



CHEBEAGUE ISLAND *Maine*

July 3, 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am writing to wish you a happy and safe July 4th weekend.

There are some timely changes I want the island community to be aware of as we all plan for this Independence Day 2020. This holiday weekend poses unique circumstances due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Based on improving CDC public health metrics and effective today, Governor Janet Mills announced an [exemption](#) for visitors from Connecticut, New Jersey and New York from the 14-day quarantine requirement or Covid-19 negative testing alternative known as "[Know Before You Go](#)".

This adds CT, NJ and NY to the list with Vermont and New Hampshire, as states with similar progress (as determined by CDC data measurements) in the fight against the spread of Covid-19. The Mills Administration cited the following rationale for this further opening up of the tourist season in Maine:

- The States of Connecticut, New Jersey and New York demonstrate low positivity rates and show encouraging downward trends in the prevalence of the virus.
- CT, NJ and NY demonstrate a lower positive rate than Maine's Covid-19 positivity rate. Adjusted for population, Maine ranks 7th lowest in the nation in terms of positive cases; 9th lowest in the nation in terms of deaths; 4th highest percentage of recovery (out of 42 reporting states).
- New Hampshire and Vermont continue to have similar or better success rates in fighting the spread of Covid-19 and are exempt from the 14-day quarantine or Covid-19 negative testing alternative.

- Governor Mills urges all visitors, including those from these states, to be proactive and obtain a Covid-19 negative test before arrival to Maine, but has not mandated testing. A list of testing sites can be found at [Get Tested Covid19](#).

What does this mean for us on Chebeague? We are still in a state of emergency on Chebeague Island. The community has rallied together to follow CDC guidelines, create systems to carry on daily life safely and avoid an outbreak. Summer friends and neighbors have arrived on the island and successfully completed 14-day quarantines. But we are still vulnerable. In fact, until we have a vaccine, we may be more vulnerable with our growing summer population and our high proportion of at-risk residents. Combined with the national strain on PPE and test availability along with rising cases in other parts of the country, we are on high alert.

Many of our events are canceled and facilities are closed, but we still have more islanders interacting daily. We are interconnected here. The frontline on Chebeague is shared by every one of us. Stopping an outbreak is our number one priority and requires everyone to play a part.

Please wear your masks and carry them wherever you go. You may not see anyone, and may be able to keep socially distant, but we know it is common to run into a friend at the Store, on the road, at the Transfer Station, the Slowbell or the Niblic and Boatyard. Enjoy your visit, but **wear your mask** and keep 6 feet apart (at least).

The sun and beautiful weather may blur our vigilance. Don't let it. The nature of island life and our smaller geography necessitates all the proven safety measures. I ask you to keep an elderly islander or a friend or loved one with an underlying health issue top of mind. Wear your mask for them.

We learn more about the virus every day, but what science is proving over and over, is that masks work. Keeping six feet apart from one another works. Washing your hands works. Combined, we have a plan we must follow together.

Independence Day takes on a different kind of meaning this year. Each of us will need to balance our desire for carefree fun and family time this 4th of July with our diligence to the specific, proven safety measures to fight the virus and keep Chebeague safe.

As always, if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 846-3148 or email me at townadmin@townofchebeagueisland.org.

Be safe. Be considerate. Listen to one another.

Marjorie A. Stratton
Town Administrator