



Beach Reopening Guidelines

COVID-19

Based on Recommendations Published by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (MA EOE), Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Centers for Diseases Control (CDC)

As stated by the MA EOE and the CDC, implementation of these guidelines should also be informed by what is feasible, practical and acceptable. Each town may choose to implement these guidelines to varying extents based on beach location, frequency of use, size, staffing capacity and availability of usable and properly maintained communal facilities.

Section 1: Preparing and Maintaining Beach Areas and Facilities for Reopening

- A. Complete a walk-through of the parking lot, beach area and any communal bathroom facilities (refer to guidelines for proper sanitation and use of bathroom facilities). Assess any structures that are prone to shared-use; hand railings, door handles, lids to trash receptacles, picnic tables, lifeguard chairs, life-saving equipment, etc. If these items cannot be regularly sanitized according to MDPH guidelines, they should be removed or made inaccessible to the general public.
- B. Admission/entry transactions are encouraged, where possible, to be carried out through a no contact process such as online reservations, timed-ticketing, permit/sticker issuance or an on-site electronic transaction method that allows for social distancing guidelines to be followed. If not feasible, hand transactions and cash may be allowed.
- C. The beach area itself (from the wrack-line or high-tide line) should be assessed for capacity. Each family or group should be able to maintain at least 12' of distance between themselves and neighboring parties in any direction while sunbathing/sitting on the beach. Once beach capacity has been assessed, parking lot capacities should be adjusted accordingly.
- D. Ensure that there is adequate space for entrance and egress to and from the beach area. Patrons should be able to come and go while maintaining 6 feet of distance between one another. If the walkways are narrow and do not allow for sufficient distancing, masks should be required.
- E. All snack shacks, food trucks and other food service venues should follow the appropriate guidelines for food service safety and allow for appropriate social distancing of customers and staff. Picnic areas should be closed if social distancing cannot be maintained and sanitization cannot be performed between use.

Section 2: Social Distancing

- A. The following social distancing guidelines should be enforced at all beaches:
 - 1. When seated and/or sunbathing on the beach, 12 feet of distance must be maintained between parties in every direction. Six feet of distance is acceptable while walking or swimming.
 - 2. Family groups should not exceed 10 people. Groups larger than 10 people should be dispersed.
 - 3. Cloth face coverings should be used in times when physical distancing cannot be maintained. It is important, however, to note that cloth face coverings can be difficult to breathe through when wet, and therefore should NOT be worn in the water.
 - 4. Organized ball games should not be an allowed activity including, but not limited to, volleyball, Kan Jam, spikeball, football, soccer, Kadima and bocce.
 - 5. Exceptions to the social distancing guidance should include:
 - a. Anyone rescuing a distressed swimmer, providing first aid or performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation, with or without an automated external defibrillator.
 - b. Individuals in the process of evacuating an aquatic venue or entire facility due to an emergency.
 - 6. Lifeguards:
 - a. Lifeguard chairs should be occupied by no more than one lifeguard at a time. If the volume of patrons swimming dictates more than one lifeguard in a given area, social distancing of 6 feet between lifeguards should be maintained.

Section 3: Beach Staff

- A. All staff members should receive appropriate training about:
 - 1. When to stay home from work (for example, if they have symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days) and when they can safely end their home isolation.
 - 2. How to promote behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - 3. How and when to properly use a cloth face covering.
- B. Designate a staff member to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. All staff should know who this person is and how to contact him or her.
- C. A minimum distance of 6 feet should be maintained between lifeguards, the public and lifeguard stands except in the case of an emergency.

- D. Lifeguards who are actively lifeguarding are not also expected to monitor handwashing, use of cloth face coverings or social distancing of others. Assign this monitoring responsibility to another staff member.
- E. It is recommended, whenever possible, that a staff member be assigned to beach safety rule enforcement. This is especially important at high volume beaches with large parking areas, access to food venues and/or bathroom facilities.

Section 4: Restrooms, Comfort Stations, Showers

- A. Managers should ensure that users can abide by social distancing standards for bathroom lines and follow any established visual guidelines for maintaining a 6' distance in all restroom facilities.
- B. The managing entity should have the facilities cleaned at least once daily by staff and perform deep cleaning and disinfection services at least once per week and should follow the EOEA COVID-19 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices.
- C. Composting (Clivus or similar) toilets should be permanently closed and replaced with temporary (seasonal) portable restrooms. Daily cleanings should be performed.
- D. Restroom facilities should contain adequate hand washing and/or sanitizer stations.
- E. Indoor shower facilities and changing facilities will remain closed in Phase 1.
- F. Water fountains and water refill stations will remain closed in Phase 1.

Section 5: Information and Signage

- A. Signs regarding COVID-19 Beach Safety should be posted in highly visible locations at each beach access point and restroom facility (restroom facilities should have separate signs explaining rules pertaining to the individual shared facility). Separate signs regarding proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are encouraged.
- B. When possible, staff should broadcast, over a PA system, regular announcements about social distancing rules and how to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Section 6: Supplies for Staff and Patrons

Provide accessibility to adequate supplies that support healthy hygiene. Supplies include soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.

Section 7: Other

- A. Swimming lessons where participants cannot maintain social distancing are prohibited.
 - B. Over Sand Vehicle (OSV) Coastal Beaches
 - 1. Capacity for OSV beaches should be calculated by the beach manager.
 - 2. Methodology for calculating beach capacity of OSV's should account for at least one car length (15 to 20 feet) between vehicles at high tide.
 - 3. Capacity for OSV should be clearly outlined and signed for potential users and made available on social media.
 - 4. Activities on OSV beaches should follow guideline of Beach Activities listed above.
-