

Official National Walleye Tour (NWT) 2026 Rules (Feb 10, 2026) – IRA
THESE RULES ARE REVISED FOR 2026 DO NOT ASSUME, PLEASE READ EVERY LINE.

NEW for 2026 – Pro anglers are **REQUIRED** to download, keep active and use the Fishing Chaos Platform during all NWT events for tournament registration and operations. Co-anglers are encouraged to do so. ALL registrations, payments and all primary communications will take place through this app. (see NWT Rule 2)

ADVANCE NOTICE – COMING in 2027! - The 2027 the National Walleye Tour is investing heavily to elevate Professional Walleye Fishing, we are excited to announce that in 2027, NWT will become a Invitation only Professional Tour. We want to give advance notice NOW before the 2026 season begins on how to earn YOUR invite to fish NWT in 2027!

Additional invitations may be awarded to this baseline at the sole discretion of the National Walleye Tour.

PROFESSIONAL invites (must fish all events) and the order of invitations will be; Top 55 Pros from the 2026 NWT Progressive Angler of The Year (AOY) Pro standings, Top (5) Co-anglers from the 2026 Co-Anglers Progressive AOY standings will be given a chance to turn Pro. (Should any of these 5 Co-anglers decline their Pro invitations, those invites will be offered to Pros in 56th through 60th place in the 2026 Progressive AOY Pro standings.) Previous NWT Pro AOY from the preceding (5) years, (If not already qualified.), (5) Persons as Pros, from the top 10 teams from the 2026 Masters Walleye Circuit Team of the Year (TOY) final points standing, (3) persons as Pros from the National Team Championship (NTC) top 5 finishing teams. *NWT reserves the right to add as many other Professional invites of any kind, to any event as it deems appropriate.*

Co-Angler invites (must fish all events) and the order of invitations will be; Top 30 Co-anglers from the 2026 NWT Co-Angler Progressive AOY standings will receive an invite into 2027 NWT events as co-anglers. (5) persons as Co-anglers, from the top 10 teams from the 2026 Masters Walleye Circuit Team of the Year (TOY) final points standing, (3) persons as Co-Anglers from the National Team Championship (NTC) top 5 finishing teams. Pro anglers wishing to “pair up” with a co-angler for travel \ expense purposes, those co-anglers will be invited next and any balance of any co-angler spots will be filled by general public registration for 1 at a time events. *NWT reserves the right to add as many other Professional invites of any kind, to any event as it deems appropriate.*

Detailed 2027 NWT rules & format will be published as soon as possible after the conclusion of the 2026 season so anglers can make an informed decision well in advance on 2027 invitations.

Strict adherence to NWT rules is required by all contestants. Additionally, it is suggested that co-anglers help share fuel expenses each day of competition to help offset the high cost of boat operation. NWT also recommends the use of livewell additives to help promote the healthy release of fish. In the event of an emergency, please call 911 first and then notify the tournament director ASAP.

1. Official Rules, Safety Regulations, Interpretation & Enforcement: Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director whose decisions are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal.

All participants are expected to know the complete rules, regulations, understand them and to help in the marshaling of the field. **All participants** agree to report any rule violation directly to the tournament director immediately upon discovery. **Failure to report** known violations immediately by an NWT angler is a rules violation in and of itself and may be cause for penalty.

ALWAYS CHECK EACH SPECIFIC EVENT’S FACT SHEET FOR THAT EVENT’S RESTRICTIONS OR DETAILS.

It is 100% each participants responsibility to know the applicable states’ laws and regulations that cover the waters you intend to fish in, whether in a tournament or not. The fact that you entered a competitive event does not change the legal requirement for you to know and understand the laws and regulations. Ignorance of the law is not an excuse.

All anglers will be required to execute a verification affidavit for each day’s fishing pertaining to two basic questions.

1.) We caught all fish legally today

2.) I personally witnessed NO rules violations today

If the answer to these two questions is True or Yes and everything is OK. Participants will separately initial an affidavit verification form in the weigh in line. If the answer to either one is NO or False or if the angler needs to speak with the tournament director for any reason, the angler will make an X next to their name on the form or simply do not sign it. Say nothing until talking directly to the Tournament Director immediately after the weigh in is over that day. It is CRITICAL the tournament director hears the question directly and understands the context of the question before it is interpreted. **NO ONE can do this but the Tournament Director.** Anyone who does NOT initial or complete their daily affidavit (If you weigh fish or not) will not be allowed to go out again until cleared by the Tournament Director.

In the event of a rule violation, officials may impose such sanctions, as deem appropriate including but not limit to; Fines, forfeiture of cash, awards, prizes, points, weight or eligibility. In all or in part, by fish, by day or overall, disqualification of day's catch, total catch, prohibition from future participation or any other punishment befitting the violation as determined and applied solely by the Tournament Director.

2. Participation, Eligibility & Payback: As a requirement of participation all Professional anglers are required to download, use and keep active the NWT Fishing Chaos platform from event check in, until the event is completed. Co-anglers are encouraged to do so too. FULL details on the platforms use and capabilities will be outlined at each event's mandatory rules briefing. Payback includes cash and prizes and is based, in part, on the number of paid entries at each event. Participants must be active members of NWT or join/pay the membership at time of registration for their first event each year. Memberships are non-transferable and non-refundable and expire on 12/31 each year.

Participation is open only to members of NWT who are 16 years of age or older. Any person under the age of 18 (19 in AL, NE) must also have the signature of a parent or legal guardian on the liability release. Each participant must complete, agree to and submit an official entry form with payment by the due dates. During any official tournament days, no contestant may use a boat unless they have documented proof of insurance coverage that includes property damage, excess medical, watercraft liability and/or contractors' insurance having reasonable limits. Said insurance must cover any and all injury and/or damage incurred in connection with the event. Proof of satisfactory coverage must be immediately available upon request. Random checks may be conducted. To ensure effective and timely communication between NWT and the anglers, each angler must provide NWT with their primary cell phone number, primary email address and home phone number (if applicable) Tournament communications will also be shared to anglers via text and push notifications in the NWT event page on the Fishing Chaos Platform. Anglers contact information can be updated on the Fishing Chaos Platform in their profile and is the participants responsibility to make sure NWT has the most up to date contact information. Participant cell phones must be able to receive text messages from NWT or push notifications through the Fishing Chaos Platform.

