

2021 New Normal Health & Safety Guidelines

for Connecticut State Parks and Boat Launches

What's open when?

State Park and Forest recreation areas are planning to return to providing full services to our visitors during the 2021 season.

Most park buildings, museums, nature centers and other enclosed structures, including restrooms, will be opened on Memorial Day weekend. When possible, DEEP requests that visitors try to maintain social distancing from individuals outside of their own household while inside park buildings, along with adhering to face mask wearing requirements. Visitors who do not abide by these rules may be asked to leave state park property.

What's the best way to stay safe?

If you are not feeling well, stay home!

- Fully vaccinated visitors are not required to wear a face mask outdoors. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated should continue to wear a face mask outdoors when social distancing is not possible. In indoor spaces (bathhouses, visitor centers, etc.) we will continue to require all guests to wear face masks, regardless of vaccine status.
- Practice good hygiene when outdoors. Wash your hands, carry and use hand sanitizer, and sneeze and cough into a tissue or your elbow, not your hands.



What policies do I need to follow?

ACTIVITY	POLICY
Outdoor Gathering	Return to normal (pre-COVID) park capacity limits. Fully vaccinated visitors are not required to wear a face mask outdoors. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated should continue to wear a face mask outdoors when social distancing is not possible.
Boat Launches	Return to normal (pre-COVID) parking capacity limits. Fully vaccinated visitors are not required to wear a face mask outdoors. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated should continue to wear a face mask outdoors when social distancing is not possible.
Picnicking	Picnicking is allowed, with tables reinstalled.
Beaches	Shoreline and Inland open with public guidance to social distance from others in or out of the water.
Lifeguards	Lifeguards will be in place at 6 or 7 shoreline and inland parks. The number of days per week that lifeguards are present will depend on staff availability.
Boardwalks/Trails	Open. Fully vaccinated visitors are not required to wear a face mask on trails and boardwalks. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated should continue to wear a face mask outdoors when social distancing is not possible.
Campgrounds	Traditional opening schedule. Reservation system is open and available to take campsite reservations for the coming season.
Cabins	Open. Reservation system is open and available to take cabin reservations for the coming season.
Youth Group Camping	Open. Youth group, backpacking and river camping sites are open and available for reservation (which are required).
Educational Programming	Allowed with social distancing and outdoor gathering limits. Boating education certification courses will continue to be offered on an interactive videoconferencing platform pursuant to Executive order 7JJ. In-person classroom courses will resume when authorization has been granted.
Indoor Gathering	Open. Face masks required indoors regardless of vaccination status.
Museums and Nature Centers	Open with limited capacities to assure adequate social distancing. Face masks required indoors regardless of vaccination status.
Restrooms/Bathhouses	Open. Face masks required indoors regardless of vaccination status.
Concessions	Open with social distancing.
Special Use Events- Indoor and Outdoor	Allowed following DECD and DPH Guidance; COVID protocols and plans required. Applications made between 60-45 days prior to event to assure compliance with current guidance.

Any questions about this guidance should be referred to deep.stateparks@ct.gov. Any questions about COVID-19-related health issues associated with outdoor recreation activities should be referred to the Connecticut Department of Health, COVID19.DPH@ct.gov.

In an effort to ensure alignment with public health guidance, in response to COVID 19, operational changes may be necessary and policies subject to change.

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