

City of Salem to discourage Halloween visits by tripling fines, closing business, and banning music stages and street performances

In order to protect the health and well-being of residents, employees, and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Salem is implementing additional public safety protocols for the weekends of October 23rd to October 25th and October 30th to November 1st. In addition to all Salem Haunted Happenings events being cancelled, which was announced in August, businesses are being asked to close early on October 23rd and October 24th. A Board of Health and Executive Order requiring early closures of businesses is anticipated for October 30th and October 31st. Visitors who are planning to come to Salem that weekend should postpone their visit to Salem.

“While we have seen around half the visitors to Salem this October than we’ve had in previous years, we still have had large numbers of people here throughout the month,” said Mayor Kim Driscoll. “Ordinarily, there is no better place to celebrate Halloween than Salem. Our first priority from the outset of this pandemic has been keeping residents, employees, and visitors healthy and safe. To help ensure we can meet that goal, we are taking action to limit the number of people who will be in Salem on Halloween and the day prior.”

MBTA Train Service

The City has worked with the MBTA to curtail trains to Salem over the final two weekends of October. MBTA commuter rail

trains outbound from Boston will not stop at Salem station on October 23rd and October 30th between 7:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. or October 24th, October 25th, and October 31st between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Visit www.mbtta.com/salem complete details and commuters should plan their travel accordingly.

Parking Restrictions

All City parking garages and lots will close to entering traffic at 2:00 p.m. on October 23rd and at noon on October 24th, October 25th, October 30th, October 31st, and November 1st. Salem residents with reserved parking spaces or who live downtown and any downtown business employee with proof of employment may enter and park in both City garages at any time at the regular parking rate and subject to available spaces. Exiting traffic will still be allowed. All privately operated parking lots are ordered to close to entering vehicles at these times, as well. The City's "Universal Steel" parking lot at 297 Bridge Street will be closed to all parking Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for the next two weekends.

The MBTA garage will have restricted access for local parking from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on October 23rd and October 30th, noon to 8:00 p.m. on October 24th, noon to 6:00 p.m. on October 25th and November 1st, and noon to 11:00 p.m. on October 31st. During these times only commuter/transit users will be allowed to park in the garage.

The City is temporarily expanding resident parking areas to additional streets during the final two weekends of October and will be ticketing and towing illegally parked vehicles. See the attached map for the expanded resident parking streets. Hang tags and stickers will not be issued for the expanded resident parking areas. License plates will be run by police prior to towing in order to check the registered address of any vehicle.

Business Closures

The City of Salem is asking all downtown businesses to utilize reservations and to close or curtail activity by 8:00 p.m. on October 23rd and 24th to help mitigate the evening crowds that are anticipated for this traditionally busy weekend. No lines or waiting will be permitted on the public way after 8:00 p.m. on both Friday and Saturday, October 23rd and 24th. This includes retail, museums, attractions, walking tours, restaurants, and other businesses that are in the area designated on the attached map.

The City will order mandatory 8:00 p.m. closures of all downtown businesses for the weekend of October 30th and October 31st of retail, museums, attractions, walking tours, restaurants, and other businesses that are in the area designated on the map below. Further, the City anticipates that it may be necessary to close or restrict access to sections of the downtown, as necessary, throughout the day.

Traffic Control Points

The Salem Police Department will implement a Traffic Control Plan in approximately 15 locations throughout the City to assist non-residents in exiting the area. Traffic Control Points will be established October 24th, October 30th, and October 31st between noon and 8:00 p.m., or as circumstances may require. Police personnel will staff Traffic Control Points at each location to redirect vehicles and physical barricades will be in place to define closure at each location. Traffic Control Points will also have significant parking enforcement efforts, to further deter non-residents from parking in residential areas. These areas will be clearly marked. The Traffic Control Plan is subject to change based on actual traffic flow and congestion.

