

This document contains the Connecticut regulations for General State Park Rules and Regulations with the revisions to the regulations that became effective July 27, 2007. This document was prepared by the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and is provided for the convenience of the reader. This is not the official version of the regulations. The official regulations are published by the State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch, Commission on Official Legal Publications in the Connecticut Law Journal. In the event there is inconsistency between this document and the regulations published in the Connecticut Law Journal, the Connecticut Law Journal publication will serve as the official version.

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Sections 23-4-1 through 23-4-5, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are revised as follows:

Section 23-4-1. General regulations

(a) Hours of operation.

State parks and state forest recreation areas shall be open for public use daily between sunrise and sunset. State parks shall be open to public vehicular traffic daily between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and sunset, except as otherwise specifically authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection. Other state forest areas shall be open between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset.

(b) Vandalism and possession of food or beverage inside historic structure.

- (1) No person shall deface, destroy, alter, remove or otherwise injure in any manner any structures, buildings, vegetation, earth or rock material, trees, or fuelwood, nor shall any wildlife be molested or disturbed except as authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection. The Commissioner may grant upon written application, permission to collect specimens, take samples and conduct other investigations for scientific or educational purposes. Such permission shall be in writing and shall be subject to such conditions as the Commissioner deems necessary.
- (2) No person shall possess food or beverage inside of historic structures unless permitted by the Department of Environmental Protection.

(c) Hunting/weapons.

Hunting or carrying of firearms, archery equipment or other weapons, including but not limited to air rifles and slingshots, is not permitted in any state park or forest except as authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection. All carrying or use of weapons is subject to applicable provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes and regulations adopted thereunder.

(d) Fishing.

Fishing is permitted in all state parks and forests, except in designated swimming areas and other areas so posted. Fishing, where permitted, is allowed from sunrise to sunset unless otherwise posted. All fishing is subject to the provisions of Chapter 490 of the General Statutes and regulations adopted thereunder.

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(e) **Alcoholic beverages.**

- (1) The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on state park or forest beaches, boardwalks and other areas so posted.
- (2) The possession of beer in containers larger than one (1) liter is prohibited.
- (3) The sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- (4) The Commissioner shall have the authority to ban the possession or use of alcohol in any state park acquired or opened after April 1, 2006.
- (5) The Commissioner shall have the authority to temporarily ban, for periods up to a maximum of ninety (90) days, the possession or use of alcohol at specific recreation areas if its use is creating public safety issues as determined by the Commissioner.

(f) **Pets and riding animals.**

- (1) Pets and riding animals are prohibited in Sherwood Island and Squantz Pond State Parks from April 15 to September 30, inclusive. Except as provided in subdivision (5) of this subsection, riding animals and pets must be on a leash that is no longer than seven (7) feet in length, and must be under the control of their owner or keeper at all times.
- (2) Pets and riding animals, including, but not limited to dogs and horses, are prohibited in the following areas of state parks and forests at all times: all buildings, swimming areas and other areas so posted. No person shall allow any pet or riding animal under their control to enter a waterbody in which there is a Department of Environmental Protection designated swimming area from anywhere on Department of Environmental Protection property containing that swimming area from April 1 through October 31, inclusive.
- (3) In state forest campgrounds, no more than two pets shall be allowed per campsite. Pets are prohibited from state park campgrounds.
- (4) Trained service animals, required to perform a specific task and for the ongoing treatment of a disability or health condition, are permitted in all areas not closed to the public while accompanied by the person needing their assistance.
- (5) This subsection shall not apply to the proper use of dogs while in the act of hunting, training or deployment of certified search and rescue dogs or to Law Enforcement or Department of Environmental Protection personnel acting in the course of their employment.
- (6) Persons bringing pets or riding animals to state recreation picnic areas, athletic fields, man-made structures, paved surfaces, beaches where permitted and campgrounds, with the exception of horse camps, shall remove and properly dispose of pet waste (feces) left by the pet or riding animal under their control.

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(g) Notices and signs.

No person shall erect, post or distribute any notice or sign upon state park or forest property unless authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection manager in charge of such park or forest property.

(h) Commercial restrictions.

