



Wes Moore, Governor  
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor  
Josh Kurtz, Secretary  
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

November 1, 2025

Dear Shellfish Leaseholder,

Maryland laws and regulations require leaseholders to pay annual rent and provide the Department with a report documenting the use of a lease each year. Additionally, leaseholders and other individuals who plan to engage in aquaculture activities on a leased area should, in most cases, possess a Shellfish Aquaculture Harvester Permit and/or Registration Card. Enclosed in this mailing are your 2026 annual rent invoice, which must be completed and returned to the Department by **January 1, 2026**, and the accompanying documents that must be completed and returned by **January 31, 2026**, to meet program requirements. **Failure to submit timely payment and/or completed documents may result in delayed permits or notice of default and lease termination.**

Shellfish Aquaculture Harvester Permits and Registration Cards (SAHP/RCs) will be renewed for 2026 if all permit requirements, including monthly harvest reporting, have been satisfied and individuals remain eligible for permitting. New Registrants, who have not done so previously, must obtain a DNRid and Aquaculture Declaration in the [MD Outdoors](#) system, review the harvester education-training document, and sign the Harvester Verification and Signature Form prior to receiving a harvester card. Those who have not renewed their harvester education training within the past five years must also do so.

**PLEASE NOTE: In light of a recent legislative change to the annual report deadline, the Department has administratively extended the expiration of the current (2025) SAHP/RCs to Jan. 31, 2026, and you may continue operating on your lease(s) with those previously issued harvester cards through that date. However, if you plan to conduct aquaculture activities on your lease beginning Feb. 1, 2026, your annual report and permitting paperwork must be complete and received by the Department no later than Dec. 10, 2025, to ensure sufficient time for processing, printing, and delivery of your 2026 Permit and Registration Cards before Feb. 1. Issuance of SAHP/RCs is not guaranteed by Feb. 1 for leases that have forms received or incomplete after Dec. 10th. SAHP Renewal forms will be processed upon receipt and 2026 SAHP/RCs will be mailed on a rolling basis every two weeks beginning on Jan. 7, 2026. ALL rent payments must be received by the Department no later than Jan. 1, 2026 and the accompanying forms must be completed and received by Jan. 31, 2026 to remain in good standing and avoid receiving a notice of default and lease termination.**

Be sure to review the instructions and information on all enclosures carefully, and only use the forms provided for the 2025-26 reporting and permitting cycle. The checklist below lists all of the required items that should be enclosed with your return mailing. Incomplete or unsigned forms will not be accepted and may lead to a delay in permitting. Businesses should confirm that they remain active and in good standing with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation ([dat.maryland.gov](http://dat.maryland.gov)).

## **SUMMARY OF 2025-26 DEADLINES:**

### **Due Dec. 10, 2025 (If requesting Early Permitting ONLY)**

- ALL items listed below and 2025 Monthly Harvest Reports through the month of November

### **Due Jan. 1, 2026 (For Regular Permitting Timeline)**

- 2026 Lease Rent Invoice Stub with Payment

### **Due Jan. 31, 2026 (For Regular Permitting Timeline)**

- 2025 Annual Usage Report Form, receipt(s), and proof of water column insurance, if applicable
- 2026 Shellfish Aquaculture Harvester Permit Registrant Renewal Form
- 2026 Shellfish Aquaculture Harvester Verification and Signature Form, if applicable
- 2026 Declaration of Summer Harvest Landing Location
- 2025 Aquaculture Industry Status Report Survey (optional)
- 2025 Monthly Harvest Reports (ALL months, if listed as missing on your SAHP Renewal Form)

If you hold more than one lease, you must complete and return a full set of forms for each lease. Rent may be submitted as one combined payment for all of your leases; however, please write all lease numbers on the memo field of your check. An online electronic payment option is also available on the [Maryland Onestop Portal](#). Finally, **please make a copy of all documents for your records prior to submitting them to the Department.**

Thank you for your continued cooperation and investment into Maryland's shellfish aquaculture industry. If you have any questions about the enclosures, please contact Aquaculture and Industry Enhancement Division staff at (410) 260-2401 or [aquaculture.dnr@maryland.gov](mailto:aquaculture.dnr@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Brian Callam, Ph.D.  
Director, Aquaculture Division, Fishing and Boating Services

Enclosures