NWT reserves the right to refuse participation, (including championships) to anyone for any reason including, but not limited to, suspension, disqualification or banning from this or other events, criminal behavior, felony convictions, or any unsportsmanlike behavior that would reflect dishonorably on our sport. All contestants must have a valid fishing license, produce it upon request and follow all state and federal regulations for the waters they fish.

3. Pro & Co-angler Entry & Pairing: All Pro-anglers and Co-anglers will make entry separately and independently into the events of their choice. **Correct SSN#'s is required at time of entry, no exceptions.**

Angler Advantage (AA) is an OPTIONAL payout group anglers can choose to enter if they wish. An additional \$250 (pro) or \$100 (co-angler) fee is OPTIONAL, enter only if you wish too. AA fee is in addition to the standard entry fee and will be paid back 97% only to those anglers who pay into it. If you do not understand how AA works, ask an official before signing up. All entry fees including AA entries must be made before entry registration closes on Friday 2 weeks prior to the event AA can be added when registering via the NWT Fishing Chaos Platform. **Anglers Advantage entry's CANNOT be paid on-site.**

Priority PRO ANGLER Entry - For those who enter and pay for all 4 events at once under the below terms will gain entry before all other Pros that enter less than 4 events at once. As such should be protected in most field sizes from being sent home if the field is uneven as long as there are anglers entered who signed up for the event under general registration. The priority status list will also be in order by date and time stamp. Priority status will be forfeited if for any reason a Pro decides NOT to or cannot fish all qualifying days of all four qualifying events for any reason voluntarily or otherwise.

ALL Professional Angler Entries: Opens Feb 16, 2026, 10am CT for all professional options.

Registration will take place at NationalWalleyeTour.com. Registration questions can be handled by using the “Chat” feature found on the National Walleye Tour registration page, or by emailing NWT-Entry@federationangler.com. For specific rules questions you can also contact the tournament director at jeff@federationangler.com or 580-716-4291. All entry types including any mailed Pro entries, and payments must be received by the normal registration deadline date of Friday 2 weeks prior to the event. **You are NOT entered until you are paid in full and confirmed in. There are NO refunds once you are confirmed in.** Mailed payments received by deadline dates will manually be submitted by tournament staff registering anglers and adding them into the portal and confirmation will be sent via email.

There are (2) entry choices; Priority entry and General single event entry.

Priority Entry all 4 events - This is NOT a “per event fee” it is full amounts for the entire season to gain priority status. Pay full entry fees at time of registration anytime between Feb 16, 10AM CT and Friday March 27 at 5PM CT. Full season entry fees \$8,000.

Pro Priority status entry fees are for the season, NOT per event and therefore cannot be refunded or transferred.

General registrations for single event PRO entries. Single event entry per-event fee is \$2,000 for pro’s and you may enter as many as you wish.

Pros may enter as many single events as desired. **BE ADVISED** all entries are based on the date/time registrations were marked complete and paid except as otherwise noted in these rules. In the event the field cannot be evened to an equal number of Pro and Co-anglers at any time the last person entered and paid at each event by time stamp will be sent home. REGISTERING EARLY will limit the chance of being sent home if the field cannot be paired. **There are NO refunds once you are confirmed in.** With a verifiable significant emergency, the tournament director reserves the right at his sole discretion to allow a single event entry fee to be transferred to another 2026 event if possible or refunded if it is prior to the start of the event.

Payout for Professionals at each event is over 100% in cash and prizes, (Final payouts will be announced at the tournament briefing.)

Co-Anglers will have a payout structure as well. Co-anglers primary responsibility is to learn and to serve as a marshal and as such MUST know the rules and report any violations directly to the tournament director. **There are NO refunds once you are confirmed into an event.**

Co-Anglers – **NOTICE:** NWT will turn on “Standby Status” for Co-Angler registration at **any** time the number of Co-angler entries reach the projected Pro Angler entries for an event. During “Standby Status” Co-anglers may continue to register and secure your place in line by time stamp but no payment will be collected online if “Standby Status” is turned on until you are confirmed into the event. Those Co-anglers who enter and pay for all 4 events at once under priority entry will be confirmed in first and before all other Co-anglers that enter less than 4 events at one time as long as there is Pro to match you with. Priority status should better protect you in most field sizes (not guaranteed) from being sent home if the field is uneven due to being the last to person to register as long as there are enough Pros and other Co-anglers who signed up for single events under general registration. Priority status will be forfeited if for any reason a Co-Angler decides NOT to or cannot fish all the qualifying days of all four qualifying events for any reason voluntarily or otherwise.

Priority Co-angler Entry – Opens **Monday Feb 23, 2026 at 10AM CT** and will remain open for **3 DAYS ONLY** until **4pm CT, Wednesday Feb 25, 2026**, ONLY to those Co- Anglers who sign up for all 4 events at one time with full payment. Co-Anglers wish to sign up for all (4) four to gain priority entry will pay full entry fees of \$2,600

General Co-Angler registration: Opens at 10am CT Monday March 2, 2026 to single event entries. Per event fee for Co-anglers is \$650. During general registration Co-Anglers may enter any number of events one at a time using this method but will NOT have priority status. **BE ADVISED** all entries are based on the date/time registrations were marked complete and paid except as otherwise noted in these rules. In the event the field cannot be evened to an equal number of Pro and Co-anglers at any time the last person entered and paid at each event by time stamp will be sent home. REGISTERING EARLY will limit the chance of being sent home if the field cannot be paired. **There are NO refunds once you are confirmed in.** With a verifiable significant emergency, the tournament director reserves the right at his sole discretion to allow a single event entry fee to be transferred to another 2026 event if possible or refunded if it is prior to the start of the event.

