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Memorandum

From: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Date: March 1, 2021

Subject: Safety Standards for Coastal and Inland Beaches – Phase III, Step 2

The following are safety standards for the management and use of coastal and inland beaches in the Commonwealth for Phase III, Step 2 of the Commonwealth's Reopening.

All beach managers and visitors should adopt the specific guidelines outlined herein. Property-specific guidelines should be posted at entrance points to beach areas and on relevant social media/websites. Guidelines provided herein apply to all inland and coastal beaches unless otherwise specified.

This guidance will apply until amended or rescinded.

Coastal and Inland Beaches – Manager and User Guidelines for Parking and Capacity

- ❖ To allow for adequate social distancing for ingress, egress, and transit across the beach, beach capacity should be managed to accommodate a minimum of 12 feet distance between toweling/beach blanket groups. Toweling/Beach blanket groups are limited to groups no larger than 10.
- ❖ Parking lots, people entering the beach or other factors should be managed, if necessary, to limit beach capacity to accommodate adequate social distancing based on an assessment by the beach manager.
- ❖ Loading and unloading times for people and personal items at drop off areas should be limited, where possible. No loitering, tailgating.
- ❖ Picnic areas should be closed if social distancing cannot be maintained.

User Guidelines

- ❖ Beach visitors are required to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet or more at all times and visitors should maintain at least 12 feet minimum distance between towelings/beach blanket areas.
- ❖ Face coverings are required for all visitors in accordance with COVID-19 Order 55: [*Revised Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places*](#) to prevent against the transmission of COVID-19. Face coverings should not be worn while swimming.
- ❖ Persons seeking to organize (1) any gatherings or events on a beach must follow the gatherings order and [*Safety Standards for Theaters and Performance Venues*](#) and [*Indoor and Outdoor Event Standard*](#), or (2) any youth or adult amateur sport or other recreational activities must follow the [*Workplace Safety and Reopening Standards for Businesses and Other Entities Providing Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities*](#) guidance.
- ❖ Beach visitors shall abide by social distancing standards for bathroom lines and follow any established visual guidelines for maintaining a 6 feet distance in all restroom and locker room facilities.

Over Sand Vehicle (OSV) Coastal Beaches

- ❖ Capacity for OSV beaches should be calculated by beach manager.
- ❖ Methodology for calculating beach capacity of OSVs should account for at least one car length (15 to 20 feet) between vehicles at high tide.
- ❖ Capacity for OSV should be clearly outlined and signed for potential users and made available on social media.
- ❖ Activities on OSV beaches should follow guideline of Beach Activities listed above.

Lifeguards

- ❖ A minimum distance of 6 feet should be maintained between lifeguards, the public and lifeguard stands except in the case of an emergency.

Admissions/Contact Stations/Rentals

- ❖ Admission/entry transactions, where possible, should 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.
- ❖ Any necessary visitors-staff interactions, whether in a vehicle or on foot, should be in accordance with social distancing.
- ❖ If renting equipment, all equipment must be cleaned and disinfected between use. If items cannot be properly disinfected, rental should not be allowed. Masks and snorkels should not be rented.

Restrooms, Comfort Stations, Showers, Locker Rooms, Changing Areas

- ❖ Managers should ensure that users can abide by social distancing standards for bathroom lines and follow any established visual guidelines for maintaining a 6-foot distance in all restroom facilities.
- ❖ In advance of the initial opening of public restrooms, the managing entity should adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines pertaining to the cleaning and disinfection standards for interior spaces and that social distancing can be maintained.
- ❖ 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 [*EEA COVID-19 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices*](#).
- ❖ Restroom facilities should contain adequate hand washing and/or sanitizer stations.
- ❖ Indoor shower facilities should remain closed.
- ❖ Locker rooms and changing areas may open in Phase III but should be limited to 50% capacity. Managers should ensure that users can abide by capacity restrictions and social distancing standards and are encouraged to establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed areas.
- ❖ Allow water fountains to be used as refill stations only, provided that social distancing can be maintained. Customers and workers should bring their own water bottles or purchase from the business.

Food Service, Concessions, and Vending

- ❖ Food service, concession and restaurants shall follow all applicable food service and [*restaurant standards*](#).

Trash Disposal and Management

- ❖ Trash disposal at beaches is available at the discretion of the city or town it is located in and/or the managing organization.
- ❖ Visitors of beaches should expect limited or no trash disposal receptacles. When visiting beaches without trash receptacles, visitors should adhere to a strict “carry in, carry out” policy and take waste with them.
- ❖ Where trash receptacles are available for normal use, beach managers should where feasible, provide no touch, lidless trashcans.

Shuttle Service to Beach Facilities

- ❖ Shuttle services to the beach may operate at up to 50% vehicle capacity. The shuttle operator should ensure that distance is maintained between groups, such as marking those seats that can be used and/or leaving rows or certain seats unoccupied.
- ❖ Facial coverings must be worn by the driver, staff and all users at all times while inside the vehicle.

- ❖ Windows should be opened when feasible to increase ventilation.