Mills Administration Allows Lodging Reservations For Future Stays

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Department of Economic and Community Development also posts additional COVID-19 Prevention Checklists to help businesses prepare for Stage 2 & FAQs to answer common questions

The Mills Administration announced that, effective immediately, Maine lodging providers can begin accepting future reservations for stays with an arrival date of June 1st and beyond for Maine residents and for non-residents who comply with the State's 14-day quarantine requirement.

A previous Executive Order prohibited such reservations. The change comes amid ongoing collaboration between the Mills Administration and Maine's tourism and hospitality sectors to identify innovative and practical solutions to welcome visitors while protecting the health of Maine people and the health of Maine's economy.

"The tourism and hospitality industries are vital pillars of Maine's economy. Although the pandemic has altered how they can operate safely, it has in no way diminished their importance – both to our economy and to us as a state," said Governor Janet Mills. "We are acting in partnership with the industry to resume reservations while we also work together to evaluate alternatives to the 14-day quarantine, including testing and other protocols, that will allow us to protect Maine residents and tourists during the summer months."

"We will continue to work closely with the tourism industry to make progress as we head into the summer," said Heather Johnson, Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development. "Ultimately, we want to adjust the 14-day quarantine in a way that protects the health of Maine people and the health of Maine businesses."

Under Governor Mills' April 3 Executive Order, which established quarantine restrictions on travelers entering Maine, lodging establishments were prohibited from accepting new reservations with the exception of essential workers, such as health care workers, and vulnerable populations, including those fleeing domestic violence, homeless individuals and health care and essential workers.

With today's announcement, lodging establishments may immediately begin accepting reservations from Maine residents and non-residents for stays beginning on June 1st in line with the parameters established under the Restarting Maine's Economy plan.

However, lodging establishments that accept reservations must be prepared to cancel and fully refund reservations if these establishments cannot be reopened under Stage 2 as tentatively planned.

This change comes as the Administration is working collaboratively with the tourism and hospitality industries to reexamine the 14-day quarantine requirement based on scientific advancements, best practices, and actions taken by other states.

The Administration has maintained the previously-established 14-day quarantine – a proven epidemiological strategy to mitigate the spread of the virus – because it is one of the limited number of tools we currently have

to effectively protect Maine people against the virus. Meanwhile, hot-spots such as New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, states from which Maine draws the majority of its tourists, continue to report a significant number of COVID-19 cases and deaths. Additionally, reopening without appropriate health and safety protocols could result in a surge of cases that would only further destabilize these businesses and impact consumer confidence in visiting their locations in the long-term.

Ultimately, it is the goal of the Administration to be able to adjust the 14-day quarantine, but to do so in a way that still protects the health of Maine people.

Further, the Department of Economic and Community Development today released additional COVID-19 Prevention Checklists for Stage 2 businesses tentatively slated to open in June under the Restarting Maine's Economy Plan. The checklists, which provide health and safety guidance that businesses must commit to complying with in order to reopen, for the following have been posted:

- Lodging
- Campgrounds
- Nail salons

The Department plans to post the remaining Checklists on large gatherings, religious gatherings, public/community buildings, fitness centers/gyms, tanning salons, day camps, and overnight camps, as well as links to guidance on non-professional sports on May 20.

The Department, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, also released a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document in an effort to help provide answers to some common questions.

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