

Recreational Fishing

Why recreational fishing rules matter
Fishing is one of New Zealand's most popular outdoor activities. Recreational fishers (anyone fishing non-commercially) take large numbers of finfish and shellfish every year. To keep the fisheries sustainable the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) sets recreational fishing rules. By sticking to the rules and fishing responsibly, fishers help make sure that there will be fish today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

- What do the rules cover?**
Anyone fishing recreationally has to follow rules about;
- daily bag limits (how many fish you can keep);
 - legal size limits (the sizes of fish you can keep);
 - species restrictions (the types of fish you can keep);
 - closed and restricted areas (where you can fish).

- Things to remember:**
- It is illegal to sell or trade recreational catch.
 - Breaking the rules can lead to prosecution, fines and property confiscations.
 - Only those physically involved in taking finfish, rock lobster, or shellfish can claim a catch within the daily limit.
 - Unwanted or unlawful catch (catch above your daily limit, undersized fish, fish taken with undersized mesh, unintentional catch or bycatch) should be immediately returned to the water, dead or alive.

How can I check the rules?
This brochure is a summary of the fishing rules for the Challenger Fishery Management Area (FMA). It is a guide only and may not include local restrictions or rules that have changed since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish. MPI provides lots of (free) ways to check the rules. This includes a free text service, a free Smartphone app, or visiting our website or offices. For more information see the back page of this brochure.

Fishing Sustainably

Good fish handling

- Correctly handling and releasing unwanted or unlawful catch can increase their chances of surviving to be caught legally another day. When handling and releasing fish, remember:
- use wet hands (or wet gloves);
 - be gentle – slide fish into the water from as close to the surface as possible;
 - return fish as near as possible to where you found them (especially shellfish and rock lobster);
 - the best way to protect undersized fish is not to catch them in the first place. If you are catching lots of undersized fish, change locations, or use a larger hook or mesh size.

For more information, MPI has a 'Fish Handling Guide' available online or through our offices.

Seabird Safety
Seabirds are experts at seeing bait and fish scraps in the water and can get hooked or become tangled in fishing line. Find out how to avoid attracting seabirds and how to handle them safely at [www.southernseabirds.org](#)

New Zealand's fishing rules

If you're fishing or collecting seafood in New Zealand you need to know New Zealand's fishing rules. If you do not read English, have someone translate for you.

Lao ki he toutai 'a Nu'usila
Kapau ko ha tokotaha toutai ika koe, pe 'oku ke fangota ki ha me'atahi 'i Nu'usila, kuopau ke ke 'ilo ki he ngaahi lao 'o e toutai 'a Nu'usila. Kapau 'oku 'ikai ke ke lava 'o lautohi fakapilitania, pea kole ki ha taha ke ne liliu ki ho'o lea.
Ko e lao 'oku anga pehe ni: ko e fa'ahinga mo e lalahi 'o e ika 'oku lava ke ke ma'u; feitu'u 'oku ngofua ke ke toutai ai; pea mo e ika 'e fiha 'oku lava ke ke 'ave.
'Oku ta'efakalao ke fakatau atu pea ke fai ha fefakatau'aki e ika 'o ke ma'u ai ha fa'ahinga pa'anga, pe tupu fakapa'anga.
Ko hono maumau'i 'o e lao, 'e ala faka'ilo ai koe, tautea pa'anga, pea to'o mo e koloa 'oku ke ma'u. Ko e tauhi 'o e lao mo e toutai fakapotopoto, 'e tokoni ia ki hono fakapapau'i 'e ma'u ha ika he 'aho ni, pongipongi, pea mo e to'utangata 'o e kaha'u.

Quy định cá của New Zealand
Nếu bạn đang đánh bắt cá hoặc thu mua hải sản ở New Zealand, bạn cần phải biết quy tắc đánh cá của New Zealand. Nếu bạn không đọc được tiếng Anh, có một người nào đó phiên dịch cho bạn.
Các quy tắc bao gồm: các loại và kích cỡ của cá bạn có thể giữ; nơi bạn có thể câu cá; và bao nhiêu cá bạn có thể giữ.
Sẽ là bất hợp pháp nếu bán hoặc kinh doanh thứ bạn bắt được vì bất kỳ lợi ích hay lợi nhuận tiền bạc.
Phá vỡ các quy tắc này có thể dẫn đến truy tố, phạt tiền và tịch thu tài sản. Gắn chặt với các quy tắc và đánh bắt cá có trách nhiệm giúp đảm bảo rằng sẽ có cá ngày hôm nay, ngày mai và cho thế hệ mai sau.

