



Mayor's Office | Phone: 860.584.6250 | Fax: 860-584-3835

**For Immediate Release: Effective Immediately:**

## **BRISTOL ACTIVE PARK SITES AND ATHLETIC FIELDS CLOSED**

“Over the weekend, the Parks & Recreation Superintendent Dr. Josh Medeiros, Dr. Catherine Carbone, the Superintendent of Schools, Police Chief Brian Gould and I discussed the ongoing concern of people using the Parks in large groups,” stated Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu. “In response to the fact that social distancing is not being used at the active recreation sites, the decision has been made to close these sites for the overall public health objectives that the “Stay Safe, Stay Home” initiative is encouraging.”

These closures include:

- All City Playgrounds & Playscapes including the ones at Schools
- All City Basketball Courts including the ones at Schools
- Rockwell Park Skate Park
- Volleyball Courts
- All Park Athletic Fields
- All School Athletic Fields including the Turf Fields

“Passive recreational areas, open spaces and trails will continue to remain open to the public at this time,” said Parks Superintendent Josh Medeiros. “However, signs will be posted at all of these locations reminding all Park Users that social distancing needs to be employed.”

“The role of the Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services Department is to enhance the quality of life for the Bristol community by providing opportunities to improve physical, mental and social health of both youth and adults. Due to this health crisis we need to take additional measures to protect the residents of Bristol while continuing to provide these opportunities in a safe way,” Medeiros said.

“Since the onset of this health crisis the city’s Parks team has been monitoring the latest developments and implementing best practices used by parks agencies across the country. At this time 70% of municipalities are moving to close playgrounds and over 90% of the districts are keeping trail systems, and passive park spaces open.

### **City of Bristol**

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As of March 30, 2020 Bristol parks will be taking further action to enforce social distancing through the temporarily closure of playgrounds and select recreational amenities. Trails and passive park spaces will remain open as they are essential to allow people the ability maintain physical and mental health while practicing social distancing.”

(Data Source: National Recreation and Parks Association).

**Open facilities at this time, which is subject to change, include:**

- Tennis Courts
- Memorial Boulevard Track for walking/running only (field is closed for activity)
- Nelson's Field
- All walking trails and paths in all Parks and also the Hoppers-Birge Pond and Pine Lake areas
- Roberts Property Dog Park – where people are encouraged to pick up after their own dogs to keep the area clean for all users.
- Rockwell Park Mountain Bike Trail
- Rockwell Park Dog Park
- Page Park and Rockwell Park Disc Golf ( for groups of less than 5)

“In addition, we will be closing the lower half of Memorial Boulevard to traffic effective Wednesday, April 1st in order to create additional passive recreation space,” said Medeiros.

“We recognize that our scholars and families are trying to get outdoors and exercise,” said Dr. Catherine Carbone, Superintendent of Schools. “Through our joint efforts we can keep our community safe by adhering to all social distancing recommendations. As such, all school fields and playgrounds, like the city parks and playgrounds, will remain closed until further notice.”

“Unfortunately, we are experiencing too many people, mostly our youth, gathering in our parks, playgrounds, skate-park, basketball courts, etc., in complete disregard of personal distancing,” said Chief Brian Gould. “We all need to do our part to isolate, contain and control this deadly disease and we ask our community to please abide by the social distancing regulations. Bristol Police Officers will be proactively patrolling these areas of concern to ensure compliance.”

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