

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 5, 2020

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**ESSEX COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIVINCENZO REMINDS VISITORS
THAT FACE COVERINGS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING ARE REQUIRED
IN ESSEX COUNTY PARKS**

Newark, NJ – Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. is reminding residents who visit the Essex County Parks System and Essex County Golf Courses that wearing face coverings and practicing social distancing are required. The Executive amended the County's COVID-19 emergency protective measures/declarations to include the requirements to require the use of face coverings and practicing social distancing on Monday, May 4th; it was announced through the daily report issued by the Essex County Office of Emergency Management.

"Over the last several days, I have visited almost all of our parks. What I witnessed were large numbers of people using our parks and making it virtually impossible to practice social distancing, even outdoors," DiVincenzo said. "While the opportunity to enjoy nature and get a breath of fresh air is welcomed, we cannot let our guard down and must continue to remain vigilant in our fight against the Coronavirus. Social distancing is still recognized as the best way to prevent the spread of this disease and wearing a face covering significantly reduces the possibility of the virus from being passed from person to person," he added.

Essex County Parks are open for passive recreation only. This includes running, walking and sitting. Visitors must wear face coverings and follow social distancing guidelines, which require 6 feet between each person. Playgrounds; tennis, basketball and bocce courts; dog parks; baseball, softball, soccer and football fields; exercise and par courses; Turtle Back Zoo, paddle boating at the South Mountain Recreation Complex and the Environmental Center remain closed. Large groups of people are not allowed. In addition, all park buildings and restroom buildings will be closed. Since Turtle Back Zoo is closed, the zoo parking decks also will be closed. Essex County's three public golf courses – Hendricks Field in Belleville, Francis Byrne in West Orange and Weequahic Golf Course in Newark – also opened on May 2nd and offer modified play.

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