បទបញ្ញត្តិស្តីពីការនេសាទរបស់ប្រទេសឈូឡង
ប្រសិនបើលោកអ្នកធ្វើការនេសាទ ឬប្រមូលផលអាហារសមុទ្រនៅក្នុងប្រទេសឈូឡង លោកអ្នកគួរតែអាននិងយល់ពីបទបញ្ញត្តិស្តីពីការនេសាទរបស់ប្រទេសនេះជាមុនសិន។ ប្រសិនបើលោកអ្នកមិនចេះអានជាភាសាអង់គ្លេសនោះ យើងនឹងជួយការបកប្រែនូវលោកអ្នក។
បទបញ្ញត្តិទាំងនេះពាក់ព័ន្ធជាមួយ ប្រភេទ និងទំហំក្លីងដែលលោកអ្នកអាចនេសាទទឹកនីមួយៗដែលអាចធ្វើការនេសាទ និងថ្ងៃនៃការនេសាទដែលលោកអ្នកអាចក្រសែកបាន។ វាជាបទល្មើសក្នុងការនេសាទដែលលោកអ្នកធ្វើការលក់ ឬផ្គត់ផ្គង់ផលក្លីងដែលចាប់បាន។ ការនេសាទនៅនឹងបទបញ្ញត្តិទាំងនេះ លោកអ្នកអាចត្រូវទទួលបានការផាកពិន័យឬទទួលបាននូវការប្រឆាំងប្រឈមប្រឆាំងការគំរាមព្រហ្មទណ្ឌក្នុងការនេសាទ និងការនេសាទប្រកបដោយការទទួលខុសត្រូវ និងធានាផ្លូវច្រើនមានក្លីងម្យ៉ាងគ្រប់បទប្បញ្ញត្តិ អនាគត និងសម្រាប់កូនចៅយើងច្រើនជំនាន់ក្រោយមុខទៀត។

Finfish Species	Min length (cm)	Max daily limit (per person)	Min mesh size for nets (mm)
Blue Cod – Marlborough Sounds Area	30 (max size 35cm) (landed whole or gutted only)	2 (area closed 1 Sept–19 Dec inclusive)	100 (set netting prohibitions apply)
Blue Cod – Challenger East Area	30 (landed whole or gutted only)	3	100
Blue Cod – Challenger West (South of Farewell Spit)	33	20	Set netting prohibited
Blue moki	40	20	114
Bluenose	–	5	160
Butterfish/Greenbone	35	20	100
Elephant fish	–	20	150
Flatfish (ex Sand flounder)	25	20	100
Grey mullet	–	20	100
John Dory	–	20	100
Kahawai	–	20	100
Red cod	25	20	100
Red gurnard	25	20	100
Red moki	40	20	114
Rig	–	20	150
School shark	–	20	150
Sand flounder	23	20	100
Tarakihi	25	20	100
Trevally	25	20	100

[Table continues overleaf]

Finfish

Daily bag limits and size restrictions
In the Challenger FMA there is a combined maximum daily bag limit of 20 of any combination of species listed in Table 1 (individual species limit must not be exceeded).

Remember there may be local restrictions or area closures, check the 'Closed and Restricted Areas' section.

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Sand flounder	23	20	100
Tarakihi	25	20	100
Trevally	25	20	100

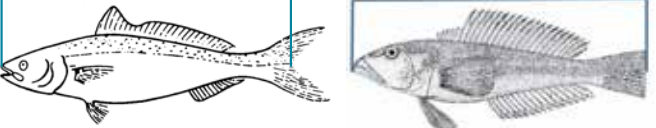
In addition to the combined maximum daily bag limit, you can take individual species as listed in Table 2.

