



DEP NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

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Catherine R. McCabe, Commissioner



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEP OFFERS SEVEN TIPS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING WHILE VISITING NEW JERSEY'S STATE PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

(20/P11) TRENTON -- New Jersey residents visiting state parks, forests and wildlife management areas are urged to follow specific practices to promote social distancing and prevent the further spread of COVID-19, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe reiterated today.

State parks and forest trails are open, but all buildings, including bathrooms, are closed. All public shooting ranges also are closed until further notice. Visitors are reminded to keep a minimum six-foot distance from others during their visits.



“Our parks and forests remain open for passive recreation,” Commissioner McCabe said. “New Jersey residents need access to spaces for outdoor recreation more than ever for the opportunity to take a break from time indoors and for physical exercise. We encourage these visits as long as the public is mindful of keeping their distance from

others, and we thank our conservation partners for their efforts in promoting how to enjoy nature safely.”

Entrance fees are not being charged at state parks and forests. Trails are open for exercise such as walking, fishing, hiking and biking as long as social distancing requirements are observed.

The DEP and Division of Parks and Forestry offer the following tips for enjoying New Jersey's parks while protecting public health:

- **Make space for others on the trails.** To protect yourself and other park visitors while on trails, visitors should warn other users of their presence when passing by. As others pass, step aside for them.

- **Go solo – or with immediate family.** Please visit parks with family members from your household or for solo activities such as dog-walking or biking. Follow carry-in/carry-out guidelines by cleaning up after your pet and taking home with you any trash.
- **Give yourself – and others – space.** Do not gather in groups of 10 or more and maintain a six-foot distance from others at all times. If the recommended distance is not possible, go to another area of the park or visit the park another time.
- **Drop your line, keep your distance.** As warmer weather and the spring trout fishing season approaches, anglers are reminded that the six-foot distance rule remains in effect. If the required distance cannot be maintained, find another area to fish.



- **Go before you go.** As park restrooms are closed, please use the restroom before visiting a park. Do not attempt to open bathroom or other facility doors, which are locked.
- **Stay away from playground equipment and parks facilities.** All playground equipment and all park buildings such as nature centers, bathrooms, offices and historic buildings are closed. Events have been canceled and all upcoming camping reservations through Thursday, April 30 have been canceled. Camping reservations will be refunded in full and new camping reservations will not be accepted.
- **Follow CDC and state health recommendations.** Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and [covid19.nj.gov](https://www.covid19.nj.gov) for the most recent recommendations to protect yourself and others from spreading COVID-19.

“While visiting, each resident must remember to do his or her part to flatten the curve to slow the spread of coronavirus or COVID-19,” said Division of Parks and Forestry Director Olivia Glenn. “And flattening the curve starts with visiting the park or forest closest to you and respecting the personal space of those who may be around you.”

New Jersey State Park Police and State Park Service are patrolling properties and will reinforce social distancing guidelines to help promote New Jersey’s public health and safety. State Park Police can be reached via the 24-hour dispatch center at 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337).

For a video about social distancing protocols, visit: <https://youtu.be/x4hc2d0ZKAM>

Visit www.facebook.com/newjerseystateparks or www.njparksandforests.org for the latest park information.

Visit www.spstrailtracker.nj.gov to find a park near you.

Visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/> to learn more about COVID-19 in New Jersey.

New Jersey residents may call 211 with questions or concerns about COVID-19, and to learn resources available to them.

Residents may also text NJCOVID to 898-211 to subscribe to text message updates on NJ COVID-19.

Follow the New Jersey State Park Service on Instagram @newjerseystateparks.

Follow the DEP on Twitter @NewJerseyDEP.

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