



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lee Monument Grounds to Close Overnight for Safety Purposes

RICHMOND, Va. – While there have been many successful and peaceful events on the Lee Monument grounds since late May, concerns are mounting for the safety of those in attendance of the events and for those living and working within the immediate area, especially at night. The substantial increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic in and around the monument and intermittent blockages to vehicular traffic within the intersection pose serious safety risks. In

addition, such legal violations as vandalism, trespassing on nearby private properties, littering, public urination and excessive noise have steadily been on the rise.

As a result of increasing public safety risks and numerous legal violations, state and local law enforcement will be enforcing state laws, city ordinances and the regulations for use of the Lee Monument property. These steps are necessary to provide a safe and secure area for individuals who want to express their First Amendment rights peacefully, as well as general visitors to the site, City of Richmond residents and property owners.

With the conclusion of the Juneteenth holiday weekend, the Lee Monument grounds will close to the public from sunset to sunrise beginning Monday, June 22, 2020, in accordance with the Virginia Department of General Services' (DGS) regulations. Officers will stress education and encourage voluntary compliance with the regulations prior to any enforcement actions.

The grounds will reopen each day at sunrise. Those visiting the Lee Monument during daylight hours are advised of the following mandated regulations:

- Vehicles are prohibited
- No climbing on the statue or its steps
- Maximum occupancy is 500
- No additional banners, flags, posters or other objects shall be placed on or affixed to the statue
- Unlawful activity is prohibited
- Events expected to draw 10 or more people require a permit

A copy of the Regulations for Public Use of Robert E. Lee Monument are available online at <https://dgs.virginia.gov/globalassets/business-units/dres/documents/rel-monument-regulations.pdf>.

The overnight closure will remain in place indefinitely.

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