

BOSTON — Governor Charlie Baker today issued an emergency order<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/april-2-2020-beaches-order>> requiring all coastal beach reservation parking areas managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to close effective [12:00 PM on Friday, April 3, 2020](#) to reduce large concentrations of people at beaches during the COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, effective [12:00 PM on Friday, April 3, 2020](#), DCR will open select seasonal state parks<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-seasonal-park-locations-0>> early and expand access at other parks to provide additional open space opportunities for residents to enjoy and alternatives to popular state parks throughout the Commonwealth.

Coastal parkways that provide access to state beaches will also be closed to both parking and dropping off passengers. State beaches will remain open and available to pedestrians for transitory use only (walking, jogging, biking, solitary fishing, etc.). A link to find specific parking and traffic restrictions can be found here<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-coastal-beach-parking>>.

State parks and associated parking areas remain open at this time; however, the public is asked to visit state parks and other open space properties that are located near their homes to ensure social distancing to limit the spread of COVID-19. Additionally, DCR's agency-owned ice rinks<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-managed-ice-rinks-closed-for-the-season>>, visitor centers<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-managed-visitor-centers-closed-effective-immediately>>, campgrounds<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-managed-campgrounds-closed-effective-immediately>>, playgrounds<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-managed-playgrounds>>, fitness areas<<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-managed-fitness-areas>>, athletic fields, athletic courts, golf courses, and bathroom facilities will remain closed [until Monday, May 4, 2020](#).

DCR will also be limiting the amount of parking spaces available at certain high-visitation state parks. DCR continues to stress that if a park is crowded, visitors should consider visiting a different location or returning at a later date or time. The state parks system<<https://www.mass.gov/visit-massachusetts-state-parks>> has over 450,000 acres of property, and every region of the state contains multiple parks to explore that may be less busy than others in the area. DCR advises visitors of state parks to:

- Stay within solitary or small groups, and avoid gatherings of ten or more people;

- Practice social distancing of at least six feet between individuals;
- Participate in only non-contact recreational activities;
- Practice healthy personal hygiene, such as handwashing for at least 20 seconds; and,
- Stay home if ill, over 70, and/or part of a vulnerable population.

To centralize COVID-19 updates that impact the state parks system, DCR recently developed a Massachusetts State Parks COVID-19 Updates webpage<<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-state-parks-covid-19-update>>. Prior to visiting a state parks property, members of the public should review the contents of the webpage. Furthermore, for information about the Baker-Polito Administration's ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, please visit the Department of Public Health's (DPH) website<<https://www.mass.gov/resourc>