

# NAVY PARENTS - NAVY DEPENDENTS – NAVY LOVED ONES

## SARGE'S NAVY BOOT CAMP GRADUATION SURVIVAL GUIDE

UPDATED ON 04-14-2026

Guide to a successful and stress-free Graduation weekend.

**Note – Before you go any further, please consider the following bulleted points.**

- Official e-mails go into Junk/Spam/trash/deleted items folders based upon your e-mail filters. Check your settings.
- **The meet and greet QR CODE you get from your sailor in the mail, IS NOT SARGE'S MEET AND GREET.** Before you pay, check what you get for your payment. *My meet and greet is NOT an official Navy event nor is it sponsored by the Navy or MWR.*
- *We are just a mom and pop (Retired – 21 years active service) supporting our New Navy Families on this new adventure.*
- Beware of spoof Facebook groups that will steal your friends list and your personal data.
- The Navy **NEVER CHARGES** the families for viewing the graduation on YOUTUBE!

**Make sure you read the PREFACE regarding Identity Theft.**

**NOTE:** There are several face book groups (**SPOOF GROUPS**) that claim to be official **U.S. NAVY RTC/BOOTCAMP/A-SCHOOL GROUPS.**

**Be careful before you join a face book group.**

**Our OFFICIAL groups have the following**

**ADMINS/MODERATORS WHO MONITOR OUR GROUPS.**

CRAIG MARONEY, NATALIE T. LEILI, CHRIS MOREN, SARGE JOHN SPADARO, TESSIE MARONEY, SUE KRAWCZYK-MARTIN, BETH RONNING LUNDGREN,

(900 DIVISIONS -KAREN WHITE HESS, GLORY STRATE ORTIGO),

(NAVY BOOT CAMP 101-OFFICIAL GROUP

CARA GENOVESE, JOHANNA GOVAARS-NOBLE)

**These are considered SAFE GROUPS on Facebook If you join a group on Facebook, make sure you see one of the names above as either an admin or moderator. If you do not see the names above, YOU ARE IN A SPOOF AND DANGEROUS FACEBOOK GROUP**

**OFFICIAL RTC WEBSITE** <https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/>

Here is the **ONE AND ONLY**

**OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY R.T.C. FACE BOOK GROUP.**

<https://www.facebook.com/NavyRecruitTrainingCommand>

**The U.S. NAVY OFFICIAL FACEBOOK GROUP**

**NEVER CHARGES A FEE TO VIEW THE GRADUATION.**

**Any other group claiming to be R.T.C. is a SCAM!**

When you join a group, ensure that you click on the **member names** before you join **and make sure that one of the names above** is either moderators or admins. I have provided the Facebook links below.

Our weekly PIR groups can be found by searching Facebook for the following **FORMAT**

**PIR XX-XX-XX EXAMPLE PIR 04-30-26**

**Other unofficial safe groups request memberships.**

**Remember to answer all questions to join our groups.**

**You must be logged in to your face book account to view or join our groups.**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Rtcgreatlakes>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/158614470999596>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/900Division>

# PREFACE

This guide is intended for Navy Families and loved ones who will travel to the Great Lakes Naval Station for the **Pass In Review (P.I.R.)** also known as Navy Boot Camp Graduation. This applies to all Sailors including those sailors who will be staying here for follow-on training. The information contained herein is current as of the publication date **04-14-2026** and is subject to change without notice. This document is not endorsed by the United States Navy, Department of War, or any other U.S. Government agency, or any commercial entity, and is not intended as an Official Department of the Navy document. Please take a moment to read this in its entirety.

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## **Contact information:**

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(847)212-0246***

## **About us.**

Congratulations and welcome to the World’s Greatest Navy family. Please take a moment to read this document. This will be a life saver while you prepare for your trip to Great Lakes and most importantly; while you are here for the Navy Boot Camp Graduation and/or when your sailor is staying here for “A”

School. Please do not miss the maps on the last three pages. **There is also a helpful information guide for your recruit before he/she ships out to active duty.**

## MY STORY:



I entered the United States Army back in 1971 from Brooklyn N.Y. and proudly served our country for 21 years of active duty and retired as a Sergeant First Class. I have been married to my best friend Linda since 1973. We have one daughter Kathy, who is my right hand at the Family Meet and Greet, which we sponsor the night before Graduation from Boot Camp (48 times a year). **See the links section** to make a RSVP for the night before dinner.

