CHAPTER 01 INTRODUCTION

Rule 1.1 This part provides for the regulations for live-bait fishing, transport and sales.


Rule 1.2 The live bait fishery is a service to the recreational fisherman and tourist industry of Mississippi.


Rule 1.3 Regulations are necessary to assure that this service may be performed with minimal impact on shrimp and fish populations.


Rule 1.4 To protect the valuable shrimp fishery of the State of Mississippi, no more than that amount of bait shrimp necessary to service the recreational fishermen of Mississippi should be harvested from those waters of the state that are closed to commercial shrimping activities except for live bait shrimping.


Rule 1.5 For live bait dealers to operate live bait shrimp transport vehicles and to ensure that only bona fide operations will be licensed, said vehicle should be properly regulated.


CHAPTER 02 DEFINITIONS

Rule 2.1 Definitions

A. BAIT SHRIMP – Saltwater shrimp that count one hundred (100) or fewer shrimp per pound and are intended solely for use as bait to be sold or dispensed alive or dead with heads attached to recreational fishermen, or licensed live bait dealers as permitted within the State of Mississippi.

B. BULK SALES – Any sale, barter, trade, exchange or otherwise dispensing of dead shrimp consisting of more than five (5) pounds per person per day; or any sale, barter,
trade, exchange or otherwise dispensing of live shrimp of more than five hundred (500) live bait shrimp per person per day.

C. **CAST NET** – Any cast net or brille net or any circular or conical weighted net designed to be thrown downward by hand and withdrawn by lines attached to its margin.

D. **CHUM** – Fish or invertebrates (excluding all species of marine shrimp and crabs) which are intended solely for use as a fish attractant to be sold or dispensed to recreational fishermen within the State of Mississippi.

E. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** – The Executive Director of Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) or his designee.

F. **FINAL DESTINATION** – A place on the mainland or barrier island, not including piers or jetties, where the fishermen finally lands their catch and does not further transport the fish by boat.

G. **FOOTROPE** – Leadline, footline, groundrope or that lower part of the trawl that the webbing is first attached, that also provides for the weighing down of the trawl by means of lead weights, chain or other means.

H. **HEADROPE** – Corkline, headline, floatline or that upper part of the trawl that the webbing is first attached, that also provides flotation by means of corks, floats or other means.

I. **INTEREST IN COMMERCIAL SHRIMP OPERATION** – Having any direct or indirect pecuniary or financial interest in any commercial shrimp vessel, shrimp processing facility or sale of shrimp for human consumption.

J. **INTEREST IN LIVE BAIT OPERATIONS** – Having any direct or indirect pecuniary or financial interest in any live bait catcher boat, live bait shrimp transport vehicle or live bait camp.

K. **LIVE BAIT CAMP** – Any business of a live bait dealer that deals in the selling of live and dead shrimp to recreational fishermen within the State of Mississippi for bait use and has been duly inspected and permitted as a "live bait camp" by the MDMR.

L. **LIVE BAIT CATCHER BOAT** - Any watercraft having suitable equipment aboard to properly harvest and retain aboard, in a live condition, shrimp which are intended solely for use as live bait to be sold or dispensed to recreational fishermen within the State of Mississippi and said boat having been duly inspected, permitted and licensed by the MCMR as a "live bait catcher boat" to a particular live bait camp.
M. **LIVE BAIT DEALER** - "Live shrimp dealer" or any person, firm or corporation who engages in the sale, exchange, barter or dispensing of shrimp, in a live condition or dead with heads attached, solely as bait only to recreational fishermen within the State of Mississippi, or other licensed live bait dealers as permitted; and has been duly inspected and permitted as a "licensed live bait dealer" by the MDMR. Said dealer must also actively pursue the business of supplying the needs of sports fishermen in the State of Mississippi with bait, tackle and other recreational fishing needs.

N. **LIVE BAIT SHRIMP TRANSPORT VEHICLE** – Any motorized vehicle having suitable equipment to properly transport, in a live condition, shrimp which are intended solely for use as live bait to be sold or dispensed to recreational fishermen and said vehicle having been duly inspected and permitted as a "live bait shrimp transport vehicle" by the MDMR.

O. **SALTWATER MINNOW** – Any species within the Cyprinodontidae, Fundulidae, and Poeciliidae families.

P. **SALTWATER MINNOW DEALER** – “Saltwater minnow fisherman” and any person, firm or corporation who engages in the sale, exchange, barter or dispensing of saltwater minnows, in a live condition, solely as bait only to recreational fishermen, or to licensed live bait dealers as permitted.