Once entered into a tournament you will immediately receive an email invoice with links to important details. It is your responsibility to confirm receipt of entry. If you do not receive the email notification within 2 hours of paid entry, please email NWT-Entry@federationangler.com Tournament officials reserve the right to shorten or extend the entry deadlines at any time. Once full field is set, you will receive a final confirmation notice. **YOU ARE NOT CONFIRMED INTO THE EVENT UNTIL WE SEND YOU A SEPARATE FINAL CONFIRMATION NOTICE.**

No refunds will be made, or credit extended for any cancellation by an angler except as otherwise noted in the rules. Disqualification from a tournament for any reason will result in forfeiture of entry fees. No refunds or credits are extended to anglers that choose not to fish due to inclement weather, mechanical issues or unforeseen circumstances. Anglers always have the option to fish close by on a kicker or trolling motor to salvage what points they can.

Pairings - The field will be evenly paired if possible. The last person registered Pro or Co will be the first to go home if the field cannot be evened at any time. **REGISTER EARLY IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RISK THIS.** Pros and Co-anglers will be paired by random draw. Contestants are expected to compete every day they are qualified; failure to do so may result in ineligibility to compete in future NWT tournaments. All contestants or their representatives must contact their assigned partners following the pre-tournament meeting. Partners should advise each other of their respective lodging and phone numbers and establish a meeting time and place away from the boat ramp for the following morning's takeoff. The tournament director, at his sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to takeoff for any reason.

4. Off-limits, Practice, Information Exchange, Pre-Tournament Meeting & Competition: Competitors must be paid in full (Entry fees due, AA fees and membership dues) the Friday, 2 weeks before each event to participate. Competitors must be at the launch ramp and no longer fishing, getting off the water by 3pm the evening before the 1st day of competition for each qualifying event. Tournament officials reserve the right to extend or shorten this deadline.

After this time participants are prohibited from fishing or pre-fishing on tournament waters except during designated tournament hours. Participants must stay off tournament waters before and after tournament hours except to navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities. If repairs and/or an equipment test-run are needed on the water without a sponsor service tech on board then an NWT official must give pre-approval before getting on the water for testing.

Qualifying events will have (2) scheduled competition days with a full field fishing both days. Pros and co-anglers fish together for a combined daily boat weight, and each will carry that weight forward. Winners determined by heaviest cumulative weight for all days fished.

In the event severe weather tournament waters may be altered or restricted or a day of competition canceled. The Tournament Director in his sole discretion may or may not add only one (1) blow day depending on location, permits and availability. If a blow day cannot be added the results will be based on days fished.

The championship will be a 3-day event with the full field of Pros and Co-anglers fishing all 3 days. Winner's determined by heaviest cumulative weight for all days fished. A blow day on any day will be lost and final results will be based on days fished.

Information Exchange - The purchasing of, or bartering for, information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the hiring of fishing guide services is not permitted 30 days prior to first tournament day of any event.

During any competition days, Anglers may not receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters nor follow a non-contestant's boat or participate in the placing of markers by non-contestants or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. Co-anglers who share a pro partner's fishing locations with another contestant will be disqualified along with the contestant requesting and/or using the information.

During competition hours from takeoff until check-in, all on-water communication by contestants for the purposes of locating or catching fish is strictly prohibited BY ANY MEANS (excluding anglers in the same boat).

NWT anglers may NOT seek, nor accept information from anyone through any means, for the purposes of locating or catching fish on tournament waters during any off-limits period or during tournament hours, nor talk to anyone on the phone except in case of an emergency or to tournament officials. This includes but is not limited to the use of all communication devices that can be used for the purpose of helping you locate or catch fish on tournament waters with anyone through any means in any way is strictly prohibited. Including but not limited to apps, cell phones, texting, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc. No exceptions. Communication devices may only be used in an emergency (severe weather, breakdowns, etc.) or to communicate with lockmasters about locking or with the tournament officials. If an emergency call does occur, the competitor involved MUST contact the tournament director immediately and self-report the emergency call. **NEW FOR 2026 Pro competitors ARE** allowed to use devices for Media **OUTPUT** as defined in **Rule 17** below and for Official NWT apps, global maps, weather, power generation, tidal charts, etc.

Flights (including Drones) over tournament waters are not permitted 30 days prior to the first tournament day, other than as a ticketed passenger on a commercial airline flight.

On-site registration and rules briefing/pairing meeting - On-site registration/pairings/rules briefing is mandatory. Exact details are listed on each event fact sheet. Entry verification with dates, time, and location of that meeting are sent to all anglers when registered. Please follow these directions. If you do not receive this information, it is your responsibility to contact us and confirm it. Contestants not present or represented for pairings may forfeit their entry fee and not be entered in the tournament.

In a verifiable emergency an angler **MUST** request permission from the tournament director to send a person 16 years of age or older to represent them. If permission is granted, non-contestants can represent one person; contestants can represent themselves and one other person. This representative must attend the full meeting to meet your partner, exchange full contact info, and gather all details (flights, takeoff/check in times, boat #, off-limits, size & creel limits, and exact location to meet prior to takeoff. Any contestant who does not attend in person or uses a representative gives up any claims of lack of knowledge on any subject or rule. Otherwise, if an angler (or his pre-approved representative) arrives 15 minutes or more late without approval they will be removed from the event and forfeit all entry fees.