We have traveled around the globe, and we know how frustrating it is when you visit a place without any guidance; that is why I prepared this document for you. The information enclosed is based upon my forty plus years in the Gurnee and Great Lakes area.

Many people ask how an Army guy from Brooklyn New York ended up in the Great Lakes. Well, the answer is simple. On my last tour of duty, I was stationed at Fort Sheridan, Highwood, IL. We needed housing and the Great Lakes Naval Station was the only military base in the area that had immediate housing available for Senior Enlisted. We fell in love with the area and have seen the Great Lakes Naval Base transform into one of the finest military facilities on the planet. We now reside in Gurnee, IL. There are many things to do in the area, and you can save a lot of money by planning and being aware of your surroundings.

The intention of this document is to assist everyone planning to visit the Great Lakes area and attend their Sailors Boot Camp Graduation and follow-on training. Please share this with your loved one's recruiter, so they can help future parents, spouses, and other loved ones.

I am also on Facebook, adding me as a friend is easy.

Your e-mails and any information or communications you provide will always be kept private. I will not sell, transfer any emails, any phone numbers under any circumstances, without your permission. My team of drivers and I support our Sailors and their families with low-cost, **professional local/long distance taxi** service as well as, to and from all airports including Milwaukee. My team of drivers consists of several Veterans. Please consider using my team for all your Great Lakes area transportation needs. References can be found on the testimonial page of my website or book your travel at <https://www.mynavytaxi.com/reservations.html>

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Great lakes history can be found at this link

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval\\_Station\\_Great\\_Lakes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Great_Lakes)

Navy slang can be found at this unofficial link.

[https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Glossary\\_of\\_U.S.\\_Navy\\_slang](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Glossary_of_U.S._Navy_slang)

Gifts for your sailors and **Ship challenge coins** can be found at

<https://pirgifts.com> which is an EBAY SITE owned by a retired Navy member.

<https://bluewaterstitching.etsy.com> Navy mom business

<https://www.buyitproud.com> Meet and Greet supporter.

## **IDENTITY THEFT!**

If you have a Facebook account, search for our **PRIVATE PIR GROUPS.** You can search using the following example **"04-30-26"** **ALWAYS USE THE FORMAT "DD-MM-YY"** Our face book groups are

either admin controlled by **Carolyn Moor or Natalie T. Leili**. You will always **find official PIR groups** for each graduation **that we** (not the Navy control). **Our 900-division** private group is admin controlled by **Karen White Hess** and myself.

The U.S. Navy has only **ONE OFFICIAL RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND** public face book pages.

**BE AWARE – THERE ARE SPOOF GROUPS/LINKS THAT LOOK LIKE THE OFFICIAL NAVY FACE BOOK.** These are dangerous because you expose your sailor, and your confidential information, and are known for **IDENTITY THEFT**.

Here is the **ONLY DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY OFFICIAL RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND FACE BOOK PAGE**

<https://www.facebook.com/NavyRecruitTrainingCommand>

<https://www.facebook.com/USNavy/>

Navy Internet official pages:

<https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/recruits.html>

<https://www.navy.mil/> Official Department of the Navy website.

**OUR OTHER SECURED FACE BOOK GROUPS/PAGES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Rtcgreatlakes>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/900Division>

There are other private /community pages **that claim to be** the official U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command Face Book pages. **These are dangerous and keep popping up. Use your common sense. If you are not sure if you are on the CORRECT page – LEAVE IT.**

Remember- **The Navy will NEVER ask for credit cards** to view the graduation on YouTube. Every week (on graduation day only) the Navy on the OFFICIAL RECRUIT TRAINING FACE BOOK PAGE will post a link to view the graduation live via YOUTUBE. Do not be spoofed!

## WELCOME:

**If you are reading this now, your loved one is either in boot camp or will be entering active duty soon.** Boot Camp is the first step on the journey for your recruit to become a United States Navy Sailor. Some families wait for the “I’m a sailor” call before they plan their trip to Great Lakes. Planning in advance is essential to ensure that you have a safe and enjoyable trip and save money. Even some seasoned travelers make mistakes and forget essentials. I hope my Navy Family Survival Guide© will answer all your questions. If you have any questions or if there is something I did not cover, feel free to call me at 847-212-0246 before 9:00 PM **central time** or email me at [info@mynavytaxi.com](mailto:info@mynavytaxi.com) **This document is subject to change without notice.**

**New requirements for recruits who will enter active duty on or after 10/15/25. Please read this chapter with your recruit before they ship out.**

**Recruit Training Command (RTC)**, the Navy's only boot camp, will require recruits to pass an initial run standard before they may commence basic military training. The initial run standard is evaluated on the 1.5-mile run of the first Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) at boot camp. The initial run standard for male recruits will be 16 minutes 10 seconds and 18 minutes seven seconds for female recruits.

