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# OC Community Resources

May 6, 2020

*Sent via e-mail; no hard copy to follow*

Mark Ghilarducci, Director  
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Wade Crowfoot, Secretary  
California Natural Resources Agency

Subject: County of Orange Beach Re-Opening Plan – COVID-19

Messrs. Ghilarducci and Wade,

Following is the County of Orange's plan to reopen County-operated beaches effective Thursday, May 7, 2020.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and the State's original Stay-at-Home order, Orange County has prioritized public health and safety and followed the guidelines outlined by the State and the Center for Disease Control. The County has been consistent throughout the pandemic in recognizing the critical importance of outdoor activity to the mental health and wellbeing of our community, balanced with careful management of social distancing challenges in regional park and recreation facilities.

In addition to early and comprehensive closure of high-touch amenities like playgrounds and shelters, the parking lots at all County beaches and parks have been closed since March 25 in an effort to encourage local, neighborhood-based recreation and to reduce potential for crowding of open spaces. These closures have proved to slow both volume and intensity of visitation to the beaches and open areas, while simultaneously providing needed access for Orange County residents to pursue healthy outdoor exercise.

Additionally, the County of Orange proactively launched a public messaging campaign which, among other elements, included use of social media, multiple County of Orange websites, and comprehensive signage at all County facilities encouraging social distancing and discouraging congregating in public spaces. Generally, these efforts have been successful as evidenced by the majority of park and beach visitors respecting social-distancing guidelines and recreating within their family units. Incidents of non-compliance have been effectively addressed through additional education efforts and verbal advisement. Orange County and our residents are making health and safety a priority.

On Friday, May 1, in response to an order received from CalOES and the California Department of Natural Resources on April 30, the County closed all of its beaches. Signage was immediately posted at each parking lot and access point informing patrons of the closure. Additionally, OC Parks Rangers and lifeguards were stationed at the facilities informing patrons of the closures and encouraging compliance. This is current status and reflects Phase One of the County's beach management plan.

Having complied with the State order, the County is now proposing to re-open County-operated beach facilities for active recreation starting Wednesday, May 6, implementing a phased approach consistent with neighboring Orange County municipalities. Additional social media messaging and other communications will be developed to inform the public that congregating, sun-bathing, picnicking, and lounging on the beach is prohibited. County Park Rangers and lifeguards will provide outreach and education to the public to encourage continued social distancing. Further details regarding the specific management actions at each County beach facility are identified below.

Phase Two will be monitored and evaluated for effectiveness and visitor compliance. Based on review of conditions with the County's Health Officer, the County would move forward collaboratively with its partners to develop and implement future phases, to ultimately support the full reopening of the County beaches in a manner consistent with the County's health guidelines.

Thank you for joining the County of Orange as we prioritize public health and safety while recognizing the critical importance of outdoor recreation. We appreciate your support for this plan.



Stacy Blackwood, Director, OC Parks

Enclosures: County of Orange Phased Beach Reopening Plan

**County of Orange Phased Beach Reopening Plan**  
**May 5, 2020**

PHASE 1: Beaches CLOSED per Governor's Directive

PHASE 2: LIMITED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Beaches to open to public 7 days a week, during standard County beach operating hours – except where operating hours limited consistent with approved beach re-opening plan established by local municipality (see list below)
- Parking lots and amenities closed; restrooms open with high-frequency sanitation protocols
- Signage regarding closures, use restrictions, and social distancing placed in high-visibility locations
- Parking attendants stationed at primary entry to each site for public information
- County Park Rangers patrols for public education and monitoring
- OC Lifeguards on duty at each site for ocean/life safety

Permitted Activities (with appropriate social distancing)

- Walking, running, jogging, dog-walking (where permitted), and other non-stationary activities
- Swimming, stand up paddle boarding, surfing, bodyboarding, skim boarding, scuba, kayaking, outrigger, recreational boating, and other ocean activities

Temporarily non-permitted activities

- Sunbathing, sitting, sandcastle building, use of fire rings, and other stationary activities
- Volleyball and other high-touch group sporting activities
- Use of beach chairs, coolers, BBQs, tents, umbrellas, and other personal gear associated with stationary activities
- Placement of beach towels, blankets, etc. on beach

County Beach Facilities Operations (Listed north to south, identifying municipal partner)

- Bayside Beach (at Newport Harbor Patrol) – Newport Beach
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Parking lot CLOSED
  - Restrooms open
- Aliso Beach – Laguna Beach
  - Limited hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Inland and coastal parking lots CLOSED
  - Restrooms on beach side open
  - Playground and fire rings CLOSED
- Camel Point Beach – Laguna Beach
  - Limited hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Pedestrian access/stairway open (2 accesses – 1 ingress, 1 egress)
  - Restroom open

- West Beach – Laguna Beach
  - Limited hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Pedestrian access/stairway open (2 accesses – 1 ingress, 1 egress)
- Table Rock Beach – Laguna Beach
  - Limited hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Pedestrian access/stairway open
- Thousand Steps Beach – Laguna Beach
  - Limited hours of operation: Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
  - Pedestrian access/stairway CLOSED
  - Restrooms CLOSED
- Salt Creek Beach – Dana Point
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Parking lot CLOSED
  - Picnic shelters CLOSED
  - Basketball court CLOSED
  - Park open for passive walk-through activities
  - Restrooms open
  - Walkways/trails open
- Strand Beach – Dana Point
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Parking Lot (Selva) CLOSED
  - Restrooms open
  - Walkways/trails open
- Baby Beach (at Dana Point Harbor) – Dana Point
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Parking Lots CLOSED
  - Sailing and Events Center, Docks CLOSED
  - Picnic shelters CLOSED
  - Restrooms open
  - Walkways/trails open
- Capistrano Beach – Dana Point
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Parking Lot CLOSED
  - Coastal Trail/bikeway to Doheny State Beach open (contingent upon re-opening of State Beach)
  - Fire rings CLOSED
- Poche Beach – San Clemente
  - Open 7 days, standard County beach operating hours
  - Walkway open

### PHASE 3: RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC USE; LIMITED CLOSURES

- Beaches open to public 7 days a week, public use standard County beach operating hours (see OC Parks website for each facility)
- Signage regarding social distancing placed in high-visibility locations
- County Park Rangers patrols for public education and monitoring
- OC Lifeguards on duty at each site for ocean/life safety
- Beach parking lots, coastal accessways/stairways, docks, and bikeways re-opened

- Restrooms open with high-frequency sanitation protocols
- Certain high-touch amenities and/or enclosed spaces (e.g. playgrounds, shelters, etc.) may remain closed
- All public activities permitted, with responsible social distancing and face coverings where appropriate

#### PHASE 4: FULL OPERATIONS

- Beaches open to public 7 days a week, unrestricted public use during standard County beach operating hours
- All amenities and facilities reopened
- Return to standard staffing model