

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Free Entry to State Parks Beginning Memorial Day Weekend

05/26/2022

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy announced today that, as of Memorial Day Weekend, entry to all New Jersey state parks, forests, and recreation areas will be free of charge this summer. Presented in the FY 2023 budget proposal, the one-year state parks fee holiday is one of several fee waivers and programs designed to advance affordability and opportunity in New Jersey.

Park entrance fees will be waived for all visitors, regardless of state residency. Anyone who already purchased a 2022 annual State Park Pass will automatically receive a full refund. Other individual park fees remain in place, including but not limited to camping, interpretive programs, and mobile sport fishing permits.

“Presented in our FY2023 budget, the bold steps we have taken toward a more affordable Garden State will ensure access to our state parks for everyone – residents and visitors alike,” **said Governor Murphy**. “While incentivizing tourism and economic activity in our local communities, the fee holiday also promotes access to green, open space; thriving waterways; and the many natural wonders that make us proud to call New Jersey our home. We thank the Department of Environmental Protection for its devoted environmental stewardship, which enables each and every New Jerseyan to enjoy the physical and mental health benefits that safe outdoor activities provide.”

Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette also shared news of the state parks fee holiday during the annual State of the Shore event in Asbury Park today. With the arrival of the Memorial Day weekend, Commissioner LaTourette kicked off the summer outdoor season this week with visits to the Jersey shore and lakeshores, including Hopatcong State Park.

“From High Point State Park in Sussex County to Cape May Point State Park in Cape May County, the state park system provides endless opportunities for recreation – from swimming, hiking and kayaking, to picnicking, exploring nature and experiencing our rich history,” **said Commissioner LaTourette**. “Whatever your passion or interest, there is a state park in New Jersey for you. We look forward to a great season.”

The New Jersey State Park System, comprised of more than 50 sites and 453,000 acres, draws millions of visitors each year and is a key contributor to the state’s summer tourism economy.

Lifeguards at Island Beach State Park, the only oceanfront swimming beach under the State Park Service’s administration, will go on duty at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 28.

Lakefront lifeguards are anticipated to be on duty in mid-June at nine swimming areas throughout the state park system. Park users may check the current operating status of their favorite swimming area at State Park Service’s website (<https://nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/swimmingschedule.html>).

The State Park Service continues to recruit lifeguards at all swimming areas throughout New Jersey. Salaries start at \$17.50 per hour at lakefront beaches, while oceanfront guards at Island Beach State Park start at \$18.50 per hour. Prior experience is not necessary, but candidates must pass running and swim tests prior to employment. Apply today by visiting nj.gov/dep/workinparks (<https://nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/jobs.html>)

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