Finfish Species	Min length (cm)	Max daily limit (per person)	Min mesh size for nets (mm)
Eels	–	6	12
Garfish (piper), Pilchard, HERRINGS (Yellow eyed mullet)	–	No limit	25

Finfish Species	Min length (cm)	Max daily limit (per person)	Min mesh size for nets (mm)
Groper/Hapuku/Bass	–	Daily bag limit of 5 with max 3 kingfish	160
Kingfish	75		100
Sea Perch	–	No limit	100
Snapper Snapper – Marlborough Sounds sub-limit*	25 25	10 3	100 (set net bans apply)
Trumpeter	35	No limit	100
All others not otherwise stated	–	No limit	100

*Within the bag limit of 10 snapper is a sub-limit of 3 which can be taken from the Marlborough Sounds Area.

Measuring Finfish
Measure from the tip of the nose to the middle ray or 'V' in the tail.



Finfish Restrictions

Line fishing restrictions

- Line fishing includes the use of long lines and dahn (drop) lines but does not include rod and reel or hand lines. In areas where line fishing is permitted, the following restrictions apply:
- no person may use, or be in possession of, more than one line (other than handlines, or rod and reel lines);
 - no person may use or possess a line with more than 25 hooks;
 - where more than one person is using a line from a vessel (other than rod and reel lines), no more than two lines (other than rod and reel lines), may be used, set from or possessed on board that vessel;
 - surface floats attached to any line must be marked clearly, legibly and permanently with the fisher's initials and surname at each end of the net. A phone number is also useful.

Rod and reel hand line restrictions
When fishing in the Marlborough Sounds, you must not use more than 2 hooks per rod and reel (or hand line) for any finfish species.

- Netting restrictions**
Net fishing includes set, fyke, drag and all other nets. In areas where netting is permitted the following general restrictions apply:
- no person may set or possess more than one drag net, set net, fyke net, or any other type of net at any time (excludes landing net);
 - nets must be hauled by hand only;
 - any net or nets used either individually or jointly must not extend across more than one-quarter of the width of any river, stream, channel, bay or sound at any time of the tide;
 - no person may set or use a baited net (except fyke nets);
 - nets must not be staked (except fyke nets).

- Drag nets**
In areas where drag nets are permitted the following restrictions apply:
- must not exceed 40 metres in length;
 - total warp length must not exceed 200 metres.

- Set nets**
In areas where set nets are permitted the following restrictions apply:
- must not exceed 60 metres in length;
 - must not be set within 60 metres of another net;
 - must have a surface float that is clearly, legibly and permanently marked with the fisher's initials and surname at each end of the net. A phone number is also useful. (Only one float is required for fyke nets);
 - only one set net is allowed to be used from, or be on board any vessel. (An additional net is allowed for bait fishing if it is less than 10 metres long and has a mesh size of 50mm or less);
 - may not be used in a way that causes fish to be stranded by the falling tide.

Shellfish

Daily bag limits and size restrictions
Shellfish are taken when they cannot freely return to the water e.g. placed into a catch bag or similar. At no time while gathering may you be in possession of more than your daily limit.

Remember there may be local restrictions or area closures, check the 'Closed and Restricted Areas' section. The Challenger FMA limits for taking and possessing shellfish are listed in Table 1:

Shellfish Species	Daily limit per fisher	Minimum size (mm)
Cockles	150	none
Kina (sea eggs)	50	none
Mussels	50	none
Oysters – Dredge+ – Rock & Pacific	50 250	58 none
Paua – Ordinary – Yellow foot	10 10	125 80
Pipi	150	none
Scallops*	50	90
Toheroa	Prohibited	Prohibited
Tuatua	150	none
All others (combined) •	50	none

* Limited provision allows a diver on a vessel to gather extra bag limits of oysters and scallops for up to 2 other people acting in a dive safety capacity from that vessel.

- This is a combined, mixed-species bag limit. It applies to all shellfish species not specifically named above, and includes all crabs, limpets, starfish, periwinkles, whelks, barnacles and freshwater crayfish (koura).

Shellfish must be landed in a measureable state
All shellfish to which a minimum size restriction applies (including paua, scallops and dredge oysters) must be landed in the shell and cannot be shucked or shelled seaward of the mean high-water mark. This includes transporting on the water.

Dredge oysters and scallops may be opened for immediate consumption on board the vessel. Any scallops and dredge oysters eaten form part of your daily limit. Any scallops and dredge oysters not eaten must be landed in the shell.

