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SUMMIT METRO PARKS ANNOUNCES FALL 2020 COVID-19 RESPONSE

Summit Metro Parks today announced the next phase of its COVID-19 response plan, including operating status for public buildings, rentable lodges and shelters, park amenities and in-person programming. Parks and trails remain open.

“We continue to maintain parks and trails for the public’s health and enjoyment with safety as our top priority,” said Executive Director Lisa King. “As we look ahead to the fall season, we are pleased to offer the Fall Hiking Spree, an expanded selection of virtual programs, and the return of some in-person programming.”

Beginning September 8, the park district will once again accept reservations for outdoor shelters for groups limited to 50 percent of the designated maximum capacity. Also in September, Summit Metro Parks will begin providing a limited selection of physically-distanced, small-group outdoor programming to supplement its virtual offerings.

Nature centers and other indoor park district facilities remain closed for public safety. Indoor rentable lodges remain closed through December 31, with new reservations accepted for dates beginning April 1, 2021. Those with existing reservations may contact the park district to cancel or reschedule at no charge. Special-use permits are considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with state guidelines, Summit County Public Health Department requirements and park district policies.

Summit Metro Parks remains fully operational, with rangers and maintenance crews continuing to keep parks clean and safe, naturalists and biologists helping to deliver public

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 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](#)
- Rentable outdoor [shelters](#) (opening September 8 at 50% capacity)
- Swim lakes and boat rentals
- [Some restrooms](#)
- Drinking fountains
- Rolling parking limitations and amenity closures may be implemented at busy locations to promote safe distancing

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 if possible, to carry out their own trash.

Summit Metro Parks will continue to monitor guidance from health authorities in order to determine when and how it can safely reopen facilities and potentially increase gathering size limits. 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 on social media to remain connected to the outdoors during the public health emergency.

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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.



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