

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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Visiting Parks, Trails, Golf Courses, and/or Outdoor Areas

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Due to the COVID-19 crisis, parks, trails, golf courses, and/or other outdoor recreational areas located throughout Imperial County were closed. However, we understand that staying physically active is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy. In Imperial County and as of April 24, 2020, people can visit parks, trails, golf courses and large open spaces as a way to relieve stress, get some fresh air, and stay active. **Before You Go to a Park, Trail, Golf Course and/or Outdoor Areas:** While these facilities and areas can offer health benefits, it is important that you follow the steps below to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

DO:

- Visit parks, trails, golf courses, and/or outdoor areas that are close to your home
- Prepare before you visit
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others (“social distancing”) and take other steps to prevent COVID-19
- Use face coverings when out in public
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Visit parks, trails, golf courses and/or outdoor areas that are close to your home. Traveling long distances to visit a park, trails and/or outdoor areas may contribute to the spread of COVID-19 as: 1) most travel requires you to stop along the way or be in close contact with others, and 2) travel may also expose you to surfaces contaminated with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Stay 6 feet away from others (“social distancing”), use a face covering and take other steps to prevent COVID-19. If a park is open for public use, visiting is okay as long as you practice social distancing and [everyday](#) steps such as [washing hands often and covering coughs and sneezes](#).

Follow these actions when visiting a park, trail, golf course and/or an outdoor area:

- Stay at least six feet from others at all times. This might make some open areas, trails, and paths better to use. Do not go into a crowded area
- Use a face covering when around others that are not within your household and a distance of 6 feet cannot be maintained
- Avoid gathering with others outside of your household
- Avoid traveling with others that are outside of your household
- Tennis courts are allowed
- Fishing allowed, if applicable

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- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Bring hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to use if soap and water are not available

DO NOT:

- Visit parks, trails, golf courses and/or outside areas if you are sick or if you were recently exposed to COVID-19
- Visit crowded parks or other outside areas
- Visit park restrooms
- Use playgrounds or playground equipment.
- Use hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, or water parks
- Participate in organized activities (such as parties) or sports
- Use basketball courts
- Use swimming pools

Do not visit parks or outside areas if you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19. If you are sick with COVID-19, were recently exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19, or just don't feel well, **DO NOT** visit public areas including parks or outside areas. Follow the [recommended steps to take if you are sick](#). Do not visit parks where you cannot stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times.

Do not use playgrounds, including water playgrounds, located within local, state, or national parks. Using playgrounds might lead to the spread of COVID-19 because: 1) they are often crowded and could easily exceed recommended guidance for gatherings; 2) it can be challenging to keep surfaces [clean and disinfected](#); and 3) the virus can spread when young children touch contaminated equipment and then touch their hands to their eyes, nose, or mouth. Playground areas and equipment should be blocked or taped off to the public.

Do not participate in organized activities or sports. In general, most organized activities and sports such as basketball, baseball, soccer, and football that are held on park fields, open areas, and courts are not recommended. These activities and sports typically require coaches and athletes who are not from the same household or living unit to be in close proximity, which increases their potential for exposure to COVID-19.

Do not use hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, water parks or swimming pools. While proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (with chlorine or bromine) should kill COVID-19 in hot tubs, spas, water playgrounds, and water parks, you should not use these facilities within local, state, or national parks at this time because: 1) they are often crowded and could easily exceed recommended [guidance for gatherings](#); 2) it can be challenging to keep surfaces [clean and disinfected](#); and 3) the virus can spread when people touch surfaces and then touch their unwashed hands to their eyes, nose, or mouth.

State and local parks

State authorities will decide whether state parks and other recreational facilities will open. Check with the state and/or local parks in advance to be sure you know which areas or services are open, such as bathroom facilities, and bring what you need with you.

National parks

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The [National Park Service](#) will decide on a park-by-park basis whether a national park will be open. Please check with [individual parks](#) for specific details since, in many cases, visitor centers, concessions, and bathroom facilities might be closed.

Swimming areas

State and local authorities will decide whether natural bodies of water and beaches or swim areas will be open. Please check with individual swim areas for specific details.

Golf Courses

For golf courses to re-open, the following minimum conditions must be met:

1. Golf courses may open to permanent and seasonal Imperial County residents only.
 - a. No more than 72 persons total on a 18 hole course, 36 persons total on a 9 hole course.
2. One person per cart (Immediate family members may be 2 to a cart – husband, wife, etc.)
3. All carts are disinfected prior to issue (with appropriate cleansers)
4. No more than 4 players per hole – must maintain social distancing and wear face coverings at all times
5. No removing or touching flags on greens. Cups reversed as person may remove ball without dipping into cup
6. No play in sand traps – (rakes removed) if in sand collect ball and place outside trap.
7. No ball washers available on course
8. Restrooms must be cleaned several times per day and will have sanitizers, water, soap paper towels available in each location.
9. Online Pro Shop sales are encouraged. If on-site sales must happen, only one person allowed in Pro Shop at any time.
10. Food can only be available at an outside curb for pickup to go.
11. Drinks available and outside curb pickup – phone in orders only.
12. No communal water sources (cool cans).
13. No gatherings after or before golf anywhere on site.
14. Hand sanitizers will available at each cart.

Closures

The re-opening of parks, trails, golf courses and/or outdoor areas is being done in Imperial County on a trial basis as is being done all over the United States and in other California areas. This change could be reversed at any time if any of the requirements are not adhered to and/or the Health Orders are changed.

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