"All military services have an initial physical fitness standard before recruits can commence basic training," said **Rear Adm. Mike Bernacchi**, commander, Naval Service Training Command. **"The initial run standard raises the bar at RTC, helping us develop tough, more qualified Sailors during basic military training and send a more lethal force to the fleet."**

To graduate boot camp, all recruits must score a satisfactory medium on the official Navy PFA. To ensure recruits advance toward this goal over their ten weeks of training, the initial run standard sets the minimum run time at which a recruit must start training to meet their expected level of progress.

If a recruit fails to meet the initial run standard, **they will have one chance to retest within 48 hours.** **If they fail the retest, recruits will be discharged from the Navy with an entry level separation, which allows them to reapply later with a waiver from Navy Recruiting Command. "It is the responsibility of each recruit to work hard and maintain all Navy standards,"** said RTC Commanding Officer Capt. Mike Garrick. **"Physical fitness is one of the greatest predictors of Sailor success. Before they arrive at boot camp, recruits are expected to train to meet the physical fitness standards." Delayed entry program personnel should read the information at this link** <https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/recruits.html>

**For Graduation dates – click here** <https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/Graduation/Training-Group-Graduation-Dates/>

**For recruits who prove they are serious about physical fitness by achieving an outstanding high on their final PFA at boot camp, they could be meritoriously advanced to the next pay grade upon graduation.**

Recruits who pass the initial run standard may commence basic military training and are placed in groups based on their initial fitness abilities. Throughout their training, recruits are encouraged to advance to higher levels of fitness through participation in cardio and strength training exercises. **As recruit's advance, they improve their fitness level and prepare for success in the fleet. See this link <https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/recruits.html#prepare>**

Watch the you tube video here -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93c2e1etIVM&list=PL82P7mqWj53KI\\_f-g2xx3-4a\\_6exH20hB&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93c2e1etIVM&list=PL82P7mqWj53KI_f-g2xx3-4a_6exH20hB&index=2)

Boot camp is now ten weeks long and all enlistees in the U.S. Navy begin their career at the command. Training includes physical fitness, seamanship, firearms training, firefighting, and shipboard damage control along with lessons in Navy heritage and core values, teamwork, and discipline. About 30,000 to 40,000 recruits graduate annually from RTC and begin their Navy careers.

## **IMPORTANT NOTES**

- 1. Have your sailors send their official photos home!** Too much time is wasted on graduation day waiting for their photos at the Navy Exchange. Recruits who pick up their pictures prior to graduation must go back to their ships after the ceremony and retrieve the photos. **Valuable time is wasted.** They should also **travel light on their DEP-OUT date.** Most of them only need the clothes they are wearing and personal hygiene items. **ALSO – THIS IS A DIGITAL AGE – SOME SAILORS SPEND OVER \$900.00 on frames and photos. Advise them to spend wisely.**

**Note \*\* CHANGE TO PREVIOUS POLICY \*\*** Hazardous items cannot be stored in their Graduation Box and **will be disposed of. Items disposed of may include but are not limited to** VAPE DEVICES, lighters, medication, lighter fluid, butane fuel, tobacco products, alcohol, matches, spare batteries, battery packs, candy, snacks, knives, or unidentified liquids. In the past, items were boxed up and shipped home.

Now the items brought to bootcamp that are not on the recommended list, including their phones, are stored in a box, and given to them on **Graduation Day.** **They have a choice at Graduation to give their family the box and the family can secure their items. If they elect to hold the box after graduation, they can ONLY open it at the airport when they ship out or when they get to their "A" school at Great Lakes.**

**VERY IMPORTANT -** **If anything has changed while your recruit was in the delayed entry program (DEP) such as marriage, divorce, arrests, tickets, medical issues of any kind, citizenship, or additional dependents, please make sure that your recruit brings the official ORIGINAL documents to support the changes to M.E.P.S. The "M.E.P.S" MUST update the recruits' forms on the contract to reflect changes. If anything is concealed, the recruit is subject to discharge for fraudulent enlistment DURING THE MOMENT OF TRUTH PHASE UPON ARRIVAL TO GREAT LAKES.**

**THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE** it affects benefits the recruit or their dependents may be entitled to such as health insurance (**TRICARE**), **Military I.D. and housing allowances or their security clearances.**

Additional documentation supporting changes such as high school graduation, high school transcripts (**may be needed to verify course completion for certain rates**), or college transcripts, are to be brought to the M.E.P.S. because it could affect their **Entry Pay Grade or rate qualifications.**

**JROTC cadets should bring the written grade advancement recommendations** and supporting documents needed so your recruit will not lose his advance grade prior to graduation from boot camp.