5. Safety: Each boat passenger must wear a US Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver fully zippered, strapped and snapped securely anytime the boat is on plane. Inflatable PFD indicators should be checked daily. Inflatable PFDs are allowed if U.S. Coast Guard regulations are met. Depending on the type and model of inflatable, the Coast Guard requires that Inflatable PFDs be always worn to be counted and cannot be taken-off, unless there is an equal number of non-inflatable Coast Guard approved PFDs on board, readily accessible. Therefore, Pros must always carry a minimum of two (2) Coast Guard approved chest-type NON inflatable life preservers on board to be legal in case someone in the boat takes off an inflatable PFD they are wearing, even momentarily. Federal law also requires any vessel under 26 feet to have an operational engine shut off device and that it be attached to the driver when the vessel is on plane. Officials STRONGLY admonish Pro anglers to operate your vessel responsibly and safely for any given condition, allow plenty of travel time and SLOW DOWN, DO NOT OPERATE YOUR VESSEL IN CONDITIONS YOU FEEL ARE UNSAFE FOR YOUR VESSEL, ONLY YOU CAN DETERMINE THIS AND ARE 100% RESPONSIBLE SAFE OPERATION OF YOUR VESSEL.

Officials may restrict or alter tournament waters and reserve the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. In the event of lightning, severe weather, limited visibility or any unsafe condition, participants should remove themselves from competition and seek safety or shelter until it is safe to continue. Participants may not leave their boats during tournament hours except in case of emergency. Each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer if required. The horsepower

rating of the outboard engine must not exceed the rating specified on this plate. Changing or altering standard factory motor parts to increase horsepower over factory rated horsepower is forbidden. Each contestant agrees to submit their boat and/or motor to an inspection, if requested by NWT.

At the sole discretion of the tournament director, tournament days or waters may be altered, shortened, moved, postponed or canceled due to unsafe weather, water or other concerns/conditions.

6. Sportsmanship & Code of Conduct: All participants will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner always maintaining professional demeanor in public and in communication with staff, anglers and officials. Any unfavorable conduct, speech or action by a participant in our efforts to promote sportsmanship, clean waters and conservation, can be grounds for fines or disqualification. Every competitor is expected to participate in the marshaling of the field to help maintain the highest integrity of competition. Use of or possession in the boat of alcohol or marijuana/cannabis products, ("medical" or otherwise) or any mind-altering drugs by any participant during the official event or tournament days or in our weigh-in process area and/or any use by the final day designated "leaders" until any polygraph examinations are complete will not be tolerated and shall be cause for disqualification. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported directly to the Tournament Director for investigation. Any violation of these basic sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. In case of conduct not complying with these standards, NWT shall have the right at its sole discretion to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete by returning the entry or to disqualify or fine a contestant.

Angler Code of Conduct – ALL anglers participating in any NWT event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Any angler who violates any of the provisions of the Sportsmanship Rules or the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to fines, reduction of Angler of the Year points, forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual NWT-sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition or any penalty combination deemed appropriate by NWT Officials or as follows.

Anglers shall, always, treat others the way they would want to be treated and conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates integrity, honor and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament staff and the general public and does not reflect unfavorably on NWT, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments hosts or sponsors. Anglers are frequently in the public eye and are considered role models by young people; therefore, it is imperative that tournament competitors demonstrate good sportsmanship in fishing and clean language in public. Sportsmanship is defined as fair play, respect for opponents and polite behavior. The following are just some of the examples of unacceptable behavior by competitors in NWT events that will be cause for penalties.

- Use of foul language or inappropriate messaging in the weigh in area, line, on camera, on stage or in view of the public.
- Heated public disagreements with NWT officials, other competitors, fans or volunteers during an event.
- Public attacks through media, including social media, upon the integrity of NWT, NWT rules or officials.
- Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of NWT, NWT officials or its sponsors or other NWT anglers.
- Displays of anger and/or displeasure for reasons related to fishing competition where members of the public, including other anglers, spectators and the media, are present.
- Publicly questioning or criticizing tournament officials or official decisions, rulings or penalties.
- Abuse (physical, verbal, threatening or slanderous) of tournament officials, volunteers, fellow competitors or others connected with a NWT event of any kind, including to person or property or with comments on social media.
- Offensive or slanderous comments with racial, cultural or sexual overtones regarding event officials, personnel or anglers.
- Intentionally interfering with a fellow angler's ability to compete.
- Any verifiable disqualification, suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by any tournament or fishing organization may result in disqualification from competition and rejection of an application for participation in an NWT tournament.
- Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or crimes involving moral turpitude, may be grounds for disqualification from competition and for rejecting any application for participation.
- When an NWT angler is found to have violated the Angler Code of Conduct the following escalating scale of fines will be imposed, in addition to any other penalties that may be deemed appropriate by NWT:
 1. First offense Not less than \$250 nor more than \$2,500 fine.
 2. Second offense Not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$2,500.

3. Third offense Not less than \$2,500 nor more than \$10,000.

4. Fourth offense is unlimited, including fines and possible suspension or ban from NWT events.

The numbers of offenses in the list above refer to violations over the course of an angler's career. Code of Conduct violations will expire 5 years from the last recorded violation date. NWT reserves the right to automatically withhold any fines from any payouts due. Otherwise, non-payment will prevent the angler from fishing another NWT event until payment is paid in full. Therefore, any fines assessed after a payout is made are required to be paid in full within 30 days or before entry into the next NWT event will be allowed, whichever is first.

Co-Angler Obligations: Co-Anglers are required to have full knowledge of the rules and regulations covering the body of water just as Pros are and will also serve as marshals in the field. Any rules violation must be immediately reported to the tournament director. Pros and Co-Anglers are to be honest and timely with catch and weight reports. Any competitor who, in the judgment of tournament officials, advises or encourages a Co-Angler to neglect or disregard a rules violation or falsely report catches or weights may be penalized. Co-angler use of cell phones or recording GPS waypoints or use any type of handheld GPS during any competition day is prohibited unless specifically authorized or approved to do so by Tournament officials. Co-Anglers are allowed to carry still cameras and personal smart phones/tablets. Co-angler photos/videos should be discussed with pro partners regarding backgrounds, landmarks, and their permission to post their likeness from the water, etc. Co-Anglers may be asked to text catch reports, pictures or any other data to NWT tournament officials from their personal cell phones. Co-Anglers are not allowed to text information to anyone other than an NWT official channels or tournament staff, unless in an emergency. **Registered Co-Anglers are HIGHLY encouraged to bring a personal PFD to each event to ensure proper fit meeting the guidelines in rule #5 above.**

7. Tackle, Equipment, Inspections, Permits & Permitted Fishing, Baits, Legally Hooked Fish:

Participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses, permits, required AIS inspections if required by law, all tournament boats must be cleaned of all harmful exotic aquatic species CLEAN, DRAINED and DRY prior to entering the water and upon departure from tournament waters. All anglers must commit to following all regulations. All state rules regarding fishing and boating will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified at the rules meeting.

