

## FAQs ABOUT FISHING AND BOATING IN PA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

During a time when most of our daily activities continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, our favorite fishing and boating activities are no exception. **Anglers and boaters must abide by social distancing guidelines** provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Governor Tom Wolf's [Stay-at-Home Order](#) regarding COVID-19.

Effective 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), in consultation with the Office of the Governor, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), opened the statewide 2020 trout season. This measure allows licensed anglers and youth to begin fishing for and harvesting trout. All regulations, sizes, and creel limits apply.

Below is a list of answers to our most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Still have questions? Call (717) 705-7800 or email [RA-BE@pa.gov](mailto:RA-BE@pa.gov).

### **Q: May I still fish and boat? Even under the stay-at-home order?**

**A:** Yes. Effective 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, the PFBC opened the statewide 2020 trout season. Fishing and boating are currently acceptable forms of outdoor activities per the [stay-at-home guidelines](#) from the Governor and PA Department of Health **when social distancing is practiced.**

- Fish close to home
- Only go fishing with family members living in the same household
- Allow at least 6 feet between yourself and others
- If another angler is in an area you intended to fish, move on to another location

### **Q: What should I do to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus while fishing or boating?**

**A:** There are many things you can do:

- **Stay home if you do not feel well**
- Cover your face with a mask or cloth covering
- Practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet (the length of an outstretched standard fishing rod) between you and the nearest angler
- Avoid crowds. If you arrive at a fishing spot that is already occupied, find another location.
- Keep children from wandering into the personal space of others
- Do not share fishing gear
- Do not carpool



- [Buy your fishing license online](#)
- Continue to follow [CDC guidelines](#), which include washing your hands or using hand sanitizer frequently, and not touching your face
- If you are fishing at a state or local park, the restrooms may be closed. Use the bathroom before you visit or dispose of waste properly. Carry out your trash.

**Q: Has trout season been cancelled?**

**A:** Not at this time. Effective 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, the PFBC, in consultation with the Office of the Governor, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, opened the statewide 2020 trout season.

**Q: What does the trout opener mean for Mentored Youth Day?**

**A:** A Mentored Youth Trout Day will not take place this season. The PFBC will honor all Voluntary Youth Fishing Licenses purchased in 2020 for all mentored youth fishing opportunities during the 2021 season.

**Q: Are you still stocking trout?**

**A:** Yes. PFBC staff are still working hard to stock 3.2 million trout across the state in 2020, but volunteers are not permitted to assist. To further discourage group gatherings, a stocking schedule and list of waters that have been stocked will not be provided to the public this season.

**Q: Do I still need a fishing license?**

**A:** Yes. To reduce unnecessary travel and social contact, anglers may produce a digital copy of their license on their mobile device as proof of purchase. A signed, printed copy is not required to prove you own a license. If approached by a Waterways Conservation Officer in the field, an angler or boater can provide a digital image or receipt of their fishing license, and a digital receipt from their launch permit or boat registration. Anglers may still display their fishing license. Visit the [FishBoatPA](#) app or [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) to get started.

**Q: Where may I fish and boat?**

**A:** Select a location close to home. Visit the [FishBoatPA](#) app or [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) to locate an access area and refer to the 2020 Fishing [Summary Book](#) for seasons and creel limits.

**Q: How do I report suspected fishing violations, including poaching before trout season starts?**

**A:** Call the tip line at 1-855-FISH-KIL (1-855-347-4545).

**Still have questions?** Again, we welcome your call at 717-705-7800 or email at [RA-BE@pa.gov](mailto:RA-BE@pa.gov).

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