Q. **SALTWATER MINNOW TRANSPORT VEHICLE** – Any motorized vehicle having suitable equipment to properly transport, in a live condition, saltwater minnows which are intended solely for use as live bait to be sold or dispensed to a recreational fisherman and said vehicle having been duly permitted as a “saltwater minnow transport vehicle” by the MDMR.


**CHAPTER 03 CLOSURE AREAS**

Rule 3.1 It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to take, catch, or carry away any saltwater shrimp, for any purpose at any time from any bayou, bay, lake, canal, stream, creek, river or other tributary to the Mississippi Sound or Lake Borgne in the three Coastal Counties using a trawl. However, live bait shrimping by live bait catcher boats is permitted year-round in Middle Bay; Point Aux Chenes Bay; Jose Bay; Pascagoula Bay; East, West and Middle Pascagoula Rivers south of the CSX Railroad bridges; Biloxi Bay and Bay of St. Louis south of the CSX Railroad bridge and Heron Bay.


Rule 3.2 Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit the use at any time of cast nets not exceeding twelve (12) feet (maximum radius or length) to catch saltwater shrimp for personal consumption.

CHAPTER 04 GEAR REGULATIONS

Rule 4.1 It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to engage in live bait shrimping operations or to operate a live bait catcher boat without complying with the following:

A. A live bait catcher boat shall be licensed to catch live bait shrimp for only one live bait dealer, unless specifically permitted to do so as provided for in this Part. Once a live bait boat has been inspected and licensed to catch shrimp for a specific licensed live bait dealer that boat and captain must continue to work for that dealer until the following license period. The only exception to this is when a dealer has their license revoked or is otherwise out of business. The captain and live bait catcher boat may transfer to work for another live bait camp with the prior approval of the Executive Director or his designee and if they were not convicted of any violations that resulted in or contributed to the revocation of the live bait camp license. These are the only circumstances in which a live bait captain and catcher boat will be allowed to change camps during the course of the season and begin to work for another camp.

B. It shall be unlawful for any live bait catcher boat to tow a net in excess of twenty-five (25) minutes, including the time it takes to put out or pick up a trawl.

C. It shall be unlawful for live bait catcher boats east of Bayou Caddy to pull or have on board a trawl with measurements in excess of sixteen (16) feet along the headrope or in excess of twenty-two (22) feet along the footrope for the purpose of catching bait shrimp in Mississippi waters. It shall further be unlawful for live bait catcher boats working in Hancock County south and west of Bayou Caddy to pull or have on board a trawl with measurements in excess of twenty-five (25) feet along the headrope or in excess of thirty-two (32) feet along the footrope for the purpose of catching bait shrimp in Mississippi waters.

D. It shall be unlawful for live bait catcher boats to use boards greater than four (4) feet in length.

E. Live bait catcher boats must be clearly marked by displaying in an easily visible position, on both port and starboard sides, in block letters at least six (6) inches high by at least one-half (1/2) inch wide and of a contrasting color to that of the vessel, the words: "LIVE BAIT" and the name of the camp similarly displayed.

F. It shall be unlawful for any live bait catcher boat to use in excess of one (1) trawl. It shall be further unlawful for any live bait catcher boat to use any test or try trawl.
G. Live bait catcher boats shall be equipped with shaded holding tanks with aeration capabilities and a water circulating system aboard. Said holding tanks aboard the live bait catcher boat must be of either circular or raceway type with adequate water flow, provided, however, that rectangular shaped tanks already in use may continue to be used when boards are placed in the corners to prevent live shrimp from congregating. Provisions for aerating said holding tanks shall be provided to ensure optimal survival of the bait shrimp. A pump capable of drawing water from near the bottom where the shrimp are caught shall also be on board. A "wet" or recirculating sorting tank shall be required to separate shrimp from incidental catch. Other types of on-board holding tanks or systems may be permitted if it can be shown that they are at least as adequate as those described above. The Executive Director or his designee shall determine the capability of such holding tanks aboard to hold shrimp or fish in a live condition, as well as the capability of any pumps or aeration systems prior to the issuance of a permit for their operation.

H. It shall be unlawful for any live bait catcher boat to have in excess of thirty (30) pounds of dead shrimp on board at any time.

I. It shall be unlawful to possess mullet north of the CSX railroad while engaged in minnow fishing.

J. The designated captain of the live bait catcher boat may not operate said boat without having in his immediate possession a valid live bait catcher boat license issued by the Executive Director or his designee and their Captains' license issued by the MDMR.

