

Guidance for Townships on Park and Recreational Facilities and Programs During Pa.'s Phased Reopening

This document provides direction and links to resources for the safe opening of recreational facilities and programs during the phased reopening of the commonwealth.

What park and recreational facilities are reopened and when recreational programs are resumed are ultimately decisions of the board of supervisors, as local governments are exempt from the stay-at-home and business closure orders but are strongly urged to follow state and federal guidance to provide for public safety. For townships in the yellow and green phases, particularly those offering recreational programming, be sure to review the state guidance for summer recreation. In addition, state-regulated facilities and programs, such as pools and day camps, must follow state rules for reopening.

Use signage to remind park and program users across all phases to continue to practice social distancing by staying six feet apart, wearing cloth facemasks, and frequently washing hands.

Red Phase: Maximum attendance for large gatherings is 10, and stay-at-home and business closure orders are in effect. Pools, waterparks, and all indoor health and wellness facilities must be closed. Access to playgrounds and ballfields and courts should be restricted to enforce social distancing. Day camps and recreational programs should be canceled.

Townships should also consider not renting facilities and should provide access to passive recreation to individuals and families, such as trails for walking and biking and access to waterways for fishing and boating.

Yellow Phase: Maximum attendance for large gatherings increases to 25, and stay-at-home orders are lifted. Be sure to review the state guidance for summer recreation, particularly if your township offers summer programming. The following programs may resume:

- **Child care and day camps that provide child care or enrichment:** Follow detailed state guidance when offering child care or day camps to your residents.
- **Community pools:** The state guidance for summer recreation requires public bathing places regulated by the state Department of Health and other community pools to follow CDC Guidance and state guidance. This includes operating at reduced capacity and implementing procedures to encourage social distancing, such as directional signs. Some townships are limiting attendance to members only to achieve reduced capacity.
- **Pavilion and facility rental for groups of up to 25:** Under state guidance, townships should limit the size of groups renting facilities to no more than 50 percent of

the total maximum occupancy and incorporate the state guidance, including signage. Clean and disinfect facilities prior to rental following CDC guidance. If renting indoor areas, reduce the use of high-contact surfaces by leaving doors open where appropriate.

Recreation that remains closed in the yellow phase includes all indoor recreation, health, and wellness facilities, as well as waterparks, playgrounds, and recreational and amateur team sports (not affiliated with a school). The commonwealth has stated that ballfields and court use should continue to be restricted in the yellow phase.

Green Phase: Be sure to review the state guidance for summer recreation, particularly if your township offers summer programming. The following facilities may reopen, and programs may resume:

- **Waterparks:** Implement CDC guidance for waterparks and other aquatic venues.
- **Playgrounds, ballfields, and courts may reopen:** Follow CDC guidance for park and recreational facilities.
- **Team sports:** Township officials should ensure that sports organizations that plan to use township facilities are aware of both state and CDC guidance for team sports and have put a plan in place to keep players safe.
- **Indoor recreation and health and wellness facilities:** State reopening procedures require these facilities to operate at no more than 50 percent occupancy and strongly encourage operation by appointment only. State guidance must be followed.
- **Pavilion and facility rental** and events for up to 250 may



The state guidance for summer recreation requires community pools to follow both state and CDC guidance, which includes operating at reduced capacity and encouraging social distancing.

resume but continue to follow state and federal guidance. Under state guidance, townships should limit the size of group rental facilities to no more than 50 percent of the total maximum occupancy and incorporate the state guidance, including signage. Clean and disinfect facilities prior to rental using CDC guidance. Reduce use of high-contact surfaces by leaving doors open where appropriate. Consider providing hand sanitizer or a handwashing station. Implement CDC guidance for large events.

In addition, the CDC recommends that park administrators follow these guidelines:

- Display posters and signs throughout the park to frequently remind visitors to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
 - **CDC: Stop the Spread** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf
 - **CDC: What You Should Know About COVID-19** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf
- Maintain restrooms that remain open with functional toilets, regularly cleaned and disinfected surfaces, and handwashing supplies, following CDC guidance.
- Be prepared to cancel or postpone large events and gatherings. Refer to the state guidance above for the sizes of gatherings allowed based on your county's current phase.
- Make sure people are social distancing in popular areas of the park, such as sports fields, playgrounds, skateparks, basketball courts, tennis courts, and picnic areas.
- Keep your park staff informed about COVID-19 and park policies on a regular basis.

Additional Resources

- **State Guidance for Summer Recreation** — www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/20200522-Department-of-Health-2020-Summer-Program-FAQ.pdf




In the green phase of reopening, townships may resume the rental of picnic pavilions but must follow state and CDC guidance for limiting crowds and disinfecting facilities.

- **State Guidance for Businesses Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees and the Public** — www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/business-guidance/
- **CDC/EPA Cleaning & Disinfecting Guidance** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html
- **DCNR COVID-19 and Outdoor Recreation Reminders** — www.dcnr.pa.gov/Pages/AlertDetails.aspx
- **CDC Federal Guidelines** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html
- **CDC Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html
- **CDC: Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html
- **State COVID-19 Safety Procedures for Businesses** — www.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Reopening-Businesses-Flyer-8-5x11-1.pdf
- **Life Sustaining Business Frequently Asked Questions** — www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/business-faq/
- **CDC: Parks and Recreational Facilities** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html
- **CDC: Considerations for Youth Sports** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html
- **State Process to Reopen Pennsylvania** — www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/
- **CDC: Gatherings and Community Events** — www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html
- **State Life-Sustaining Business Frequently Asked Questions** — www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/business-faq/
- **CDC: Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes and the Public** — www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/

Quick Access to These Documents

To access these documents noted above, go to www.psats.org, click on the COVID graphic, and look for this fact sheet. You will find hyperlinks for all there.



PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

David M. Sanko, Executive Director
 4855 Woodland Drive • Enola, PA 17025-1291
 Telephone: (717) 763-0930 • Fax: (717) 763-9732
www.psats.org
 @PSATS @PSATS
 Pennsylvania State Association
 of Township Supervisors