Liquor Sales

State law provides that restaurants with liquor licenses may serve alcohol between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Local

licensing boards may grant extended closing hours between 11:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. In Salem, hours are extended to 1:00 a.m. In light of the pandemic, large crowds expected in our downtown in the coming weekends, and the resulting concern by local health officials of a potential increase in cases as a result, the Salem Licensing Board this week shall discuss and vote on rolling back the sale of alcohol at restaurants in the downtown Central Business District (B5) and Business Neighborhood (B1) zones to 11:00 p.m., the limit of the Licensing Board's authority on closure time, for October 24th, October 30th, and October 31st. A map of the zones can be found on the City's website at <https://www.salem.com/gis-and-maps/files/zoning-map2019>

Essex Street Pedestrian Mall

Salem Police will restrict pedestrian access to the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall should crowds reach a level that is considered unsafe pursuant to public health guidelines. Police may close the pedestrian mall entirely for periods of time to de-densify crowds, as deemed necessary.

Triple Fines

Salem will again this year triple all City fines for the period of October 30th through November 1st, including fines for noise violations, resident parking violations, and public intoxication.

Halloween Night

All the customary Halloween night events in Salem have been cancelled, as was announced on August 4th. This includes all outdoor music stages and performances, beer gardens, and other activities, including the usual Halloween fireworks. There will be no events on Halloween night in Salem. Downtown businesses should close by 8:00 p.m. on Halloween night at the latest. Salem Police will close roads to through-traffic and pedestrians as circumstances warrant.

Trick-or-Treating

Trick-or-treating is not a City event. The decision to trick-or-treat is one that individual families should make on their own. Those who choose to engage in trick-or-treating should comply with the public health guidance issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health: www.mass.gov/news/halloween-during-covid-19. If trick-or-treating, families should not congregate with other family groups, should keep a face covering on at all times, and should stay six feet away from others. Anyone choosing to trick-or-treat should be out no later than 8:00 p.m. Those giving out candy should leave it outside for trick-or-treaters to take and only in individual, not communal, receptacles. Residents who do not wish to give out candy can indicate that by keeping their outside light off for the evening. Residents of other communities should not trick-or-treat in Salem.

House Parties

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, residents, including Salem State University students, should avoid gathering for Halloween parties. Salem has previously suspended its reopening and remains in Phase III, Step 1, within which indoor gatherings are limited to 25% of the maximum permitted occupancy and no more than 25 persons in all. Violations of the gathering order may result in substantial fines and penalties.

These announcements all follow the City's previous measures undertaken over the past several months to curtail the spread of COVID-19 in the community:

- Postponed the shift to Phase III, Step 2 reopening;
- Limited table capacities to six despite state allowances for up to 10;
- Canceled all Haunted Happenings parades, balls, festivals, and large events in August;

- Suspended all Haunted Happenings marketing earlier this year;
- Prohibited street performers in the central downtown area;
- Canceled the usual outdoor retail merchant activity on and along the pedestrian mall;
- Instituted a mandatory mask zone downtown and inside businesses;
- Published a crowd meter at www.salem.com/crowds to reflect downtown crowd levels on October weekends;
- Required those staying overnight in Salem to complete the local traveler form at www.salem.com/traveler;
- Established free COVID-19 testing in downtown Salem on weekdays; and
- Restricted access along the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall

Date	City and Private Parking Garage and Lot Closures	MBTA Garage Access Restricted	No Trains from Boston Will Stop in Salem	Business Modifications/Restrictions
Friday, October 23 rd	2:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.	Between 7:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.	Businesses urged to use reservations; close or curtail activities by 8:00 p.m. No lines or waiting permitted in public way after 8:00 p.m. Sale of alcohol at restaurants ends 11:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 24 th	12:00 noon	12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m.	Between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.	Businesses urged to use reservations; close or curtail activities by 8:00 p.m. No lines or waiting permitted in public way after 8:00 p.m. Sale of alcohol at restaurants ends 11:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 25 th	12:00 noon	12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.	Between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.	No early closures.
Friday, October 30 th	12:00 noon	6:00 p.m. to 11:00 pm.	Between 7:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.	Businesses urged to use reservations. Mandatory downtown business closure by 8:00 p.m. No lines or waiting permitted in public way after 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 31 st	12:00 noon	12:00 noon to 11:00 p.m.	Between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.	Businesses urged to use reservations. Mandatory downtown business closure by 8:00 p.m. No lines or waiting permitted in public way after 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 1 st	12:00 noon	12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.	Between 11:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.	No early closures.