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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Temporary Closure of State Parks' Athletic Fields and Courts

State Parks Remain Open for the Public to Visit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

3/24/2020

Department of Conservation & Recreation

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BOSTON — Out of an abundance of caution due to the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has temporarily closed athletic fields and courts, such as basketball, tennis, handball, pickle ball, and bocce, throughout the state parks system effective today, March 24, 2020 until Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at which time the closure will be reassessed. Importantly, all state parks across the Commonwealth remain open and available for the public to visit. DCR reminds residents and visitors to avoid gathering in groups of ten or more people, maintain social distancing, and practice healthy personal hygiene to stop the spread of the virus.

Similarly, DCR has extended the closure of agency-owned **ice rinks** (/doc/dcr-managed-ice-rinks-closed-for-the-season), **visitor centers** (/doc/dcr-managed-visitor-centers-closed-effective-immediately),**campgrounds** (/doc/dcr-managed-campgrounds-closed-effective-immediately), **playgrounds** (/doc/dcr-managed-playgrounds), **fitness areas** (/doc/dcr-managed-fitness-areas), and bathroom facilities until Tuesday, April 7, 2020, which will also be reassessed at that time. The temporary extension of the closure of these facilities is consistent with an emergency order **issued** (/news/governor-charlie-baker-orders-all-non-essential-businesses-to-cease-in-person-operation) by Governor Charlie Baker on Monday, March 24, 2020.

Furthermore, the agency will be removing trash receptacles throughout the state parks system to aid in the prevention of spreading COVID-19. DCR asks that all visitors of state parks adhere to a "carry in, carry out" trash policy during this public health emergency**, and ()urges visitors do their part to help protect our shared natural resources by leaving no trace and taking any trash with them.** ()

Additionally, in an effort to better inform state park visitors during the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the agency has developed a Massachusetts State Parks COVID-19 **webpage** (/info-details/massachusetts-state-parks-covid-19-update), which centralizes COVID-19 updates that impact the state parks system.

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** (/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19).

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dcr
Massachusetts

Department of Conservation & Recreation
(/orgs/department-of-conservation-recreation)

COVID-19 UPDATE: In an effort to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Baker-Polito Administration is urging the public to stay home as much as possible to avoid person-to-person contact. However, should individuals and their families need to get outside for healthy, outdoor recreational activity, Massachusetts state parks and other natural resources managed by DCR, such as trails, beaches, reservations, and forests, remain open and accessible to the public.

For the health and safety of all, please only take part in non-contact recreational activities, and avoid activities where individuals will come in contact or close contact with one another. Additionally, visitors are asked to avoid gathering in groups of ten or more, maintain social distancing, and practice healthy personal hygiene to stop the spread of the virus. Should crowds begin to form at locations throughout the state parks system, visitors are asked to leave the area, choose a different park or trail, or return at a later date/time.

It is important to remember that DCR visitor centers, campgrounds, ice rinks, playgrounds, fitness areas, bathroom facilities, athletic fields, and courts are temporarily closed. DCR has instituted a “carry in, carry out” policy during this public health emergency, and urges visitors do their part to help protect our shared natural resources by leaving no trace and taking any trash with them. Furthermore, the agency appreciates your support and understanding as we all continue to work together to stop the spread of COVID-19. For more information about the agency’s efforts during this public health emergency, please visit the Massachusetts State Parks COVID-19 UPDATE webpage linked below.

More (/orgs/department-of-conservation-recreation)

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