GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STATE PARKS & HISTORIC SITES

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Operating Procedure # O - H - 2

Subject: Hours and Seasons

Effective Date: December 2, 2015

Procedure Statement:
Procedures for park hours and seasons are necessary to provide for visitor safety and quality customer service, and to protect the assets of each site. It is critical for managers to ensure that proper staffing is available at all times to meet these goals.

Definitions: None.

Procedure:
Georgia State Parks will be open year-round from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Park office hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for conducting normal park business. Parks are authorized to operate beyond these hours to meet customer needs. State Outdoor Recreation Areas and satellite facilities may have different hours of operation.

Individual days of operation will vary for Georgia State Historic Sites. Most historic sites are closed on Mondays except for Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Independence Day if it falls on Monday. In those cases, the site may close on Tuesday instead.

Park closing (10:00 p.m. until 7:00 a.m.) may be accomplished in one of two ways. If it is determined by the Site Manager and Region Manager that it is in the best interest of the park visitor for security and the protection of park property and facilities, the gate may be closed and secured. Guests must not be locked in without a method to open a gate to exit the park. Staff residences must be readily accessible to the secured area either by physical proximity or some means of communication.

All offices (including Historic Sites) will remain open for lunch, unless approved by the region office to close for a special event or temporary staff shortages. The region office will notify headquarters if this occurs, allowing HQ to be prepared for questions, allow marketing to post on the state parks webpage, and reservations to notify incoming guests.   Park Offices may have modified hours for Thanksgiving Day which must be approved by the Region Manager. Park Offices are closed on Christmas day but must accommodate guests of all reservable facilities including cottages, camping, shelters, picnic shelters with early check-in procedures.

In the case of emergency, dangerous or unusual conditions such as severe weather, loss of vital utilities, or the failure of sanitation or treatment facilities, the site manager may, at his/her

discretion, temporarily close the facility or portion of the facility to public use. In the event that the entire site needs to close, approval will be necessary through the chain of command. The Park Manager should immediately notify the Region Manager of a temporary closure AND the Operating Status Report should be immediately updated to reflect the closure and following PRHS Administrative Procedure A-S-2. The Park Manager should update the Region Manager and the Operating Status Report periodically, typically at 8 a.m., Noon and 5 p.m. All reasonable efforts will be made to open the site or portions of the site as soon as possible thereafter.

Certain activities, such as campfires, may be prohibited when their occurrence might endanger visitors or the safety of park or site land and facilities. (For example, the site manager may prohibit campfires in camping or pioneer areas in the case of severe dry periods to lessen fire danger.)The Manager should base any closures on reliable sources such as the Georgia Forestry Commission, the PRHS Resource Management Unit, etc. The Region Manager should be made aware when such activities are restricted and PRHS Head Quarters should be advised to post a notice on the PRHS website to inform guests.

Attachment 1 provides a listing of general activities offered at many state parks and historic sites. However, Kiosks and recreational amenities should remain open longer during peak times, such as Saturdays and/or Sundays in summer season. The Manager should use good judgment in flexing hours.

Authority:
O.C.G.A. 12-3-32 (A) (11)
DNR RULES   391-5-3-.04

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – List of General Activities