

Stephanie Walton
Chief of Marketing & Communications
330-865-8040 x215
swalton@summitmetroparks.org

Lindsay Smith
Marketing & Public Relations Manager
330-865-8040 x207
lsmith@summitmetroparks.org

PARK DISTRICT ANNOUNCES UPDATED COVID-19 RESPONSE
Parks and trails open, free shipping available for spree rewards, buildings remain closed, in-person programs temporarily suspended

In response to Summit County's new [stay-at-home advisory](#), Summit Metro Parks today announced an updated COVID-19 response plan featuring zero-contact customer service for spree rewards, gift shop purchases and more. Parks and trails continue to be open for the community's physical and mental well-being. Building closures and programming modifications remain in place.

Spree Rewards and Desk Calendars Mailed Free of Charge

To receive Fall Hiking Spree or Spree for All rewards, hikers should mail their completed forms to 975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron 44313 or scan and email them to nrcsrs@summitmetroparks.org. Hiking spree pins and curved shields will be mailed free of charge to the address listed on the form. Rewards remain free for Summit County residents. Out-of-county residents will be contacted regarding payment for their spree rewards (\$5 per pin or shield). Hiking spree staffs for first-year hikers will be distributed at a later date.

The park district's free annual desk calendar will be available by early December. Summit County residents interested in receiving up to five calendars should call 330-865-8065 or email nrcsrs@summitmetroparks.org. Calendars will be mailed free of charge.

Maple Leaf Gifts

The full inventory of nature-themed and SMP-branded items from Maple Leaf Gifts is also available for shipping. Please see www.summitmetroparks.org or call 330-865-8065 for more details. Standard shipping rates apply.

Public Programming and Facilities

Summit Metro Parks continues to offer dozens of free virtual and self-guided nature education and health-based programs each month. Due to the current surge in COVID-19 cases and the stay-at-home advisory, the park district has temporarily suspended its limited selection of in-person public programs through at least December 31. Public buildings and lodges remain closed, and special use permit approvals continue to be on hold. Summit Metro Parks closely monitors crowds at parks and trails, and may implement rolling parking restrictions and amenity closures to promote safe distancing.

Summit Metro Parks remains fully operational, with rangers and maintenance crews continuing to keep parks clean and safe, naturalists and biologists helping to deliver virtual programming, and the majority of administrative staff continuing to telework to serve the public while complying with social distancing requirements. At this time, facilities and amenities that remain closed for public safety include:

- [F.A. Seiberling Nature Realm Visitors Center](#) (1828 Smith Rd., Akron)
- [Liberty Park Nature Center](#) (9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg)
- [Summit Lake Nature Center](#) (390 W. Crosier St., Akron)
- Administrative Offices Lobby (975 Treaty Line Rd., Akron)
- Volunteer Center (located at the Service Center on Sand Run Pkwy.)
- All rentable lodges
- [Some restrooms](#)

Summit Metro Parks urges everyone to stay home if sick or exhibiting symptoms, wash their hands before coming to the parks and maintain at least six feet from other visitors. The park district also reminds visitors to avoid congregating in parking lots or at points of interest and to bypass busy areas. Visitors are asked to carry their own water and hand sanitizer, and to bring along a mask for times when safe distancing cannot be maintained.

The park district will continue to monitor guidance from health authorities in order to determine when and how it can safely reopen facilities, potentially increase gathering size limits and resume in-person programs. All further decisions will be communicated to the

public on an ongoing basis as the situation evolves. Please continue to [follow Summit Metro Parks online](#) for the latest information and [visit the online calendar](#) for a full list of programs for keeping connected to the outdoors during this public health emergency.

* * * * *

Summit Metro Parks manages more than 14,000 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 150 miles of trails, with 22 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

Annual attendance averages 5 million visits. Visit us online at summitmetroparks.org.



#summitmetroparks