No more than two fishing rods with one lure each, or one fishing rod with two lures per angler may be used at a time unless the state or lake limit is more restrictive, in which case the state or lake limit will prevail.

Fishing is defined as having a lure attached to a line with the lure in the water. All fish must be caught alive and in a conventional sporting manner as defined by state statute or by tournament officials. Live bait may be used where it is legal. Trolling as a method of fishing is permitted. Any fish accidentally "foul hooked" must be immediately released. "Foul hooked" is defined as any fish accidentally hooked where the only embedded hook(s) is located anywhere behind the opening of the gill plate, unless state law is more restrictive than this interpretation, in which case state law will apply. Further any fish that is "visible to and specifically being targeted by" an angler (with or without the use of electronics) must be verified by the other partner in the boat that the fish was not foul hooked before being unhooked to be counted as a legal catch.

It is 100% each Pro angler and each Co-angler's responsibility to know the applicable states laws that cover the waters they are going to fish, whether they are entered in a tournament or not. The fact that you have entered into a tournament does not change that legal requirement for you to know and understand the rules. An event official or NWT approved person may approach or board your boat at any time for any reason. Refusal to allow an approved official on board or any efforts to impede their work may result in disqualification.

8. Boat/Motor, Safety Equipment, Operation and Procedures: Each boat MUST be given, prior to the start of each day, a livewell and SAFETY INSPECTION check by officials, and boat marker, which MUST remain in or on the boat and turned in during check-in at the end of each day. NWT reserves sole discretion to assign boat numbers in any manner. There shall be one official safety checkpoint for checkout in the morning / check-in in the afternoon. At the time of checkout/check-in all competitors and their boats shall be in full compliance with all rules set forth by officials. At check-in all boats shall identify themselves to the check-in official and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. **YOU MUST CHECK-IN and EXECUTE YOUR DAILY VERIFICATION AFFIDAVIT FORM EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FISH.** Failure to go through boat checkout in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point in the afternoon will result in that day's disqualification. *It is each angler's responsibility to know what time they are due in and be in early enough and close enough to make 100% sure the timekeeper can verify you in on time.* All fishing must cease upon check-in.

Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times. As the captain/operator of a vessel the Pro angler is solely responsible for the safe operation of it and for the safety of all occupants in it at all times. Participants must abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas at all times. All participants are required and agree to wear a Coast Guard-approved type III or greater CHEST TYPE personal flotation device anytime the boat is on plane **SEE RULE #5**. The Pro angler has full control and responsibility of the vessel and will make all decisions regarding boat operations and waters to be fished. Officials STRONGLY admonish Pro anglers to operate your vessel responsibly and safely for any given condition, allow plenty of travel time and SLOW DOWN, DO NOT OPERATE YOUR VESSEL IN CONDITIONS YOU FEEL ARE UNSAFE FOR YOUR VESSEL, ONLY YOU CAN DETERMINE THIS AND ARE 100% RESPONSIBLE SAFE OPERATION OF YOUR VESSEL.

Pros must provide all presentation equipment such as downriggers, planer boards, side planers, rods, reels, bait, line and terminal tackle for their own use and the use of their co-angler partners. With the exception of two rods and reels, co-anglers are not permitted to bring tackle into their pro's boat without permission from the pro. We recommend that all participants successfully complete a boating safety course. Boating safety certification, or a "grandfather" exception, may be required in certain states. Boating safety courses are available online and should carry an endorsement by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators or NASBLA

All tournament boats are required to have in their possession all Coast Guard-required safety equipment, including but not limited to approved CHEST TYPE personal flotation devices (SEE RULE #5 above), a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher, distress horn/flag/whistle, and display a boat marker/engine sticker (supplied by NWT). Great Lakes, Canadian border and some other navigable waters require flares. All boats are required to have a functioning bilge pump and Federal law requires any vessel under 26 feet to have an operational engine shut off device and that it be attached to the driver when the vessel is on plane.

A driver must be seated behind the steering wheel or at the tiller and in full control of the boat whenever the primary combustion engine is in operation and in gear. In addition, a marine band radio is required. All boats must be propeller-driven and a minimum of 16 feet in length. All boats must be equipped with wheel or tiller steering; no other steering device will be permitted. No barges or similarly cumbersome craft will be permitted unless being used as an adaptive device. Boats must contain a properly aerated livewell space to maintain alive a limit catch of fish.

Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competitions. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Optional remote engine fuel tanks must be factory- or factory-authorized-dealer installed and be strapped or otherwise secured. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

9. Permitted Fishing Locations: Tournament waters shall be established for each event. Each competitor must obtain this information from NWT. Fishing on tournament waters is permitted within the boundaries defined by the tournament director that are available to the public and accessible by boat from the tournament check out location except: All NWT events will be US waters ONLY. All Canadian waters will be off limits to fishing. An angler's boat may traverse through Canadian waters temporarily while navigating from one spot to another or for safety reasons, but NWT anglers may NOT fish in Canadian waters. Any additional boundaries or known restricted zones will be listed on the event fact sheet and/or announced at the mandatory rules briefing and may be further altered if needed.

Otherwise, contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas posted or otherwise designated as "off-limits," "no boats," "keep out," or "no fishing" (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by NWT, local, state or federal officials, or within a contestant's first-marked fishing area. A "marked fishing area" which is defined as a 50-foot diameter area around a marker buoy first placed by the contestant on the same day of competition. The contestant placing the buoy must remain within the marked area and may leave only to play and land a fish. When limited out or not fishing, the buoy must be picked up. A "marked fishing area" may be navigated through if it restricts access to other fishable waters.