K. Trawling hours for live bait catcher boats shall begin no earlier than thirty (30) minutes before official sunrise and end no later than official sunset each day, unless otherwise specified by the MDMR or state statute.

L. Live bait catcher boat operators may retain other fish caught incidental to catching bait shrimp, and such fish may be sold as chum or bait provided they meet all minimum commercial size requirements as established by Mississippi Statute and Parts as well as all other applicable regulations as established by the MDMR and state statute. If the live bait camp desires to sell crabs caught while engaged in fishing for live bait, the live bait dealer must possess a valid commercial crab license issued by the MDMR and abide by all crabbing regulations as established by the MDMR and state statute. All other incidental catch not intended for sale as bait or chum must be returned to the water as soon as possible in order to ensure survival.

M. It shall be unlawful for a live bait dealer or live bait catcher boat captain or operator to refuse to sell any shrimp legally caught or possessed for bait use.

N. It shall further be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to sell, offer for sale, barter, trade, dispense or otherwise dispose of live bait shrimp from a live bait catcher boat to recreational fishermen in amounts exceeding five hundred (500) live bait shrimp per person per day.
O. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to wash, pull, or have any part of a trawl in waters of the State of Mississippi that are closed to live bait shrimping or closed to that particular type or size of trawl.


CHAPTER 05 LICENSE REGULATIONS

Rule 5.1 It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to operate a live bait camp, engage in live bait shrimping or to conduct live bait shrimp operations without complying with the following:

A. Before any person, firm or corporation receives a live bait dealer's license, written application must first be made to the MDMR. Applications for a live bait dealer’s license must include the following:

1. A sworn statement that dead shrimp will not be sold in containers having a volume in excess of sixteen (16) ounces.
2. A State of Mississippi sales tax number.
3. A statement of the operating hours, at least eight (8) hours per twenty-four (24) hour period.
4. The location of the camp; the camp must be accessible to the general public by public road or navigable waterway located within the three (3) coastal counties.
5. The registration number and name of the live bait catcher boat.
6. The name of the live bait catcher boat Captain.
7. The Mississippi vehicle tag number of the live bait transport vehicle (if applicable).
8. Lists of types of licenses or permits requested (e.g. "live bait dealer", "live bait catcher boat", "live bait shrimp transport vehicle").


Rule 5.2 All live bait dealers shall have privilege tax permits and licenses as required for conducting business in the state, as well as for the county and/or municipality in which the bait camp is located. The Executive Director or his designee will determine if the business serves the public interest and recreational fishing in Mississippi. The Executive Director or his designee will notify respective applicants of an inspection date and the Executive Director or his designee will inspect each camp prior to the issuance of a live bait dealer’s license. License renewals will be issued only upon compliance of the live bait dealer with record keeping procedures for the immediately preceding license year as set forth in this Part or other parts or regulations as adopted by the MDMR, together with all applicable laws and regulations of the State of Mississippi. Any live bait dealer who failed to keep or to submit said records in a timely manner as required, must first obtain MDMR approval prior to license renewal.

Rule 5.3 It shall be unlawful for any live bait dealer to fail to submit their monthly Live Bait Dealer Report to the MDMR, in accordance with Title 22 Part 9 regulations of the MDMR. Said reports shall be postmarked no later than the tenth (10th) day of the month following the monthly reporting period. Live bait shrimp caught and sold shall be reported in numbers of shrimp, not in number of pounds.


Rule 5.4 It shall be unlawful for any saltwater minnow dealer to fail to submit their trip tickets and trip ticket summary form to the MDMR, in accordance with Title 22 Part 9 regulations of the MDMR. Said reports shall be postmarked no later than the tenth (10th) day of the month following the monthly reporting period. Saltwater minnows caught and sold shall be reported in numbers of saltwater minnows, not in number of pounds.


Rule 5.5 Live bait dealer's licenses will be issued only by the Executive Director or his designee, and only at the time of inspection of the live bait camp. Inspections shall be completed within thirty (30) days of receiving a fully completed application.


Rule 5.6 The live bait dealer's license shall identify one individual who shall be responsible for operation of the bait camp and its designated live bait catcher boat and the live bait shrimp transport vehicle in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations and fees. The live bait catcher boat captain's license shall be purchased at the same time the vessel license is purchased. It shall be unlawful to substitute captains or operate a live bait catcher boat without the designated captain aboard prior to receiving written approval from the Executive Director or his designee. Requests to substitute captains must be submitted in writing in advance of such substitutions to the Executive Director for his approval. Each live bait captain is allowed one alternate live bait captain per live bait boat license. If a change of personnel occurs on said license (including the captain or the alternate captain) a new captain's license must be purchased.


