



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 1501:31-3-02 Legal length and weight of certain fish.

Effective: January 1, 2022

Under authority of section 1533.63 of the Revised Code and division (D) of section 1531.08 of the Revised Code, the chief of the division of wildlife hereby orders that throughout the state:

(A) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, buy, transport, take, catch, or possess channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) less than fourteen and one-half inches in length, a yellow perch (*Perca flavescens* and *Perca fluviatilis*) less than eight and one-half inches in length, a yellow perch fillet or part fillet less than five and five-eighths inches, a headless yellow perch less than six and seven-eighths inches in length, a white bass (*Morone chrysops*) or white bass x white perch hybrid (*M. chrysops* x *M. Americana*) less than eleven inches in length, a headless white bass or white bass x white perch hybrid less than eight and three-fourths inches in length, a white bass or white bass x white perch hybrid fillet or part thereof less than six and one-half inches in length, a walleye (*Sander vitreus*) less than fifteen and one-half inches in length, a walleye fillet or part fillet of a length less than nine and one-half inches, a headless walleye less than twelve and one-fourth inches in length, a bullhead (*Ameiurus* sp.) less than nine inches in length, or a whitefish (*Coregonus* sp.) less than seventeen inches in length. Suckers and buffalo fish of any size may be bought and sold. Except as provided in paragraph (E) of this rule, all such fish caught or taken of a weight or length less than prescribed in this rule, and all fish that cannot be taken in Ohio waters by commercial fishing devices, shall be released back to the water immediately with as little injury as possible while the fishing device is lifted, hauled or operated.

(B) It shall be unlawful for any person to release any species of protected or undersized fish prescribed in this rule into a privately owned pond, lake, live car, or other enclosure.

(C) It shall be unlawful for any person to bring ashore, or possess aboard a boat used in commercial fishing, a fish mentioned in this rule with its head or tail removed or in such condition that its length, weight, or species cannot be determined.

(D) This rule does not prohibit the catching, taking, or possession of undersized fish when caught or



taken with hook and line, other than a commercial trotline, but when such fish are taken they cannot be bought or sold; provided that no person shall possess such undersized fish, or a species not permitted to be taken commercially, aboard a boat going to, while on, or when returning from commercial fishing devices.

(E) It shall be unlawful for any person to take, possess, sell, buy, transport, or cause to be transported, a quantity, container, boat load, catch or haul of any species of fish referred to in this rule containing more than ten percent by weight of undersized round, filleted or headless fish.

(F) It shall be unlawful for any person to take, by the aid of commercial fishing gear: blue pike; sauger; sturgeon; brook, brown, rainbow, and lake trout; or coho, chinook, and pink salmon; cisco; or mooneye from lake Erie or its tributaries or to possess any of the aforementioned species on a boat going to or returning from commercial fishing.

(G) Lake trout; sauger; sturgeon, except lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*); coho, chinook, and pink salmon; cisco, except lake herring (*Coregonus artedi*) legally acquired from out of the state may be sold, bought, and possessed except as otherwise provided in this paragraph. It shall be unlawful for any person to buy, sell, or possess a sauger less than eleven inches in length, or sauger fillet of a weight less than three ounces, or a part fillet of a weight less than one and one-half ounces; a sturgeon, except lake sturgeon, less than forty-eight inches in length; a cisco, except lake herring, less than eleven inches in length.

(H) It shall be unlawful for any person to take, possess, buy, sell, deliver, transport, ship, trade or give away, walleye (*Sander vitreus*) or part thereof, including roe, taken from Ohio waters of lake Erie and its tributaries when taken by the aid of commercial fishing gear.

(I) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess a walleye (*Sander vitreus*) or part thereof, including roe, upon or in any boat, used in licensed commercial fisheries while such boat is going to, when on, or when returning from commercial fishing devices.

(J) It shall be unlawful for any person to buy, sell, or trade walleye (*Sander vitreus*) taken from the Ohio waters of lake Erie and its tributaries.



(K) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or transport aboard a boat a quantity of walleye (*Sander vitreus*), in excess of the daily bag limit per licensed angler as specified in paragraph (A) of rule 1501:31-13-08 of the Administrative Code, except a nonresident transportation permittee may transport a quantity of walleyes when in conformity with sections 1533.301 and 1533.63 of the Revised Code.

(L) A violation of the length, weight, and species of fish required of this rule is a violation of section 1533.63 of the Revised Code.

(M) All provisions in section 1533.63 of the Revised Code not mentioned in, or modified by this rule, shall remain in effect.

(N) "Headless" for this rule shall mean the length of a fish from the tip of the tail to the point where the head was removed.

(O) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, buy, offer for sale, possess, or transport for sale fish which have a length or weight limit, in any form other than round, headless, or as fillets, except salmon and whitefish (*Coregonus* sp.) may be sold in steak form or canned and channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) may be sold in nugget and strip form.

(P) Persons processing fish in any county adjacent to lake Erie and in accordance with section 1533.56 of the Revised Code, shall be required to keep accurate daily records for a period of two years. Those records shall show the name and address of each owner or other person from whom the processor receives the fish, the species, weight of fish, and date.

(Q) All definitions set forth in rule 1501:31-1-02 of the Administrative Code shall apply to this rule.