The use of state park or forest lands or any improvements thereon for private gain or commercial purposes is prohibited, except by concessionaires or vendors with written permission of the Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee, or by Special Use License issued by the Department of Environmental Protection.

(i) Meetings and proselytism.

Political meetings and proselytism may be conducted only in areas and at times approved by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Commissioner's designee. Such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld.

(j) Littering.

No person shall dispose of any material in a state park or forest, except in receptacles provided for such disposal.

(k) Dumping.

Disposing of any material in a state park or forest which was not accumulated during the use of such facilities is prohibited.

(l) Trails and roads.

- (1) Trails are open to non-motorized, multiple use activities unless posted closed. Use of any trail, road or path posted as closed by the Department of Environmental Protection is prohibited.
- (2) Use of Connecticut Blue-Blazed Trails and the National Park Service Appalachian Trail crossing state property shall be limited to hiking except where Department of Environmental Protection blazed trails supporting other uses coincide.
- (3) Public roadways in state parks and forests are open to registered motor vehicles as defined in 14-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes and other non-motorized multiple uses unless posted closed.
- (4) Service, logging and other roads closed to public use by motor vehicles are open to non-motorized multiple use activities unless posted closed.

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(m) **Boats.**

- (1) Boats shall be restricted to areas posted for boating by the Department of Environmental Protection, and are prohibited in swimming areas.
- (2) No person shall fasten a boat to any state park or forest pier or anchor in any launching area so as to prevent free access to the pier or launching area.
- (3) Vessels launching from Squantz Pond State Boat Launch are prohibited from using a motor or combination of motors in excess of 25 horse power. Larger motors may be attached to such vessels but the propeller must be removed and the motor inclined out of the water or as high as possible. No motorized vessels may land or offload/unload passengers or equipment on Department of Environmental Protection-owned property outside of the launch area.

(n) **Gambling.**

Gambling in any form on state park or forest property is prohibited.

(o) **Disorderly conduct.**

Disorderly conduct, public nudity, intoxication, and obscene or indecent behavior are prohibited, and all forms of rough play, or activities or contests creating hazards to persons or property, including, but not limited to, the use of paintball guns or other similar devices, are prohibited.

(p) **Picnicking.**

Picnicking is allowed unless otherwise posted by the Department of Environmental Protection.

(q) **Fires.**

- (1) Fires may be kindled only in grills, stoves, fireplaces or other designated campfire facilities.
 - (2) No person may kindle or maintain a fire within five (5) feet of any tree, building or shrub, except in those locations where the Department of Environmental Protection has provided fireplaces or grills.
 - (3) Fire residue shall be properly disposed of in hot coal/ash receptacles, where provided.
 - (4) Fire residue shall not be disposed of in a manner that may damage property or cause injury to a person
- [(4)] (5) No fire shall be left unattended.

(r) **Athletics.**

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The playing of baseball, football, soccer, golf or other athletic games is allowed unless otherwise restricted.

(s) **Swimming.**

- (1) Swimming is allowed except where posted as prohibited by the Department of Environmental Protection.
- (2) All persons in swimming areas shall obey the lifeguards.
- (3) Swimming hours are from sunrise to sunset.
- (4) No person shall swim in long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, a skirt, a dress or other restrictive clothing.
- (5) Washing of persons or articles in the waters of swimming areas is prohibited.

(t) **Glassware.**

The possession or use of glass on the beach or in swimming areas is prohibited.

(u) **Fireworks.**

The possession or use of all classes of fireworks in any state park or forest is prohibited except as authorized by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. Such authorization shall be in writing and subject to the applicable provisions of the General Statutes and regulations adopted thereunder and such conditions as the Commissioner deems necessary.

(v) **Swimming aids.**

- (1) Inflatable or buoyant devices (including, but not limited to, inner tubes, ring buoys, balls, air mattresses and rafts) are prohibited in those areas at state swimming areas that are protected by on-duty lifeguards, except for U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices when worn by swimmers. The use of U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices may be required in certain areas as determined to be appropriate by the Department of Environmental Protection. These areas shall be designated by the posting of conspicuous signs notifying individuals of the required use of the U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices.
- (2) Snorkels are prohibited in guarded swimming areas.
- (3) Goggles, facemasks and flippers are permitted in swimming areas.