- Paua accumulation limits**
When daily limits are accumulated the maximum number or amount of paua that one person can have in their possession at any one time is:
- 20 paua or;
 - shucked weight (shell removed) of 2.5kgs of paua;
 - this possession limit applies everywhere, including in the home.

- Measuring shellfish**
Paua: measure the greatest length of the shell in a straight line. Do not measure over the curve of the shell.
Scallops: measure the greatest diameter of the shell.
Dredge Oysters: must not pass through a rigid circular metal ring with an inside diameter of 58mm.

Shellfish Restrictions

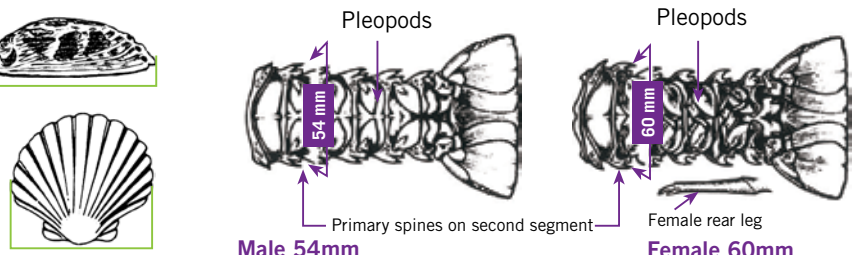
Underwater breathing apparatus (UBA)

- UBA does not include snorkels;
- no person may take paua using UBA;
- no person may be in possession of paua while in possession of UBA. This includes possession in or on any vessel or vehicle.

- Open seasons**
- Oysters: the oyster fishery is open year round. (Rock oysters and Pacific oysters must not be opened while they adhere to the object on which they grow).
 - Scallops: 15 July to 14 February inclusive.

Protection of black coral
No person may take or possess black coral.

- Potting**
In areas where potting is permitted the following general restrictions apply:
- individuals may use, set, or possess, up to three pots in any one day;
 - all pots and surface floats must be clearly and permanently marked with the fisher's surname and initials;
 - two or more individuals fishing from a vessel may use, set, or possess up to six pots in any one day provided they have their name on the pots and that each person is using no more than three of the pots;
 - lobs and ring pots may be used to catch rock lobster but all other requirements such as marking and pot limits apply;
 - pots used to catch rock lobster have specific escape gap requirements – see 'Rock Lobster';
 - species specific pots (cod pots, crab pots etc) can be used. They are exempt from escape gap requirements but all other requirements (such as marking and pot limits) remain.



Male 54mm
Single pleopods

Female 60mm
Paired pleopods
Small pincers on rear leg

Packhorse lobster minimum size
Measure the tail length along the underside in a straight line from the rear of the calcified bar on the first segment to the tip of the middle fan of the tail. Must have a tail length of at least 216mm (male and female).

Rock Lobster Restrictions

Protected rock lobster

- The following types of rock lobster are protected by law and must be returned immediately to the water:
- undersized rock lobster;
 - female rock lobster carrying external eggs (carried between the pleopods on the underside of the tail);
 - soft shell stage rock lobster;
 - rock lobster that cannot be measured (e.g. because of damage to the tail preventing accurate measurement).

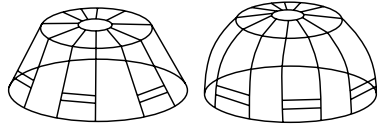
- General restrictions**
In areas where rock lobster may be gathered, the following restrictions apply:
- rock lobster may not be possessed seaward of the high water mark in an unmeasurable state;
 - only hand operated loops or lassos may be used. Spring loaded loop or lassos are prohibited;
 - spears or devices which could puncture the shell must not be used when taking rock lobster. Possessing any rock lobster which has been speared is an offence;
 - external eggs or the egg-bearing appendages must not be removed from any rock lobster.

Rock Lobster Restrictions (continued)

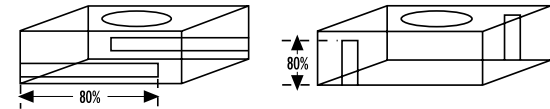
Rock lobster pots

Rock lobster pot means any pot, baited or not, that is capable of catching or holding rock lobster; and includes any other device capable of catching, holding or storing rock lobster. All rock lobster pots must have escape gaps (apertures). These are openings in the pot designed to allow undersized rock lobster to escape. No escape gap shall be incorporated in either the top or the bottom of any pot. Each escape gap must have an inside dimension of at least 54mm x 200mm.

