

COVID-19

COMMON QUESTIONS

Which DNR properties and facilities are open and operational?

State Parks, golf courses, boat ramps, WMAs, PFAs, beaches and state waters remain open. However, visitor centers, museums, other buildings, and playgrounds are closed to public access. Rental amenities are temporarily suspended and some parks may limit access to trails in order to maintain proper social distance. In addition, the state's five Lodge Parks modified their operating procedures, closing: Dining at all locations; Lodging and cottages at Lake Blackshear Resort, Little Ocmulgee and George T. Bagby; Golf and marina at George T. Bagby. The SAM Shortline Railroad is also closed.

Why are DNR properties and facilities open and operational?

Under Governor Kemp's new executive order asking Georgians to shelter-in-place, the pursuit of outdoor exercise opportunities is allowed. DNR administers the state's public outdoor recreation facilities and properties, and thus remains open.

What activities are allowed under the Governor's "Outdoor Exercise" exemption?

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, hunting, jogging, walking, hiking, wildlife viewing, running, boating, swimming, camping, fishing (except for surf fishing from Georgia beaches).

What is DNR doing to provide clean and safe properties and facilities?

All staff and volunteers are following public health guidelines and procedures when cleaning public areas. All public areas are being checked and cleaned multiple times each day. Commercial cleaning and sanitizing products are being utilized on all common surfaces including bathrooms, doorknobs, and railings. Bathrooms are being closed so that they may be cleaned thoroughly and efficiently. Staff are keeping the bathrooms stocked with soap and towels and posting the CDC poster for proper handwashing.

DNR is requiring that all guests follow the social distancing directives of maintaining six feet distance from others and the prohibiting of gatherings of more than ten persons.

Is DNR recommending that people leave their shelters to come to a DNR property or facility?

As explained in Governor Kemp's Executive Order on April 2, Georgians can leave their shelter to pursue outdoor exercise. However, we need everyone's help in social distancing and following guidelines. Please consider sheltering in place and avoiding discretionary travel or staying in local communities and visiting local recreation areas. Visiting Georgia's most well-known and high-traffic state parks is not recommended at this time. Should someone choose voluntarily to leave their shelter to pursue outdoor exercise, they do so at their own risk and must strictly follow the social distancing directives.



What actions have DNR implemented in response to COVID-19?

Recognizing that this is a serious issue, DNR is committed to the full compliance of social distancing directives to ensure the safety of our staff, our volunteers, and our visitors. All visitor centers and museums are restricting access, and all playgrounds are closed. DNR has implemented modified operating plans to reduce the number of visitors at certain high-traffic properties and trails. If designated parking areas on boat ramps, shooting ranges, trail heads or similar areas are full, the area has reached capacity. Do not park in any area not designated for legal parking. Normal rules for parking on WMAs apply—see hunting regulations on page 41. In an effort to reduce face-to-face transactions, an online registration and payment option was launched for campsite reservations and daily park pass sales.

To help people stay in compliance while at Georgia's beaches, DNR Commissioner Mark Williams has signed an active administrative order that bans the use of umbrellas, tents, chairs, and coolers.

DNR is also actively monitoring DNR-operated boat ramps for high capacity and boating activities for social distancing. Non-DNR boat ramps operated by Georgia Power, counties, etc, are not under DNR jurisdiction, but a large number of these ramps are also being monitored by their operators.

In the case of people not willing to comply with social distancing, DNR Game Wardens can charge offending parties with a misdemeanor if absolutely necessary.

Are United States Forest Service (USFS) Properties open?

As USFS properties are not under the administration of Georgia DNR, please contact USFS directly with all related inquiries.

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What can the public do when observing social distancing noncompliance?

The public is encouraged to report noncompliance by alerting DNR staff, calling the DNR Ranger Hotline at 1-800-241-4113, or emailing rangerhotline@dnr.ga.gov.