



Dear fishing tournament organizer,

We appreciate your patience in waiting for a review of your fishing tournament permit application. We have been waiting for the COVID-19 landscape to improve. Fortunately, recent improvements led to Governor Walz's newest executive order, which allows for ice fishing tournaments to proceed, with modifications and conditions to limit the spread of COVID-19. We will be moving forward with issuing your tournament permit but the permit and associated conditions are subject to change if the course of the COVID-19 pandemic changes and additional public health measures or restrictions become necessary.

Attached you will find a list of tournament permit conditions. Most of these conditions are required to comply with your permit; some are optional suggestions. Please read carefully and follow the embedded links to applicable Stay Safe Guidance documents. Our Regional Fisheries Offices will begin issuing permits immediately. If you anticipate the need to change your format to comply with these permit conditions or have a unique aspect of your event that you would like to discuss, please contact the Regional Fisheries office as soon as possible.

Region 1 (Northwest): Wendy Selmo (wendy.selmo@state.mn.us; 218-308-2623)

Region 2 (Northeast): Ruth Zaleski (ruth.zaleski@state.mn.us; 218-203-4342)

Region 3 (Central) (includes Mille Lacs): Rosa Garner (rosa.garner@state.mn.us; 651-259-5831)

Region 4 (South): Ellen Preisinger (ellen.preisinger@state.mn.us; 507-233-1215)

Please also be aware that if you plan to include elements beyond fishing related activity, such as food offerings or raffles, you need to carefully review all of the [Stay Safe MN guidance](#) – particularly the [Stay Safe Guidance for Outdoor Non-Seated Venues](#) – to see if/how those elements can be included in accordance with the applicable guidance. Please make use of the COVID questions “chat bot” in the lower right corner of the [Stay Safe MN](#) website if you have questions about Stay Safe guidance documents other than the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#).

I want to extend my appreciation once again for your patience and understanding over the last few months. We sincerely hope this provides an opportunity to get people out fishing and communities engaged in a safe manner. Good luck with your event!

Sincerely,
Jonathan Hansen
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January 19, 2021

Permitting Guidelines for 2021 Ice Fishing Tournaments

Required Permit Conditions

- Organizers must adhere to the [Outdoor Recreation and Facilities Guidelines](#) and other applicable [Stay Safe MN guidelines](#).
- The provisions of all active Emergency Executive Orders must be followed.
- The tournament organizer must develop a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. The Plan must be communicated to all participants and available to the DNR upon request.
- Participants, officials and any spectators must maintain social distancing throughout the event unless they are from the same household.
- Event staff must wear face coverings per MDH guidance and spectators and participants are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
- Tournaments, or portions of tournaments, that occur where admission and occupancy can be controlled (e.g. fenced fishing area) are subject to a capacity limit of 250 and must follow requirements for Outdoor Non-seated Venues as described in the [Stay Safe Guidance for Entertainment](#).
- Tournaments without a controlled admission point (i.e. participants are allowed to spread out on the lake) that offer in-person registration or weigh-ins are limited to a maximum of 250 participants and steps must be taken to ensure that no more than 15 people or members of more than three households are at the weigh-in or registration area at one time.
- Virtual events where participants upload their catch to a common site or via e-mail are not subject to the outdoor recreation event maximum capacity limitations provided that the event does not involve any in-person gatherings of more than 15 people or members of more than three households before, during, or after the event.
- Weigh-ins must be conducted on-ice. Only event staff are allowed in the weigh-in tent and accommodations for social distancing incorporated for people waiting in line to weigh their fish.
- Any tents used must not be enclosed (since at that point the tent becomes an “indoor space” and is subject to different capacity requirements) and must not exceed the capacity established using the following formula, to allow sufficient space for social distancing:
 - Capacity (rounded down) = tent square footage ÷ 113
 - Example: 30' x 60' tent = 1800 feet² ÷ 113 = 15 person capacity
- All awards ceremonies must be conducted on the ice and in the open (not in enclosed tents) with social distancing provisions, or via virtual notification with off-site prize dissemination.
- All associated events (e.g. off-site prize dissemination) are subject to the same requirements as the tournament and all other [Stay Safe Guidance](#).
- For events with pre-drilled holes, holes must be spaced a minimum of 10 feet apart. For events without pre-drilled holes, organizers must ensure that participants from different households maintain at least 6 feet of separation between each other.

- Events providing transportation to tournament waters must follow guidance found in [Requirements for Passenger Transportation](#).
- All associated concessions must follow the requirements of the [Stay Safe Guidance for Outdoor Non-Seated Venues](#).
- Abundant signage reminding everyone to social distance must be displayed and 6 foot distanced markings must be spray painted on ice anywhere lines are anticipated.

Recommended Actions

- Conduct a virtual event where participants do not come together for any reason.
- Have all participants pre-register for the event.
- Limit the use of shelters and tents to minimize the potential for group gatherings.
- Only offer prizes for some of the largest fish and communicate results in real time with virtual or broadcast announcements – do not offer prizes that encourage anglers to bring a lot of fish to the weigh-in.
- Forgo any type of in-person awards ceremony – post all results on a website or provide a phone number to call.
- Forgo offering food or beverage stands.
- Forgo heaters or other warming options to discourage gathering, and inform attendees ahead of time that they are responsible for their own warmth.
- Do not establish a set fishing area with pre-drilled holes. Allow anglers to fish anywhere on the lake.
- Employ multiple controlled entrance points to fenced-off areas to avoid gathering at the start of the event.