Round or beehive pots: must have at least 3 escape gaps (other than the mouth).



Square or rectangular pots: must have at least 2 escape gaps (other than the mouth) in opposite faces of the pot. Each shall not be less than 80 percent of the height or length of the face of the pot in which the escape gaps are contained.



Mesh pots: any pot constructed entirely of unaltered spot welded mesh with minimum inside dimensions of 54mm x 140mm does not require escape gaps. Mesh pots may be used with covers or liners provided they leave unencumbered at least 80 percent of the surface area of each of 2 opposite sides.

Closures and Restrictions

Restricted areas

Restricted areas are areas where the use of particular fishing methods (e.g. set nets) is restricted or where catch limits may be different. Some restricted areas in the Challenger FMA are listed below. However, these are only a guide. Check for local restrictions and recent closures by contacting your nearest MPI or DOC Office.

Blue Cod restricted areas

Area 1: Marlborough Sounds Area:

Open: 20 December – 31 August inclusive every year.

Closed: 1 September – 19 December inclusive every year.

Daily Limit: each fisher may take or possess 2 blue cod at any one time. Applies even if you caught the fish from outside the area and you are transporting the fish through the area.

Size Limit: 30cm min – 35cm max.

Additional restrictions: You must not:

- fillet blue cod, unless you eat them immediately. Any blue cod eaten form part of your daily limit;
- use more than 2 hooks per fishing line, when fishing for any finfish species (excluding longlines);
- fishers staying in baches and aboard vessels are not exempt from these regulations and may only land or transport by sea, 2 whole or gutted blue cod on any one day.



Marlborough Sounds Restricted Area

Area 2: Maud Island Area

Closed year round.

No finfish of any species can be taken.

40 59.92S 173 54.14E

41 01.70S 173 55.34E

41 02.75S 173 54.75E

41 02.21S 173 52.08E

41 01.21S 173 51.75E



Area 2: Maud Island Closed Area

Area 3: Challenger East Area

Daily Limit: 3 blue cod per fisher

Size Limit: 30cm minimum.

Additional restrictions:

- you must not fillet blue cod, unless you eat them immediately. Any blue cod eaten form part of your daily limit;
- when accumulating your daily bag limits, you may only have a maximum of 6 blue cod per fisher at any one time, even if you caught the fish from outside the area;
- during the open season you cannot transport blue cod from other Fishery Management Areas into the Marlborough Sounds Area, unless it meets those regulations i.e. only two fish 30–35cms.



Area 3: Challenger East Restricted Area

Set net restrictions

Map 1: Set netting is totally prohibited from Cape Jackson to the Clarence River (extends out to 4 nautical miles and includes the entire Queen Charlotte Sound, Tory Channel, Port Underwood, Cloudy Bay, Clifford Bay, and Cape Campbell areas).

Map 2: Set netting is totally prohibited on the West Coast from Farewell Spit to Awarua Point (extends out to 2 nautical miles). Check the regulations for co-ordinates.



Map 1: Set Net Closed Area



Map 2: Set Net Closed Area

- Exemption: Queen Charlotte Sound inside a line from West Head Point (Ruakaka Bay) to Deiffenbach Point – refer to the red area on **Map 3**. Applies between 1 April and 30 September for Flatfish set nets only (a net that is 9 meshes deep or less, is anchored at each end, does not exceed a total length of 60 metres, has a mesh size greater or equal to 100mm and a monofilament diameter less than 0.35mm).
- Exemption: Whanganui/Westhaven Inlet.
- Fishers must stay with their nets at all times and set no more than 200m from shore, between Cape Jackson and Rarangi Port Underwood and then Cape Campbell to Needles Point between 1 January – 30 April inclusive. (See red line on **Map 3**).

Map 3: Set netting may only be undertaken using set nets with a net mesh size greater than or equal to 100mm which do not exceed 9 meshes in height and must be set in direct contact with the seabed. These restrictions apply to the following (all blue areas on **Map 3**):

Pelorus Sound: inside a line from Tawero Point to Opani-Aputa Point.

Tennyson Inlet and Hallam Cove: inside a line from Sheep Point to Camel Point to Cregoe Point.

