

Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR)
Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR)
State of Hawaii

Lay Net Permit
Frequently Asked Questions

Who needs a lay net permit?

All gill nets used for lay net fishing in State waters (0-3 nautical miles from shore) need to be tagged with the owner's lay net permit number. If you own a net and plan to use it for lay net fishing, you will need this permit. Individuals assisting the permitted net owner in lay net fishing do not need the permit as long as the owner is present at all times.

When does my lay net permit expire?

The Lay Net Permit is valid between July 1 and June 30 of every year regardless of the issue date. You will need to renew your lay net permit annually.

Where can I apply for a lay net permit?

The lay net permit is only available online at: <http://fishing.hawaii.gov>

What ages are required to have a lay net permit?

Lay net permits are required for all individuals who own and use lay nets in State waters regardless of age.

Do I have to be present when my net is used or can someone else fish for me with my permit?

The permit holder must be always present while their net is being used for lay net fishing. Nets may not be left unattended for any amount of time by the permitted owner when lay net fishing.

How much does the lay net permit cost?

- Residents are free
- Members of the U.S. armed forces on active duty, as well as their spouses and minor children are free
- Non-resident fee is \$25*

*Note: the fee is fixed at \$25 whether you apply for it a year out on July 1st or month before it expires on June 30th.

Are nets required to be tagged?

Yes, each net used for lay net fishing must have at least 4 tags (one in each corner) that display the last five digits of the user's permit number. Additionally, the permit number must be displayed on surface buoys attached to each end of the net. DLNR-DAR is not providing tags for the permit numbers, so you will need to make your own tags.

Is a screenshot or downloaded copy of my lay net permit on my mobile phone okay to carry?

A screenshot, pdf copy, or printed out hard copy are all acceptable forms to carry if asked to show your license. Keep in mind that your net must also be marked properly with the last 5 digits of your DLNR-DAR issued lay net permit number.

What are the legal dimensions for gill nets used in lay net fishing?

Minimum 2 ¾ inch stretched-mesh eye size, maximum 125 feet long and 7 feet high.

Can I set more than one gill net at a time when I lay net fish?

No, it is unlawful to lay net fish with more than one net at a time. A lay net may only be set for a maximum of 4 hours and the same person may not set another net within 24 hours of a set. In other words, once you retrieve your net, you may not set it again for 24 hours.

What is the difference between a gill net and lay net?

A gill net is any panel net that is intended to capture fish by gilling (entanglement). A gill net can be used in different ways or methods to catch fish. Lay netting is one of those methods. Lay netting is setting a gill net in a fixed position in the water where it is left for a period of time to allow fish to get caught either by chance or by people scaring them into it.

Do the lay net permit and rules apply to methods like pa'i pa'i, surround netting, or hukilau?

The rules only apply to gill nets used for lay net fishing. Lay netting is setting a gill net in a stationary (fixed position) in the water where it is left for a period of time to allow fish to get caught either by chance or by people scaring them into it. Pa'i pa'i is considered a method of lay net fishing because fish are chased into a stationary gill net. On the other hand, surround netting and hukilau are not considered lay net method because the nets are actively moved in the water by the user(s).

Do I need to get this permit for my lobster nets?

Lobster nets with large mesh (generally 5 inches and up) made of cotton or fiber twine are considered entangling, rather than gilling nets. The lay net rules apply to gill nets only. However, if a fisher uses a lobster net to gill fish, the net is now considered a gill net and will be subject to lay net rules and permitting requirements.

Where can I find all the fishing rules and regulations?

The Division of Aquatic Resources website: <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dar/>

Is there a “How-To Guide” for help with navigating the licensing website?

Yes, [this PDF guide](#) serves as a tool for navigation and usage of the online license/permit website.

Who can I contact if I still have questions?

Support Hours: Weekdays from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM HST (excluding State holidays)

Email: FishingLicense@hawaii.gov

Phone: (808) 587-0109