

REOPENING GUIDANCE FOR CAMPGROUNDS

Based upon recommendations from the Cape May County-Wide Recovery Initiative Business Sector Task Force

Compiled May 6, 2020

In compliance with the Opening Up America Again criteria, state guidance, and building upon the common experience of essential retail success, the following minimum mitigation protocols will be in effect for all business and organizations:

Social Distancing: All persons who are not part of an existing, noninfected pod of individuals, such as families or other discreet small groups, will be required to remain at least six-feet distant from each other.

Personal Protective Equipment: All persons will be required to utilize an effective covering of the nose and mouth designed to maximize the prevention of distribution or inhalation of vapor droplets from the respiratory system. Employees will be instructed on the proper use of gloves or other barriers to transmission by touch and will be required to utilize the same at all times.

Employee and Management Monitoring: Where possible, offer both virus and antibody testing to employees prior to commencing operations. All employees and members of management of all business and public operations will be continually monitored for body temperature and symptom concerns. Temperature baselines will be detected and recorded for comparison to regular temperature monitoring. Any employee or member of management showing symptoms or an elevation of body temperature will be immediately removed from the workforce and sent for testing and isolation. Tracing, and if necessary removal and/or isolation, of employee contacts will immediately commence and preventative measures ranging from disinfection of work areas to closure of part or all of a facility will take place until such time as broader disinfection can occur.

Sanitation: All employers, public and private, will engage in strict sanitation protocols. All refuse will be handled by employees in personal protective equipment that includes, at a minimum, face-coverings and gloves. Refuse will be constantly monitored and frequently removed to closed containers. Industry specific sanitation protocols have been developed and will be implemented and followed, especially as relates to food service and accommodations, as more fully set forth in the protocols included in the appendix.

Disinfection: All disinfection will follow the guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control, at a minimum.¹ Disinfection will be frequent and thorough and effectuate by use of EPA and/or FDA approved and effective microbial disinfectants.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Local Industry Input/Guidance:

- Phase in approach, beginning with seasonal and long-term customers.
- Slow initial surge of campers by adjusting check-in dates/times.



Date: 4/22/20

To: Cape May County Business Recovery Task Force

Cc: Cape May County Government
New Jersey State Legislators

There is no healthier place to be than outside with distance between people. That is what campgrounds are selling, even prior to the pandemic. We are the 'Outdoor Living' industry.

Our Top Immediate Priority

We need revenue. Allow campers who have long-term agreements (Seasonals) with our campgrounds to occupy their equipment, the overwhelming majority of which is already on our campsites.

- In our industry, we call these long-term customers "**Seasonals**,"
- The other daily/weekly customers are termed "**Transients**".

Example of Seasonals:



NOTE: On April 20, 2020, the State of Connecticut allowed an exception for Seasonal campers if they were in a contract prior to the Governor's Executive Order(s) and that the term of the contract is "long-term." We hope NJ will follow.

- The exception is number 3 in [this document](#) from the Connecticut Department of Health.

Justification for allowing Seasonals:

- They are already under contract for the 2020 season and most have been since the fall of 2019.
- They are long-term campers who are in our campgrounds year after year and have a vested interest in CMC.
- They own affordable summer homes that are as permanent as the campground code allows. These homes don't move and are in CMC now.
 - These camping units cost between \$35,000 and \$110,000.
 - The units are currently on our campsites in CMC and we are currently preventing them from accessing their camping units.
- Seasonals units are completely self-contained. They have their own kitchen, bathroom, water and electricity. They are all at least 10 feet and usually 20 feet from each other.
- Seasonals very rarely need to visit the office front desk. We can do the overwhelming majority of the transactions through the phone, mail or internet.
- We know who they are before they come to Cape May County. We have extensive information about our Seasonal customers.

- If the government were to develop restrictions for CMC visitors based on where the customer's primary residence is located, we would be able to provide information about our Seasonal customers.
- Seasonals will greatly help the local economy. Some restaurants close to campgrounds are telling us that they are losing about 30% of their business from not having campgrounds open.

Our Suggestions for Opening Campground

1. Start with allowing "Seasonals" only.
 - a. These people are under long-term contracts and we have a great deal of their money now, but we may not be able to keep the money until we provide them with camping. **Getting them started soon is critical to our survival.**
 - i. Their mobile homes are already in CMC and they are currently the only group that have assets in CMC that are being prevented from using those assets. Marinas were another one, but were recently permitted to open.
 - b. We estimate our total Seasonals across our Cape May County Campgrounds to be around 8,228.
 - c. It should be noted that a [decision by the CMC Prosecutor's Office](#) allowed some Seasonal campers to begin camping on 4/18/20. The decision was based on the structure of the agreement between the campgrounds and the campers. The CMC Prosecutor's decision only allowed 10 select parks to open.
 - d. **Update: NJ Executive Order 133 allowed Seasonal campers under contract in New Jersey effective May 2, 2020.**
2. Allow "Transients" with longer term rentals (10 days or more) and self-contained equipment.
 - a. This will not be a lot of people.
3. Allow "Transients" with self contained equipment for short term rentals.
 - a. This is what campgrounds need to not lay people off and keep everything going.

- b. This should be tied to short-term rentals on the islands. They are very similar in the fact that they are visitors and don't have assets in CMC.
4. Allow all customers including tents, which means the opening of restroom buildings and other facilities.

We suggest the following timeline:

1. May 1st (update: this was granted by EO 133 on May 2, 2020)
2. May 11th
3. May 22nd
4. June 12th

Campground Facility Openings

1. The campground stores/offices need minimal opening when we first allow customers.
 - a. Many stores and offices are one in the same.
2. Keep restroom buildings closed until we reach #4 above.
3. Keep snack shops and restaurants on "take-out only" until the state allows other eat-in restaurants to have customers.
4. Open pools and lakes as you open the beaches.
5. Open arcades as you open the arcades on the boardwalk.
6. Open indoor clubhouses as you allow gathers of 50 or more. This is the final step.

What Campgrounds Can Do To Limit The Spread of COVID-19

1. Campers can be confined to their campsites under the same set of rules that NJ homeowners are currently confined to for residential homes.
2. Groups and gatherings are currently prohibited by NJ Executive Order.
3. Social Distancing will be mandated in the campground.
4. Campers must wear a mask when inside campground facilities. Walking the campground with a mask is not required; however, if you choose to stop and interact with people, then a mask is recommended.
5. Campfires are allowed at individual campsites, subject to the social distancing restrictions.

6. As usual, all individuals in the resort must be able to remove themselves from the resort at any time. In other words, everyone must have a vehicle on site and the ability to depart the resort in their vehicle.
7. Campground owners can maintain control of ingress and egress at their campground.
8. With the Health Department's ongoing permission, we can close public restrooms.
 - a. Restroom buildings are required by code, but this code should be temporarily suspended.
9. Campgrounds can temporarily close gathering areas like indoor pavilions, arcades, pools, and limit the number of people accessing the front desk at the same time.
10. Campgrounds will have cleaning and sanitizing protocols in place consistent with CDC recommendations.
11. We have the ability to ask our Seasonal customers to restrict themselves to the campgrounds and they can likely bring what they need or get it from our store. This doesn't help the local economy, but we can request this of them.

We are the outdoor living industry. Please let us bring the people what they need now.

Sincerely,

Scott Turner

Cape May County Representative to NJ Campground Owners Association