Rule 5.7 Any live bait camp may submit a request in writing for not more than two live bait catcher boats to the Executive Director. In the event of mechanical failure or other difficulties, the license of a live bait catcher boat may be temporarily transferred, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, to another live bait catcher boat after approval from the Executive Director or his designee. Requests to transfer the license to a new vessel on a permanent basis must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director or his designee for their inspection and approval. This permanent type of transfer may occur only once per license year.
Rule 5.8 No person, firm or corporation may operate as a live bait dealer without first having a valid place of business in the State of Mississippi which has been inspected by the Executive Director or his designee and only after receiving a license to operate issued by the Executive Director or his designee. Live bait camps shall display in an easily visible position from the nearest public roadway a sign using block letters at least six (6) inches high and at least one-half (1/2) inch wide the words "LIVE BAIT" and the name of the live bait camp. Camps are also required to have a facility adequate for safely serving the public and must meet the requirements necessary to operate a business where the camp is located.

Rule 5.9 Holding tanks for live bait in the live bait camp must be either circular or raceway type with adequate water flow, provided, however, that rectangular shaped tanks already in use may continue to be used when boards are placed in corners to prevent live shrimp from congregating in corners. Provisions for aerating the holding tanks shall be provided to insure optimal survival of the bait shrimp. Other types of holding tanks may be permitted if it can be shown that they are at least as adequate as those described above. The Executive Director or his designee shall determine the capability of such tanks prior to the Executive Director or his designee issuing a permit for their operation.

Rule 5.10 Dead bait shrimp may be sold, only with their heads attached, in containers holding no more than sixteen (16) ounces. No bulk sales are permitted other than to another live bait dealer as provided for in this Part, however, the selling in excess of five hundred (500) live bait shrimp from the live bait camp to an individual may be permitted by the Executive Director after request of the sale by the live bait dealer.

Rule 5.11 Holding tanks must be cleaned of dead shrimp at least every twelve (12) hours.

Rule 5.12 Live bait camps must be open from May 31 through December 1, a minimum of five (5) days per week. There must be someone available to sell or dispense bait to customers on a regular basis during at least eight (8) of the daylight hours. Operating hours for the period from May 31 to December 1 must be designated in writing at the time of license issuance. On any day that a live bait camp's live bait catcher boat operates, the live bait camp must open the following day and remain open as provided in its designated hours of operation, or for a minimum of eight (8) hours. The Executive Director must be notified in writing by each live bait dealer when they are unable to keep their live bait camps open.
camps open for a period of five (5) or more consecutive days, and also be notified prior to the camp's reopening. Live bait dealers who fail to keep their live bait camps open during their designated times, and do not notify the Executive Director in writing of such closure, will not be permitted to renew their live bait licenses for the following year.


Rule 5.13 Should the designated live bait catcher boat of a particular live bait dealer become inoperable, the live bait dealer, with prior permission of the Executive Director or his designee, may purchase shrimp from another live bait dealer for the period required to make necessary repairs or to acquire another live bait catcher boat for this live bait camp. Said temporary operation shall not exceed thirty (30) days. If after thirty days the live bait dealer is unable to make repairs, the Executive Director or his designee may extend the period of temporary operations. Subject to prior approval live bait dealers unable to secure a live bait catcher boat or experiencing difficulty obtaining live bait shrimp may buy from other licensed live bait camps or commercial shrimpers. Licensed live bait dealers buying live shrimp from other licensed live bait dealers must make application for permission to the Executive Director or his designee in writing. Application must identify licensed live bait dealers they are buying shrimp from.


Rule 5.14 It shall be unlawful for any live bait dealer, or person, firm or corporation with an interest in live bait catcher boats or live bait businesses to have any interest in commercial shrimp operations. Licensed live bait dealers and licensed commercial shrimp operations are prohibited from sharing facilities or premises.


Rule 5.15 It shall be unlawful for any live bait dealer to sell, exchange, barter or otherwise dispense of shrimp, fish, crabs or chum to any person, firm or corporation other than to recreational fishermen or other licensed live bait dealers as permitted. Licensed live bait dealers providing prepared shrimp food items to the public must retain invoices documenting the purchase of shrimp products from a properly licensed commercial supplier and sale to the public.