No contestant may "Buy" or "Barter" a fish or a fishing location. Only that water open to ALL public fishing accessible by boat from the tournament check out point will be considered tournament waters. Any water closed to public fishing will be closed to tournament contestants. All fishing must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat. The boat

must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. No tournament boat may be loaded on a trailer before the weigh-in without the direct permission/instruction of the tournament director.

Any live release area established by the Tournament Director will be off-limits & will be announced at the Tournament Briefing.

The cutting of trees, bushes and/or logs after the start of the pretournament meeting and/or the removal of official local, state or federal barricades or property at any time to make an area more accessible by boat is strictly prohibited and may result in disqualification from the tournament. The use of cables, ropes, chains or any type of block and tackle system to maneuver a boat into fishing waters is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification from the tournament.

10. Contestants Must Remain Together: Both Pro and Co-anglers paired together must remain within sight of each other and must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency, or for the momentary need for a restroom break, at which time all fishing must cease until anglers are back together if they wish their fish to be counted for the day. In the event of equipment failure or emergency, first you **MUST notify the Tournament Director immediately**. There are only two permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both anglers remaining in their boat and being towed by water by another contestant or a designated rescue boat. (2) By one angler transferring the clearly marked fish to another boat as described above and proceeding directly to the weigh in. Only under these two conditions will a contestant's catches be counted. Contestants who elect to return to the check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day's catch to that point in time of the tournament day. No one in a "tow, ride -in or rescue boat" is allowed to fish until after proceeding directly to weigh in site and all parties communicating directly with tournament officials. Arriving late, because of offering or needing assistance, even with the aid of a rescue boat, as the towed boat or the towing boat is still late, and late or other penalties will still apply. No exceptions.

Both parties (the team with trouble and team lending assistance) should file separate incident reports with tournament officials. Any angler(s) involved in a breakdown "Ride In" that involves transferring fish in which an angler involved wins/places high in that event, in the Tournament Officials sole opinion, **WILL BE POLYGRAPHED**. Any contestant returning to the check-in point will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the tournament director or his designated official. It is the sole responsibility of contestants to locate the tournament director to request a restart.

11. Late Penalty: It is your responsibility to check in **ON TIME, DIRECTLY IN PERSON, FACE TO FACE, with the timekeeper at the safety check-in point**. You are NOT checked in until you do so. Contestants who fail to do so for any reason before their scheduled time are penalized 1 pound per minute for each minute late. Anyone who is more than 15 minutes late will lose credit for that day's weight. There shall be no excuse for being late and in no case can you make up "lost time." It is each angler's responsibility to know what time they are due in and arrive early enough to make 100% direct contact with the timekeeper. **Leave plenty of time to safely get back in, DON'T push the deadline, there could be a line or general public boat traffic, etc. Do not risk it.**

12. Scoring: Scoring is determined by the combined pounds and ounces of both contestants' catch during each tournament. Pro and Co-anglers fish together for a combined daily boat weight, and each carries that weight forward.

Walleye, sauger and saugeye will be weighed where permissible by permit or by state law. Species, length limits and bag limits of eligible fish will be set, listed on each event's fact sheet and announced prior to the start of each event.

The weigh-in limit will be five fish per boat unless the limit set by the tournament director or state or lake limit is less than five, in which case the limit listed on that event's fact sheet will prevail. ANY extra fish in possession (if allowed by rule) may **NOT** be brought to the bump sink. **(Check each event's fact sheet for that event's details.)** All fish weighed must be kept in aerated livewells to keep fish alive and as fresh as possible for release. Any fish mauled, mashed, frozen, stringered, containing foreign or unnaturally placed matter to add weight or showing white gills, soft flesh or other signs of decomposition in tournament official's sole discretion will result in disqualification. All balancing weights, markers, buoys or attachments must be removed before fish are presented at the bump tank. Any attachments in the bump sink will result in a 1-pound penalty. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision. In the event a competitor has in their possession more than the stated limit, officials shall cull, starting with the largest fish first, etc., down to the event's stated limit.

Fish will be measured by a tournament official with fish's mouth closed and longest straight line. Only fish which measure the official length(s) shall be weighed in. Any fish presented for weigh-in which fails to measure the official length limits shall accrue penalties at the rate of one pound for each non-legal fish plus loss of that fish. Once a competitor's catch has been presented

to officials, they may not add to, take away from or alter their catch in any way or return to their boat until that catch has been recorded. Each contestant's catch must be presented in an official weigh bag.

13. Catch & Release: An 8-ounce deduction will be made for each legal fish presented to the bump master for weighing that is determined to be dead. Every boat must have adequate livewell space, properly aerated to sufficiently maintain, in a healthy condition, a limit catch by competitors using the boat. NWT recommends the use of livewell additive and ice, in warmer water months to improve oxygen levels and promote a healthy release of fish into natural habitat. Tournament Officials shall have the sole responsibility for accessing any penalty points or for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate."

14. Ties & Point Standings: Tie breakers are as follows. 1.) Most number of legal fish weighed, 2.) Most number of legal fish weighed alive, 3.) Heaviest single days catch, 4.) Second heaviest single days catch, 5.) Means selected by tournament director. However, no cash awards will be given to any zero weights. Ties for AOY will be broken by total weight for all 4 regular season tournaments combined, then number of fish for the year, number of live fish for the year, heaviest single days catch, second heaviest single days catch and means selected by tournament director.

Point Standings - 200 points are awarded to the winner of each qualifying tournament, 199 to 2nd, 198 to 3rd, etc. All anglers who receive weight credit will receive points. The top 40 pros and co-anglers from the final point standings qualify for the Championship. If the pro-angler and co-angler field is not even, we will continue down the points list until there is a full field of 40 boats.

