

## Off Bottom Aquaculture Permitting and Leasing Procedures for 2020 Class

*The following procedures shall be followed when applying for an aquaculture permit within Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) Commercial Aquaculture Parks.*

**For eligibility to lease up-to two (2) acres within the Deer Island Commercial Aquaculture Park applicant shall:**

- Applicant shall attend and complete the MDMR Off-Bottom Aquaculture Training Program classroom requirements.
- Applicant shall attend and complete the field training section of the MDMR Off-Bottom Aquaculture Training Program.
- Maintaining gear and seed oysters throughout the DI Training Park field portion and program. MDMR reserves the right to periodically check the gear and seed oysters during the field training session and will notify participants of any noted deficiencies. After notification, participants must comply with the requested action within the time frames provided. Failure to comply with the MDMR's requested action within the given time frames shall result in removal from the program.
- Applicant must submit Lease Packet Paperwork (listed below) *in its entirety* to the Office of Marine Fisheries (OMF), Off-Bottom Aquaculture division. OMF will review and request modifications, if necessary, and approve. Once approved, MDMR will contact participant to determine desired lease blocks. MDMR will then submit sublease paperwork and packet to the MS SOS for approval which will take 30-45 days.
  - Operational Plan: Applicant shall submit a written operational plan that covers lease layout, construction plans, a predator control plan and source of seedstock. (General Format Provided)
  - Business Plan: in-depth outline of projected lease and business expenses
  - Business Certificate (copy): Applicant shall form a business with the State of MS through the MS Secretary of State Office and submit a copy of the certificate.
  - MDAC Aquaculture Cultivation Permit: Applicant must apply for an aquaculture cultivation permit and a marketing permit from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC). \* MDAC sends out the aquaculture application with the documents to state agencies for review. MDAC has *30 days* to approve or disapprove any application. Agencies sends back their comments to MDAC, who takes comments in consideration.
  - Storm Management Plan: Applicant must submit a plan for securing or moving the aquaculture facility/equipment in the event of a significant storm or hurricane. (General Format Provided)

- Complete Public Trust Tidelands Sub-Lease agreement: MDMR will contact participant to schedule a time to pick up official lease paperwork (sub-lease agreement). Official lease paperwork shall then be:
  - Signed and notarized by the leaseholder and turned by into MDMR

**AND**

- Proof of Insurance: General liability for total acreage of lease (Bankers Insurance)
- Check made out to MS Secretary of State for \$82 (1 acre) or \$164 (2 acres)
- Once permits/plans have been approved and above items have been submitted, the applicant shall purchase all applicable licenses and complete all applicable training.
  - Oyster Aquaculture License (required) - \$60.00
    - Renews every April, recommend not purchasing 2021 until April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 to avoid having to purchase twice.
    - Boat must be registered in participants' name.
  - Harvesters Permit w/meeting (required)
    - Schedule an appointment with Jason
    - Review harvesting process.
    - Receive harvest log.
    - Can purchase first batch of oyster tags for \$0.30/each.
      - Recommended to do 100 count sacks.
      - Checks are made out to MDMR
  - Harvesters' Education Training (required) – Free
    - This will be completed at the 3/25/21 meeting and a certificated will be awarded.

- Equipment Return Deadline: June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**
  - Return all program equipment cleaned (pressure-washed), in usable condition and organized. Contact Ellen to set up drop off at the DMR office in Biloxi or Staging Site in Gulfport.

- Regular Monthly Reporting**
  - Monthly reports are to be submitted to Ellen Coffin ([ellen.coffin@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:ellen.coffin@dmr.ms.gov)) by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.
  - Reports should include total number of harvested oysters, incidental deaths of vertebrates, seed purchases with receipts, comments regarding inventory events, relocation etc.
  - This information is important to have on file for insurance claims or eligibility for spillway payouts etc.

- Other Items**
  - Dealer/Processor License (if applicable/necessary)
    - Basic Seafood HACCP Training and Sanitation Training

- MS Seafood Dealer's/Processor's License (MDMR) - \$100.00
- Oyster Aquaculture License (MDMR) - \$60.00
- Dealers' Education Training- FREE
- Oyster Tags can be purchased by:
  - Sending an email to [oyster@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:oyster@dmr.ms.gov) including:
    - Harvester name
    - Company name
    - Harvester License No.
    - Phone Number
    - Total number of tags requested
  - Lead Time: 2 Business Days
  - \$0.30/tag, check or cash (CORRECT CHANGE ONLY), no credit or debit accepted
    - Checks made out to MDMR