



TOWN OF FALMOUTH

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PRESS RELEASE

Subject: Falmouth Beaches

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Given the circumstances encountered with COVID-19, the Beach Department has been operating with a reduced number of lifeguards for the past few weeks. This has resulted in some of the Town's beaches either having fewer lifeguards on duty or, in a few cases, public beaches at which no lifeguards are available to be working. In such circumstances, this has been posted for the public's awareness at each respective beach. This situation is anticipated to be continuing, given the reality of some lifeguards necessarily remaining in quarantine per the protocol of the State Department of Public Health. Further, given that we are moving into the month of August, several of the Town's lifeguard staff leave to resume their College studies during this time.

We want to assure the public that we continue to closely follow all Health protocols, including the quarantining of lifeguards who, through contact tracing, are confirmed to have been exposed to the virus even if they have not tested positive in the most recent testing process arranged by the Town with Cape Cod Healthcare. To date, 22 Falmouth lifeguards have responded to this voluntary testing opportunity in addition to 13 others on the Falmouth Beach Department staff. As has been reported previously, ten Falmouth lifeguards have been tested positive for the coronavirus. No other Beach Department staff members have tested positive.

Upon receiving a positive test result, all lifeguards have been removed from the active working schedule and instructed by the Board of Health contact tracing personnel to isolate. Only upon successfully completing the isolation period, as determined by Board of Health protocol, are these individuals permitted to return to work. As a reminder, all staff members wear face coverings while working and are directed to conduct themselves in a responsible manner, including social distancing, hand washing, sanitizing and related actions to protect them, their co-workers and the public who continue to enjoy Falmouth beaches.

In collaboration with the Falmouth Select Board, we have been monitoring, reviewing and discussing the matter of appropriate social distancing on the Town's many beaches. At the Board's virtual meeting on July 27, it was determined to expand the available parking at the Mill Road municipal parking area on a trial basis overseen by staff members to allow for an expanded availability for parking. This has been accomplished, and observations to date have confirmed that this has been functioning successfully without leading to inappropriate crowding conditions on the Surf Drive beach.

Based upon these positive results, it has been further determined to modestly expand the available parking at the following resident parking-only beaches including Bristol, Megansett and Stony Beaches. This will be accomplished over the next several days with the assistance of Public Works, as this requires the movement of the very large concrete parking barriers. I want to thank Public Works for their diligent assistance in regard to this challenging parking situation and these late season adjustments. Monitoring and oversight of beach parking areas continues with a full staff of parking attendants.



Julian M. Suso
Falmouth, MA Town Manager