(w) **Under-water fishing devices.**

Under-water fishing devices are [permitted] prohibited in designated swimming areas.

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(x) **Noise.**

No person shall cause or allow any noise which infringes on the ability of others to enjoy state park or forest property, except as authorized by [the DEP manager in charge.] the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Commissioner's designee.

(y) **Avoidance of fees.**

The avoidance of fees established in accordance with Section 23-26 of the General Statutes at the various state parks and forests is prohibited.

(z) **Buildings and structures.**

- (1) No person shall use any building or structure for any purpose other than that for which it is designated.
- (2) No person may attach any electrical extension cord to any electrical receptacle unless authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection manager in charge.

(aa) **Public water facilities.**

- (1) The use of public drinking water facilities for the purpose of washing is prohibited.
- (2) No person shall attach any item to a faucet without prior approval of the Department of Environmental Protection manager in charge.

(bb) **Losses or theft.**

The state assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of any article in any state park or forest.

(cc) **Tents.**

- (1) Full coverage tents are not permitted in day-use areas, including, but not limited to, beaches, parking lots and picnic areas.
- (2) Rigid frame (event-type) tents are not permitted to be erected on state park or forest property except as authorized in writing by the Commissioner of Department of Environmental Protection or the Commissioner's designee.

Section 23-4-2 Vehicles – traffic and parking regulations.

(a) **Parking.**

Parking of vehicles shall be limited to such places and hours as designated by markings, signs or postings. It shall be prima facie evidence that the

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registered owner of the vehicle was the operator at the time of any parking violation.

(b) Speed limit.

Unless otherwise posted, the speed of any vehicle in state parks or forests shall not exceed twenty (20) miles per hour.

(c) Traffic signs.

No person shall operate, park or stand any motor vehicle in a manner contrary to any traffic or parking sign.

(d) Motor vehicles, use restricted.

Motor vehicles, including motorcycles and motorized bicycles, are restricted to operating on roads, parking lots, campsites and other areas posted for such, except as authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection. The use of all other motor vehicles, except motorized wheelchairs, is prohibited, except as authorized by the Department of Environmental Protection.

(e) All-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, use restricted.

No person shall use any all-terrain vehicle or snowmobile, as defined in Section 14-379 of the General Statutes on any state park or forest land except in areas posted for the use of such vehicles.

Section 23-4-3. Camping regulations.

(a) Campground areas.

Camping is restricted to such places and times as are designated by the Department of Environmental Protection.

(b) Camping permit.

- (1) Any person wishing to camp in a state park or forest campground area must secure a permit.
- (2) A person must be eighteen years of age or older to secure a camping permit.
- (3) The permittee is responsible for the campsite and the conduct of all members of the camping party and all visitors to the campsite.
- (4) No one shall occupy a campsite prior to check-in time or stay past check-out time of the last day covered by the permit. Equipment left on the site after the date and time of expiration of the permit will be considered abandoned.

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(c) Camping equipment.

- (1) No person shall place any vehicle, camping or other equipment on any state park or forest campsite without a permit.
- (2) Camping is restricted to camp trailers, tents and similar equipment except where otherwise designated by the Department of Environmental Protection manager in charge.
- (3) Any and all camping equipment on a single campsite may not occupy a total of more than four hundred (400) square feet of ground area.
- (4) Any unauthorized or abandoned vehicles, camping or other equipment may be removed by any law enforcement officer of the Department of Environmental Protection or by the Department of Environmental Protection manager in charge or his or her designee. Any fees or fines incurred or costs for removal, disposal or storage of equipment shall be the responsibility of the owner of the equipment.

(d) Trespassing.

No person shall trespass on the campsite of another.

(e) Transfer of permit.

No person shall transfer a camping permit to another.

(f) Lights.

All lights on a campsite, except those needed for safety, shall be extinguished by 11:00 P.M.

(g) Campfires.

No combustible material shall be added to campfires after 11:00 P.M.

(h) Quiet hours.

No person shall cause or allow any noise, which disturbs the tranquility of others between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

(i) Campground parking.