Rule 5.16 MDMR can provide for the transfer of the following live bait licenses/permits, dealer license, boat license and truck permit to a new camp owner during the license year provided that the sale of the camp is finalized, and notarized documentation of the sale is provided to the MDMR. The license transfer must be completed by the Executive Director or his designee and the MDMR licensing office. Each license can only be changed once per license year. This transfer may only take place provided that all reporting requirements have been met as set in this Part and there are no previous live bait violations on record.
Rule 5.17 If a licensed live bait boat or captain wants to change to a commercial shrimper, the live bait boat license and captain's license must be surrendered to the Executive Director or his designee. Surrendered licenses may not be reacquired during the same license year.

CHAPTER 06 TRANSPORT VEHICLE REGULATIONS

Rule 6.1 It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to conduct live bait shrimp operations or to operate a live bait shrimp transport vehicle without complying with the following:

A. Live bait shrimp transport vehicles must be clearly and permanently marked by displaying in an easily visible position, on both left and right sides of said transport vehicle and or live bait holding tank in block letters at least four (4) inches high and at least three-eighths (3/8) inch wide and of a contrasting color to that of the vehicle, the words: "LIVE BAIT" and the name of the camp similarly displayed.

B. Live bait shrimp transport vehicles shall be equipped with shaded holding tanks with aeration capabilities and a water circulating system. Said holding tanks on the live bait shrimp transport vehicle must be of a circular type with adequate water flow, provided, however, that rectangular shaped tanks already in use may continue to be used when boards are placed in the corners to prevent live shrimp from congregating. Provisions for aerating the holding tanks shall be provided to ensure optimal survival of the bait shrimp. Other types of holding tanks or systems may be permitted if it can be shown that they are at least as adequate as those described above. The Executive Director or his designee shall determine the capability of such tanks to hold shrimp or fish in a live condition, as well as the capability of any pumps or aeration systems.

C. It shall be unlawful for any live bait shrimp transport vehicle to have in excess of forty (40) pounds in total of dead shrimp on board at any time, except, however, when dead shrimp are to be purchased from a licensed seafood dealer for use as bait, such shrimp may be transported frozen or on ice, and must be accompanied by a bill of sale from the seafood dealer that includes the seafood dealers signature and the time and date of the sale. It shall further be unlawful to transport live shrimp while in the process of purchasing, attempting to purchase or transport dead shrimp from a seafood dealer. The additional ten (10) pounds of dead shrimp allowed within a transport vehicle tank (30 pounds of dead shrimp in the boat tank) is to allow for any mortality which may occur during the transport of the live shrimp to the final destination.
D. The driver of the live bait shrimp transport vehicle may not transport live shrimp by said vehicle without having in their immediate possession a valid "live bait shrimp transport vehicle permit" issued by the Executive Director or his designee.

Rule 6.2. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to transport saltwater minnows out of state without complying with the following:

A. Saltwater minnow transport vehicles must be clearly and permanently marked by displaying in an easily visible position, on both left and right sides of said transport vehicle in block letters at least four (4) inches high and at least three-eighths (3/8) inch wide and of a contrasting color to that of the vehicle, the words: "SALTWATER MINNOWS".

B. The driver of the saltwater minnow transport vehicle may not transport saltwater minnows by said vehicle without having in their immediate possession a valid "saltwater minnow transport vehicle permit" issued by the Executive Director or his designee.


Rule 6.3 It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to sell, offer for sale, barter, trade, dispense or otherwise dispose of any shrimp, fish, crabs or chum directly from a live bait shrimp transport vehicle other than to the live bait camp or camps for which it is permitted.


CHAPTER 07 AQUACULTURE

Rule 7.1 Live bait shrimp may be raised in aquaculture facilities, however only native marine species of shrimp and native saltwater minnows may be used as bait. Non-native species of shrimp and saltwater minnows are strictly prohibited from being used as live bait in the marine waters of the State of Mississippi.


CHAPTER 08 PENALTIES

Rule 8.1 Violations under this part will be charged in accordance with the provisions of Miss. Code Ann. §49-15-1 et seq. Each day of a continuing violation constitutes a separate violation. Violations of more than one chapter or subchapter of this part or part thereof shall be considered separate offenses and punished as such.


CHAPTER 09 CHAPTERS AND SUBCHAPTERS DECLARED SEPARABLE
Rule 9.1 Each chapter and subchapter of this Part is hereby declared separable, and if any chapter or subchapter or part thereof shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the balance of said Title 22 Part 06 shall remain in full force and effect.

MISS. CODE ANN. §§49-15-1 et. seq.