

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Ashley Huckaby May, Visit Hood River, ashley@visithoodriver.com 503-819-4532

On behalf of- City of Hood River, Hood River County, Port of Hood River & Hood River County Chamber of Commerce

COMPLY OR MAKE OTHER PLANS: HOOD RIVER CITY, COUNTY, AND TOURISM OFFICIALS SEND CLEAR MESSAGE TO VISITORS FOR JULY 4 WEEKEND

With cases on the rise in Oregon and face coverings required in indoor public spaces statewide, Hood River eager to balance tourism, safety, and compliance

(HOOD RIVER, Ore.) — Visitors with a tradition of celebrating the Independence Day holiday in Hood River and the Gorge will find an entirely different experience this year, and local officials are urging visitors to arrive prepared. Canceled for July 4 are the traditional fireworks display and parade in Hood River, and many recreational facilities are operating with strict COVID-19 and fire safety guidelines.

- Prepare to wear a mask indoors and wear outdoors when close to others you don't live with. Pandemic safety measures also include physical distancing (staying six feet apart,) and frequent hand washing.
- Expect to encounter varying hours, operations, and even closures among local parks, parking lots and businesses. Limit non essential travel. Be mindful of your surroundings and others you may come in contact with before, during, and after your travels, to reduce your risk of spreading COVID.
- Please pack out your trash and expect limited public services and access in the Gorge.
- There are no fireworks displays in Hood River county this year

These are a few of the directives Hood River City, Cascade Locks City, Hood River County, Port of Hood River and tourism officials remind those considering a day trip or overnight visit to Hood River over the Fourth of July weekend.

“We are eager to welcome visitors over the July 4 weekend and beyond, but as Oregonians, we are at a critical crossroads. We must make a plea to visitors and residents - we all have a moral and social responsibility to practice compliance, vigilance, and an abundance of caution while out and about in our community,” said Mike Oates, Chairman, Hood River County Board of Commissioners.

“It may seem as though you are escaping the crowds - and therefore the virus - by visiting Hood River County. But for those who cannot or will not practice proper ‘pandemic etiquette’ while visiting, we encourage you to make other plans and postpone travel to Hood River County until you are able to do so,” Oates said

According to the latest [Apple COVID-19 Mobility Trends](#) (chart available [HERE](#)), the number of visitors to Hood River County from outside of the area has steadily increased since mid-April. Since Memorial Day Weekend, those numbers have jumped up dramatically for both weekend and midweek visitation, and topped out at more than 300 percent above baseline over the June 27-28 weekend.

According to the latest [Google Mobility Report](#) from June 27, visitation to Hood River County parks – which includes places like national parks, public beaches, marinas, dog parks, plazas, and public gardens – is up 224 percent over baseline, the highest increase of any Oregon county.

“While Gov. Brown’s face covering mandate applies specifically to indoor public spaces, any time you expect to be in close proximity to others including outdoor locations such as a crowded beach or a popular hiking trail, we strongly encourage you to wear a face covering and maintain proper physical distance as a guest of Hood River,” said Kate McBride, Mayor of Hood River. “Just because you are outdoors does not mean you are not at risk or that it is okay to relax your guard.”

Visitors are encouraged to visit the [Rediscover Hood River](#) resources page of the Visit Hood River website before and during their visit, where they will find the latest information and updates, links to additional resources, and guidelines to maximize the safety and enjoyment of their time in Hood River County.

“We are doing everything in our power to balance peoples’ desires to visit Hood River County, our commitment to making them feel welcome and invited, and the need to protect the health and safety of residents and visitors,” said Ashley Huckaby May, director of Visit Hood River.

“If Hood River County wasn’t such a special place to so many, we wouldn’t even be having these difficult conversations. But it is and we are, and we are grateful to those who have plans to visit safely and responsibly this weekend and in the weeks and months ahead.”

For the latest updates and information on travel restrictions and closures in Hood River County from a variety of public agencies, please visit the <https://www.getreadygorge.com/closures>. Also visit <https://portofhoodriver.com/whatisopen/>, <https://cityofhoodriver.gov/most-neighborhood-parks-open/>, <https://portofcascadelocks.org/covid-19-closures-update/> or [Visit Hood River](#) websites.

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