Qualifying Tournament Winners - Once the above 40 field is set, NWT may at its sole discretion, add any NWT Pro or Co who wins a qualifying event during the season to that championship field of 40. If, a.) They are not already qualified and into it and b.) As long as that angler actually fished all days of all four regular season events. Then NWT will pull up the next highest angler in the pro/co standings, to even the field if needed.

The NWT Championship will be a NO entry fee event for NWT Pro-Anglers. The Championship Co-Anglers will pay an entry fee of \$500. Both Pros and Co-Anglers may get into the optional Anglers Advantage pots before the registration deadlines, if they choose.

Angler of The Year Points- Pro & Co-Anglers - All 5 scores minus any score penalties applied (4 qualifier points and the championship points) from a season will combine to award the AOY prizes.

15. Protests & Truth Verification Tests: RANDOM TRUTH VERIFICATION TESTS WILL BE GIVEN. An official written protest must be made with a tournament official within 15 minutes of the last flight check in time OR within 10 minutes of the last fish being weighed that day, whichever is latest. If you see a rules violation you should know and go directly to the Tournament Director to report it. All contestants agreed to report any rule violation directly to the tournament director immediately upon discovery. Failure to report known violations immediately by an NWT angler is a rules violation in and of itself and may be cause for penalty as well. If a protest is found valid, the disqualified party may be required to pay all investigative costs. Tournament officials, in their sole discretion, reserve the right to consider rule violations discovered at any time for any reason, by any person, before or after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for any past or future event including denying entry to compete. Following interviews with concerned parties or truth verification testing if required, a final ruling will be made. In the event rules infractions occur a penalty of the tournament officials choosing may be applied, and cash, prizes and awards must be returned if requested.

Each participant agrees with submission of their entry form and by their participation in the event, to submit to a polygraph or voice stress analyzer test or Truth Verification Test, should they be asked to for any reason and to abide by its conclusion. Tournament officials shall have sole discretion to select scope, when, where and who shall administer such an exam. Participants will make themselves available at their own expense for testing as scheduled. In the official's sole discretion, refusal to submit to exam or failure to pass a truth verification exam will result in disqualification.

16. Insurance: Liability insurance with coverage of not less than \$300,000 per occurrence is required of all pro contestants in NWT tournaments. The Pro angler is always solely responsible for the safe operation of the vessel, and responsible for the safety of any passengers aboard. Said insurance must be issued by a reputable insurer and must cover all injury and/or damage incurred in connection with this Tournament and cover the dates of the event(s). Proof of insurance

must be with the boat being used and must cover all passengers in the boat. Random checks will be conducted. Failure to provide proof of insurance when requested by the tournament director may result in disqualification.

17. Media Coverage: Contestants are required to truthfully and honestly comply with all Official NWT requests for media production (including but not limited to video, still camera, GPS tracking, access to boats, access to fishing area, apps that can track you and/or your progress throughout the day or to run real time live leaderboards, made by NWT staff or Official NWT film crew throughout events. Official NWT cameras or film crews are the same as tournament officials; competitors will treat them as such. NWT Camera crews are allowed to move in and out of your boats at any time and track you via GPS, etc. Refusing their requests is no different than refusing a polygraph test or an official NWT observer. Failure to coordinate with and accommodate the Official NWT media needs will result in disqualification of that and possibly future events.

Outdoor Team Works is the owner of all NWT events and holds the content rights to all photos and videos (live or recorded) that are captured at any NWT event, both on and off the water. During NWT events, NWT may require use of an official app, updates from the water or mount a camera in a participant's boat. These are not optional. The media and data collected would be used at NWT's sole discretion for any purpose. All NWT Anglers are required to comply, even if the NWT Angler already has a personal camera mounted in their boat. Refusing to comply may result in a penalty. In-boat NWT Officials and camera operators will be allowed to operate these cameras.

Pro competitor Media OUTPUT – NEW FOR 2026! NWT Pro competitors will be allowed to output live stream, photos or video on all official tournament days to the public social media channel of their choice (Facebook, You Tube, etc.) No websites are allowed. Competitors **MUST** notify NWT at registration check in the night before the event begins that they will be streaming live or posting and approx. what times/days. Competitors should make every effort **NOT** to show any other NWT competitors on the water or their boats on their live stream as you do not have their permission to do so. Competitors are allowed to start a live stream at takeoff and can stream all day until boat check in at which time the live stream must end. If the stream drops competitors may access their social media account briefly, reconnect quickly to restart the live stream and immediately leave social media. You may **NOT** browse for ANY information, interaction or intake of ANY kind, you are allowed media OUTPUT only and you may not use devices with intent consuming information or gaining information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters. **Be advised** YOU (the person streaming the video) as well as the offender are responsible for any foul language or actions that would reflect poorly on NWT and in the Tournament Director sole discretion may be subject to penalty.

3rd party media crews or camera persons who are not official NWT Media/Camera persons **MUST** gain approval and permission from the tournament director well before each and every event to gain approved media access and get event specific instructions before getting on the water to film NWT anglers either on practice day or tournament days. If an angler or group of anglers has arranged or agreed to their own personal media or camera operators, photographers, they too must gain the tournament director's permission before beginning at each event. No approved 3rd party media or camera operators may film or use **drone** footage of or over any other general NWT competitors except as defined herein and must pull off the NWT angler they are filming and clear the way if an official NWT Camera boat shows up at any time. Raw **NON PUBLIC** footage, video, recordings of any kind nor any information acquired by a 3rd party camera/media person that could assist anyone in any way in catching a fish, or finding a fishing location including but not limited to conversations, video, pictures or drone footage (if it is allowed at all) in any way connected with that event and can be viewed by or discussed with any NWT anglers privately in any form or fashion until the event is completely over. **NEW FOR 2026** 3rd party crews **CAN** post media during the day to free public facing social media sites opened to the general public. If a 3rd party media person believes they have witnessed a rules violation they must immediately contact the tournament director and report it directly to the tournament director for his consideration.