Croisilles Harbour: inside a line from Cape Soucis, outside the Islands to Kakaho Point.

Within Kenepuru Sound: set netting is totally prohibited from 1 October to 31 March inclusive.



Map 3: Set Net Restricted Areas

Long Line restricted areas

Map 4: Possession and use of Long Lines is prohibited in Pelorus Sound inside a line from Tawero Point to Opani-Aputa Point and in Kenepuru Sound.



Map 4: Long Line Restricted Areas

Closed Areas

Closed areas are areas where no fishing is allowed. These may be closed by MPI as prohibited areas or by the Department of Conservation (DOC) as marine reserves. For full details of marine reserves contact DOC.

Challenger FMA closed areas include: Long Island Marine Reserve, Tonga Island Marine Reserve, Horoirangi Marine Reserve, Whanganui/Westhaven Inlet Marine Reserve and in Double Cove, Queen Charlotte Sound.



Double Cove Closed Area



Horoirangi Marine Reserve



Westhaven Inlet Marine Reserve



Tonga Island Marine Reserve



Long Island Marine Reserve

Poacher Prevention

MPI is responsible for protecting local fisheries and stopping illegal activities such as poaching. To do this, MPI needs you to report any suspicious or illegal activity in your area.

If you see people acting illegally, taking more than their daily limit or undersized fish or selling or trading their catch, please report it. Any information provided stays completely confidential.

Report poaching, suspicious or illegal activity – call 0800 4 POACHER (0800 476 224).

New Zealand's Fishing Rules at Your Fingertips

This brochure is a summary of the recreational fishing rules for the Challenger Fishery Management Area (FMA). It is a guide only and may not include all local restrictions and rules or any changes made since it was printed. To keep up to date, check the rules each time you fish. It is illegal to sell or trade your catch.

Use one of our FREE services:

- **Download** our free Smartphone app by texting the word 'app' to 9889 **OR** by **scanning the QR code**. The app works even when you have no coverage.



- **Free text** the name of the species you are fishing for (e.g. blue cod or paua) to 9889 and receive legal size and bag limit via return text.



- **Visit www.mpi.govt.nz**

Contact your Local Office

Nelson Office (03) 548 1069

118 Vickerman Street, Nelson

Blenheim Office (03) 579 1088

Marlborough Research Centre, Grovetown Park, State Highway 1, Blenheim

Kaikoura Office (03) 319 6570

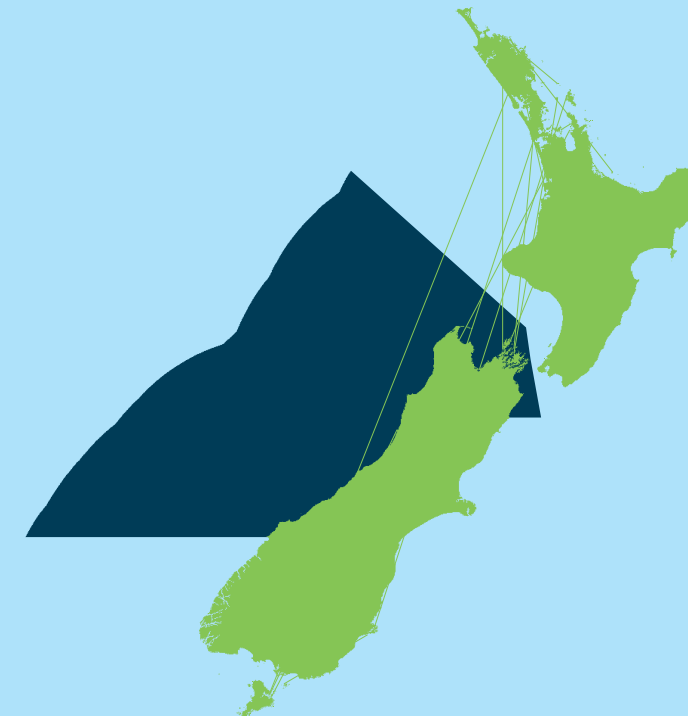
114 Beach Road, Kaikoura

CHALLENGER

Recreational Fishing Rules

Key changes: Scallops – immediate opening provision.

Effective from: October 2014 subject to change without notice.



WANT THE RULES ON YOUR PHONE?

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Download our free smartphone app.

SEE BACK FOR DETAILS.