The maximum number of motor vehicles allowed per campsite is two (2) unless posted otherwise.

(j) Campsite occupancy.

The maximum number of occupants allowed per campsite is six. However, a parent or parents accompanied by any number of their children under the age of eighteen may occupy a single campsite irrespective of the six person limitation.

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(k) Visitors.

Visitors shall park in designated visitor parking areas only and shall not otherwise drive or park within the campground. Visitors are permitted to enter state park or forest campgrounds between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and sunset, and must leave the campgrounds by 10:00 P.M.

(l) Permit forfeiture.

A permit shall be forfeited if the permittee fails to occupy the campsite within the first twenty-four (24) hour period for which the permit has been granted.

Section 23-4-4. Special regulations.

(a)(1) Bluff Point Coastal Preserve.

(A) Bluff Point Coastal Reserve shall be open to the public daily from 8:00 a.m. until sunset; provided that fishing shall be allowed at any time. Except as is specifically provided for in subparagraph (1)(B) of this subdivision, no person shall enter Bluff Point Coastal Reserve except when it is open.

(B) The Commissioner shall close Bluff Point State park and Bluff Point Coastal Reserve for the taking of deer pursuant to section 26-86a-11 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. During any such closure only persons employed by the Department of Environmental Protection whose employment requires them to do so or persons with specific written authorization from the Commissioner shall be allowed to enter Bluff Point State Park or Bluff Point Coastal Reserve during the days and /or hours designated by the Commissioner. To effect such closure the Commissioner shall post notices or signs or shall otherwise notify the public that Bluff Point State Park and Bluff Point Coastal Reserve are closed, including the hours and/or days that they will remain closed.

(2) **Vandalism.** No person shall deface, destroy, alter, molest, disturb, remove or otherwise injure in any manner any structure, building, vegetation, earth or rock material, tree, fuelwood, wildlife or fauna except as may occur as a normal incident of the lawful use of Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. The Commissioner may grant to any person, upon written application, permission to collect specimens, take samples or conduct any other investigation for management or scientific purposes. Such permission shall be in writing and shall be subject to such conditions as the Commissioner deems necessary for the purpose of preserving public safety or the native ecological associations, unique faunal characteristics, geological features or scenic qualities of Bluff Point Coastal Preserve.

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- (3) **Weapons.** Except for authorized law enforcement personnel or persons authorized pursuant to section 26-86a-11 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, no person shall discharge, possess or carry any firearm, archery equipment or other weapon, including but not limited to an air rifle or sling shot within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.
- (4) **Alcoholic Beverages.** Within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve: (A) No minor, as defined by section 30-1 of the general statutes, shall possess or drink any alcoholic beverages; (B) No person shall possess beer in a container greater than one liter; (C) No person shall drink or possess any alcoholic beverage in any area so posted; and (D) No person shall sell any alcoholic beverage.
- (5) **Pets.** No person may bring a pet or riding animal into Bluff Point Coastal Reserve unless such pet or riding animal is on a leash no longer than seven feet and is under the continuous control of the owner or handler; provided that no pets or riding animals shall be allowed into any area so posted by the Commissioner.
- (6) **Notices and signs.** No person, other than the commissioner, shall erect or post, or attempt to erect or post, any notice or sign in Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. The Commissioner may erect or post any sign or notice within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve consistent with Special Act 75-45, as amended.
- (7) **Improvements/Structures and Commercial restrictions.**
 - (A) No person, other than the Commissioner, shall temporarily or otherwise, make improvements to, or erect structures on or in, Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. The Commissioner may make improvements to or erect structures on or in Bluff Point Coastal Reserve consistent with Special Act 75-45, as amended.
 - (B) Except with the advance written authorization of the Commissioner, no person shall use Bluff Point Coastal Reserve for private financial gain or for commercial purposes. Any such authorization granted by the Commissioner shall be for the purposes specified in Special Act 75-45.
- (8) **Waste disposal.** No person shall dispose of any waste material at Bluff Point Coastal Reserve except in a receptacle provided by the Commissioner for such purpose and provided that all such waste material was generated there as a normal incident to such person's lawful use of Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. If no receptacle is provided by the Commissioner, each person shall remove or carry out of Bluff Point Coastal Reserve all such waste material accumulated or generated there by such person during such person's use of Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. No person shall bring any waste material into Bluff Point Coastal Reserve for disposal therein.
- (9) **Fires.** No person shall light a fire at Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.

