

Sec. 9. Be it further enacted, That it shall be the duty of the Shell Fish Commissioner to lease, in the name of the State of Maryland, tracts of land in the area indicated in this Act; provided, that no tract so leased, if situated within the limits of any county in the State, shall contain less than one-half of one of said sections of ten acres each or more than three of said sections of ten acres each, and if situated beyond the limits of any of said counties and within the open waters of the Chesapeake Bay, no tract so leased shall contain less than ten acres or more than one hundred acres. No one person shall be permitted, by assignment, or in any other manner, to acquire a greater amount of land than thirty acres situated within the limits of any of the counties, or one hundred acres if situated beyond the limits of any of the counties or in the open waters of the bay. No leases of oyster land lying within the limits of any county, excepting leases made to owners of land within county limits, under section eight of this Act, may be assigned to a non-resident of such county. Such leases shall be made only to bona fide and responsible persons, after the said districts shall be declared open for oyster culture, and it shall be the duty of the commissioner to demand from each proposed lessee security for the first three years' rent, to be approved by said commissioner. The terms of such leases shall be twenty years, and the annual rent reserved to the State shall be a sum not less than three nor more than five dollars per acre, to be decided within said limits by the commissioner, in accordance with his judgment of the value of the land leased. Said annual rent shall be made payable at the end of each year to the Shell Fish Commissioner. If any part of the rent reserved under such leases shall remain unpaid for more than sixty days after the same becomes due, such lease or leases shall be declared void, and the land shall revert to the State, and may be leased again in accordance with the provisions of this Act. It shall then be the duty of the Shell Fish Commissioner to proceed at once against the surety or sureties of said lessee for any rent that may be in arrears.