fisherman if you had your life to live over?**

- a. YES
  - b. NO WHY?
- 
- 

**26. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following items relating to the job of fishing? (CHECK ONE ITEM PER RESPONSE)**

	Extrem ely dissatisf ied	Somewh at dissatisfi ed	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somew hat satisfied	Extrem ely satisfie d
a .	1	2	3	4	5
b .	1	2	3	4	5
c .	1	2	3	4	5
d .	1	2	3	4	5
e .	1	2	3	4	5
f .	1	2	3	4	5
g .	1	2	3	4	5
h .	1	2	3	4	5
i .	1	2	3	4	5

**27. In general, how satisfied are you with: (CHECK ONE ITEM PER RESPONSE)**

	Extremely dissatisfie d	Somewhat dissatisfie d	Neither satisfied or dissatisfie d	Somewhat satisfied	Extremely satisfied
a. Your life	1	2	3	4	5
b. Your physical health	1	2	3	4	5
c. The overall health of the marine environment	1	2	3	4	5

*In the following questions, please tell us about any health insurance you may have.*

**28. Did you have health insurance in the last year?**

- a. YES (CONTINUE)
- b. NO (SKIP TO Q31)

**29. Where did the insurance come from?**

- a. From my employer (the vessel owner)
- b. From another employer I have
- c. Spouse's/Partner's place of employment
- d. Own Private Insurance
- e. Federal or State Insurance Program
- f. Other

**29. In the following questions, we are interested in gathering demographic and economic data about crew. What is your race and/or ethnicity? Select all that apply and enter additional details in the spaces below.**

- American Indian or Alaska Native – Enter, for example, Navajo Nation,

*Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, Aztec, Maya, etc.*

- Asian – Provide details below.

“ Chinese Asian Indian Filipino

“ Vietnamese Korean Japanese

*Enter, for example, Pakistani, Hmong, Afghan, etc.*

- “ Black or African American – Provide details below.

“ African American Jamaican Haitian

“ Nigerian Ethiopian Somali

*Enter, for example, Trinidadian and Tobagonian, Ghanaian, Congolese, etc.*

- “ Hispanic or Latino – Provide details below.

“ Mexican Puerto Rican Salvadoran

“ Cuban Dominican Guatemalan

*Enter, for example, Colombian, Honduran, Spaniard, etc.*

- Middle Eastern or North African – Provide details below.

“ Lebanese Iranian Egyptian

“ Syrian Iraqi Israeli

*Enter, for example, Moroccan, Yemeni, Kurdish, etc.*

- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander – Provide details below.

“ Native Hawaiian Samoan Chamorro

“ Tongan Fijian Marshallese

*Enter, for example, Chuukese, Palauan, Tahitian, etc.*

- White – Provide details below.

“ English German Irish

“ Italian Polish Scottish

*Enter, for example, French, Swedish, Norwegian, etc.*

**30. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**

**31. Gender: (Select all that apply)**

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Transgender, non-binary, or another gender
- d. Prefer not to answer

**32. What is the primary language you speak at home?** \_\_\_\_\_

**33. Where were you born?**

- a. U.S.: State \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Outside U.S.: Country \_\_\_\_\_

**34. What is your marital status?**

- c. Married
- d. Widowed
- e. Divorced
- f. Separated
- g. Never Married
- h. Living with an unmarried partner

**35. How many people lived in your primary household in the last year?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Adults and children under 18

**36. Which category best describes the highest level of education that you have completed? (Please circle one response).**

- i. Did not complete high school; indicate highest grade completed: \_\_\_\_\_
- j. High school diploma/equivalency
- k. Associate's/ two year degree
- l. Bachelor's/ four year degree
- m. Graduate degree

**37. What percentage does fishing contribute to your annual household income?**

\_\_\_\_\_ % (If 100% SKIP to Q42)

**38. If you have other sources of household income besides fishing, please list the top three most important sources of income other than fishing for your household.**

	Source
Most important	
2 <sup>nd</sup> most important	
3 <sup>rd</sup> most important	



**39. What was your annual fishing income in the last year?**

1. Less than \$10,000
2. \$10,000 - \$19,999
3. \$20,000 - \$29,999
4. \$30,000 - \$39,999
5. \$40,000 - \$49,999
6. \$50,000 - \$59,999
7. \$60,000 - \$69,999
8. \$70,000 - \$79,999
9. \$80,000 - \$89,999
10. \$90,000 - \$99,999
11. \$100,000 - \$119,999
12. \$120,000 or more

*Your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated. Thank you*