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- (10) **Swimming.** No person shall swim except in areas posted or designated for swimming by the Commissioner. No person shall use skin diving or scuba equipment except in areas so posted or designated by the Commissioner.
- (11) **Crockery and glassware.** No person shall possess or use crockery or glass container on the beach or in any other area so posted by the Commissioner.
- (12) **Fireworks.** No person shall possess or use fireworks at Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.
- (13) **Parking.**
- (A) Except as is specifically provided for in this subdivision, no person shall park any motor vehicle with Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. For purposes of this subdivision the term motor vehicle shall include any motor vehicle, motorcycle, motorized bicycle, camp trailer, camper, motor bus, mechanically driven mass conveyance, snowmobile, truck, trailer or tractor.
 - (B) Only the following persons may park a motor vehicle, battery-powered conveyance as described in subpart (III) of this subparagraph, or horse-drawn or electric-powered conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.
 - (i) Department of Environmental Protection employees using a motor vehicle within the course of their employment.
 - (ii) Persons responding to an emergency with Bluff Point Coastal Reserve;
 - (iii) Persons using battery-powered conveyances capable of carrying not more than two persons for use by the physically disabled or the elderly provided any such person receives advance written authorization from the Commissioner to park a battery-powered conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve; or
 - (iv) Persons using horse-drawn or electric-powered conveyances, provided any such person receives advanced written authorization from the Commissioner to park such conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve;
 - (C) Any such motor vehicle or conveyance lawfully within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve shall only be used along established roadways therein.
- (14) **Motor Vehicles.**
- (A) Except as is specifically provided for in this subdivision, no person shall use or operate any motor vehicle or allow any motor vehicle to

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enter Bluff Point Coastal Reserve. Any such unauthorized vehicle within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve may be towed at the owner's expense. For purposes of this subdivision the term motor vehicle shall include any motor vehicle, motorcycle, motorized bicycle, camp trailer, camper, motor bus, mechanically driven mass conveyance, snowmobile, trailer or tractor.

(B) Only the following persons may use a motor vehicle, battery-powered conveyance as described in subpart (iii) of this subparagraph, or horse-drawn or electric-powered conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve:

- (i) Department of Environmental Protection employees using a motor vehicle in the course of their employment;
- (ii) Persons responding to an emergency within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve;
- (iii) Persons using battery-powered conveyances capable of carrying not more than two persons for use by the physically disabled or the elderly, provided any such person receives advance written authorization from the Commissioner to operate a battery-powered conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve; or
- (iv) Persons using horse-drawn or electric-powered conveyances, provided any such person receives advance written authorization from the Commissioner to operate such a conveyance within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.

(C) Any such motor vehicle or conveyance lawfully within Bluff Point Coastal Reserve shall only be used along established roadways therein.

(15) Camping. No person shall camp at Bluff Point Coastal Reserve.

(16) Definitions. For purposes this subsection of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:

“Commissioner” is defined as in section 22a-2 of the general statutes.

“Person” is defined as in section 22a-2 of the general statutes.

Section 23-4-5. Evictions and penalties.

(a) **Eviction.**

(1) Violation of any provision of Sections 23-4-1 through 23-4-4 inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be sufficient cause for eviction for a period of [not less than] twenty-four hours.

(2) No person evicted with written notice shall enter any state park or forest during the eviction period.

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(b) Penalties.

- (1) Any person who violates any provision of Sections 23-4-1 through 23-4-[4] 3, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall have committed an infraction.
- (2)(A) Any person who violates any provision of Sections 23-4-1 to 23-4-[4] 3, inclusive, of these regulations shall pay a fine in accordance with the fee schedule established by the judges of the Superior Court of the state of Connecticut.
- (B) Any person who enters a state park or forest during an eviction period in violation of Section 23-4-4(a) of these regulations shall pay a fine in accordance with the schedule established by the judges of the Superior Court of the state of Connecticut.