Anyone given permission to fly a drone at a specific event by tournament officials must be federally licensed operator and have all required permits/permissions for the area. Drones are as a default prohibited except by Official NWT Camera/Media persons during Tournament competition hours. Any approved 3rd party drone flights may not show NWT anglers or their boats in such a way as to personally identify them during practice days or the tournament that have not given their expressed permission to do so. General drone footage that is legal and allowed is permitted before each day's take-off or during weigh-in is allowed.

Personal media representatives once approved by the Tournament Director at each single event are permitted inside an Angler's boat during practice only. Personal media representatives are not permitted in an Angler's boat at any time during competition days. Personal media representatives are not allowed to provide anglers with ANY information about anyone catching or locating fish during the competition days at any time. Personal media representatives must do everything within reason not to interfere with other competitors or NWT official media personal who are competing in or covering the event. Media coverage guidelines will be provided by the Tournament Director upon request of the media company.

All NWT Anglers will be required to sign/acknowledge indicating they have read, understand and will adhere to these rules when they register for the event and again do so by their presence at the event.

18. Awards: Participants are responsible for all applicable taxes on all cash and prizes.

19. Captions: The captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules.

National Walleye Tour follow all the action live at **NationalWalleyeTour.com**

General Questions? 580-765-9031

Rules questions email the Tournament Director Jeff@FederationAngler.com



PARTICIPANT RELEASE OF LIABILITY – READ BEFORE PARTICIPATING/AGREEING/SIGNING



List Everyone In The Boat By Name

I/We, _____
in consideration for permission to voluntarily participate in ANY event(s) or related activities conducted by but not limited to; Outdoors Team Works, LLC., Texas Team Trail, National Walleye Tour, The Big Fish Trading Company, LLC The Bass Federation, (TBF), The Walleye Federation, (TWF) and all other affiliated organizations or sponsors either jointly or separately. **I/WE also agree to receive their event communications through apps, text messages or email blasts and fully understand that I can opt out of those messages anytime. I further understand if I do opt out of them, I forfeit any claims to not being notified about any subject that may affect my chances to compete or my safety.** I/WE acknowledge, appreciate, and agree that: **The risk of injury, disability, death, loss or damage to my person or property from the activities involved in this program is significant, including the potential for permanent paralysis and death, and while particular rules, equipment, and personal discipline may reduce this risk, the risk of serious injury does exist; If you have significant medical conditions you should consider not participating in the event. AND, I/WE have been advised by the event organizers and have had the opportunity to seek legal counsel with respect to the legal effect of this document; AND, I VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE, AND KNOWINGLY AND FREELY ASSUME ALL RISKS, BOTH KNOWN AND UNKNOWN, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE ORGANIZERS** and/or, their officers, officials, directors, shareholders, agents, and/or employees, other participants, and sponsoring agencies/advertisers, their parent and affiliate companies and, if applicable, owners and lessors of premises and property used to conduct the event OR any others connected to the event (collectively "RELEASEES"), **AND I HEREBY ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RISKS ARISING FROM MY PARTICIPATION.** I willingly agree to comply with the terms and conditions for participation. If, however, I observe any unusual or significant hazard during my presence, I will remove myself from participation and bring until it is safe to continue; **AND I, FOR MYSELF AND ON BEHALF OF MY HEIRS, REPRESENTATIVES AND NEXT OF KIN, HEREBY RELEASE, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS "RELEASEES",** with respect to any and all damage, injury, disability, death, or loss to person or property, which I suffer or which I am found to have caused in whole or in part by my negligence or intentional misconduct or whether arising from the negligence of the RELEASEES, to the fullest extent of the law.

I agree to submit, by agreeing to this document, and by my participation in the event, to a truth verification test, and abide by its conclusion. Truth verification test(s) will be used at the organizer's sole discretion, and administered by its agents. I understand that failure to pass the exam as determined by the event organizers will result in disqualification. I also certify that the number given on all forms is my correct and unique taxpayer identification number.

If am an equipment or a boat operator, **I understand** as the captain/operator of a vessel or any piece of equipment that I am solely responsible for the safe operation of it and for the safety of any and all occupants in it at all times. **I expressly assume all risks associated with the event. If I am using a boat during the allowed practice or the event, I certify that I now have, or will obtain prior to the event, property damage, excess medical, watercraft liability and/or contractors' insurance having reasonable limits or defined in the rules. Said insurance must cover any and all injury and/or damage incurred in connection with the event.** Upon request, I will provide satisfactory evidence of said insurance. If I am participating in a youth event of any kind, I certify that training compliant with the Youth Safe Sports Act of 2017 has been made available to me this year. **I hereby wave my rights of privacy or publicity free and clear of any claims whatsoever** on participants part with regard to the event organizers unconditional right to use my name, voice, photographic likeness, video and biographical information and fishing tips and instructions in connection with any reproduction of same, through any media, medium, format or productions by the event organizers, their parent or affiliate companies, and those acting under their permission, anywhere, at any time. I shall not be entitled to receive any royalties, payments or other compensation in connection with such use. **I further agree that event officials' decisions will be final and binding. I understand and agree that the tournament officials reserve the right to reject my application for any reason whatsoever. Having fully acquainted myself with the rules and this agreement I agree to be bound by them. I have agreed to this contract either physically, digitally or by my participation in the event. I acknowledge this document has been made available to me multiple times, I understand it and agree to enter knowingly and voluntarily.**

Boat Captain - Dated _____ Age _____ Signed _____

Angler B - Dated _____ Age _____ Signed _____

SUB/PARTICIPANT - (if required) Dated _____ Age _____ Signed _____

PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF MINORITY AGE PARTICIPANTS As parent/guardian with legal responsibility for a minor participant, do consent and agree to their release as defined above of all the Releasees, and, for myself, my heirs, assigns and next of kin, I release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees from any and all liabilities, incidents to my minor child's participation, **EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE** of the Releasees, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

A – Parent/Guardian's PH # (s) : _____ Date _____ Signature X _____