

FAQ

Regarding the April 8, 2020 Supplemental Order of the Santa Cruz County Health Officer: Temporary Closure of public parks, trails and trailheads, and beaches and beach access points

When is the closure in effect?

11:59 p.m. on April 8, 2020 until 11:59 p.m. on April 15, 2020, unless it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.

Why are parks and beaches closed?

This Order is issued in response to an unusually high volume of use of beaches, trails, parks and other recreational areas, which is impeding the practice of safe and necessary social distancing. The heavy use of these areas impedes community efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 among the Santa Cruz County community. There is also an anticipated uptick in park users for the upcoming good weather over the holiday weekend.

What is closed?

- a. All public trails, paths, parkways, trailheads, and campgrounds.
- b. All public beaches, piers and beach pedestrian or bike paths that transverse the beach.
- c. All public parks and recreation areas, including but not limited to dog parks, skate parks, pump tracks, playgrounds, golf courses, disc golf courses, pickleball courts, basketball courts, tennis courts and other public sports and recreation areas, as well as any picnic or canopy areas within such places used for congregation.
- d. All parking lots and access points to any of the facilities or areas listed above.
- e. Also all public open spaces and grass areas, and all public sports fields.

What recreational activities in parks and beaches are allowed?

All recreational activities in the listed areas are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, walking, running, jogging, horseback riding, cycling, surfing, paddleboarding or kayaking.

Which parks and beaches are closed?

This Order applies to the unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County as well as the cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scott Valley and Watsonville. Also included in this order are the Recreation Districts of La Selva, Boulder Creek, Alba and Opal Cliffs, and the Port District of Santa Cruz. California State Parks is also complying with the Order and closing State Parks in Santa Cruz County.

Can I go in the ocean? Surf? Paddleboard? Kayak? Bodysurf? Boogieboard? Swim?

No, not during the duration of the closure.

Can I walk along West Cliff Pedestrian Walkway, San Lorenzo Riverwalk or elsewhere along the coast?

No, not during the duration of the closure. You are encouraged to shelter in place and remain in your own neighborhood. West Cliff Pedestrian Walkway and the San Lorenzo Riverwalk will be closed and SCPD will be enforcing it.

Can I go mountain biking?

No, not during the duration of the closure.

Where can I go to recreate and exercise outdoors?

While neighborhood parks remain closed, you are encouraged to remain in your own neighborhood, and walk or otherwise recreate or exercise in your neighborhood.

Where can I walk my dog?

You are encouraged to remain in your own neighborhood and walk your dog in your neighborhood.

Where can my kids go to play outdoors?

While neighborhood parks are closed, you are encouraged to remain in your own neighborhood, and walk or otherwise recreate or exercise in your neighborhood.

If I rent a Community Garden Plot in a City Park, can I enter the park to maintain it?

Yes, you may enter the park to maintain your garden plot. Parking lots may be closed. You must practice social distancing while maintaining the garden.

Who is enforcing the closure?

Pursuant to Government Code sections 26602 and 41601 and Health and Safety Code section 101029, the Health Officer has requested that the Sheriff and all chiefs of police in the County ensure compliance with and enforce this Order. You may submit a General Request through our [Community Request of Service Portal \(CRSP\)](#) to report non-compliance.

What are the penalties for violating the Order?

The violation of any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat and menace to public health, constitutes a public nuisance, and is punishable by fine of up to \$1000, imprisonment, or both.

How do I report violations?

Report violations to your local law enforcement agency. For the City of Santa Cruz, report violations through our [Community Request of Service Portal \(CRSP\)](#), choose General Request.

What do I do if I see someone in a park or on the beach?

Park maintenance workers, construction workers, gardeners, or emergency childcare workers may be working in parks. If you see someone obviously recreating in a park or on the beach, you can report it.