**Notify your credit card company or local banks** that you are traveling. If you do not, they may decline charges while you are here. This is your financial institution's way of preventing credit card theft. **Also notify your recruits' local bank or credit union** before they ship out that they will be temporarily relocated out of state for military duty, so they can monitor his/her purchases. **I always recommend that your recruit authorizes you to talk to his financial institution via (power of attorney) or put your name on the account prior to him/her leaving should there be an incident that requires your intervention.**

Also get the bank routing number and account number if your sailor desires to have their paycheck sent to their hometown bank or financial institution.

***It is advisable for your recruit to give you a "Power of Attorney" for his school, hospital, and/or their financial institution, should you need to intervene while they are away. DO THIS before they ship out.***

2. If you are arriving late for either your hotel or rental car, please let them know that you are arriving later than expected (**especially when flights are delayed**) this way they will hold your reservations. Hotels and car rental companies may cancel your reservation if you are more than 4 hours late. Also allow enough extra time (three hours) when arriving and departing if you are renting a car. **NO DEBIT CARDS FOR MAJOR RENTAL COMPANIES ARE ACCEPTED.**
3. This is not meant to frighten you, but it is reality. Right now, there are many recruits who are delayed from training and moved to (**SEPS**) **because they concealed information, whether intentional or unintentional, from the M.E.P.S. Doctors, Career Counselors, or Recruiters.**
4. During the in-processing phase known as **P-DAYS** (the first stop off the bus after arriving from O'Hare) at Great Lakes, they are informed of the penalties for **fraudulent enlistment**, and they are given a chance to disclose any information that they may have concealed during their enlistment process.

This is known as the **"Moment of Truth."** Today's technology has many ways of gleaning information from the past to include **Military Dependent Medical Records, Military Police files, court records, vital statistics records, school records, fingerprints, health insurance records, other insurance records, local and state traffic/arrest records, and social media websites.**

Friends, relatives, or other sources **may have coached some individuals not to disclose** certain items that could disqualify them from military service. Most of the time these issues, had they been disclosed prior to entry into the delayed entry program, could have been waived, **however; since it was not revealed at time of entry into the dep or at time of entry to active duty, it is now considered concealed and is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, also known as UCMJ, and violates integrity and is grounds for separation.**

***If your recruit has not shipped out yet, talk to them. If there is something that he or she concealed from the M.E.P.S., the RECRUITER, or YOU,*** I strongly suggest that you take them to

the recruiter, and in your presence and the Recruiters' supervisor, reveal the incident. Get as much documentation as possible and bring it with you to the Recruiter.

**Here is a common issue example** – A military dependent was treated for a behavior disorder while their parents were in the military. Although they were only 7 years old at the time, **the entry was made in their dependent health record**. These records are now merged with his enlistment health records, and they surface during their medical screening upon arrival to Great Lakes. Had this issue been previously disclosed, it may not have been an issue, however; **now it is an issue and considered as concealed information and all training and processing comes to a screeching halt**.

My advice – **always be truthful with the Recruiters and Guidance Counselors**. It will save a lot of heartache and embarrassment down the road. **There is still time to make corrections prior to shipping out. Finally, make sure your recruit knows how to swim!**

**Major Change regarding overnight Liberty see chapters 10\*\* and 15 \*\***  
**MAJOR CHANGE EFFECTIVE 10-05-23. You and your recruit should take a moment and read the content at these links.**

<https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/graduation.html>

**Note – If your sailor IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN, THEY CAN BE NATURALIZED RIGHT AFTER THE BOOTCAMP GRADUATION CEREMONY – SEE THIS LINK**

<https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/Recruits/Naturalization/>

## **Chapter 1**

### **PREPARATION FOR YOUR TRAVEL TO THE GREAT LAKES GRADUATION**

OK you are all excited. Your loved one has left the M.E.P.S. and you cried your eyes out. As the bus left the parking lot and turned the corner, those tears of sorrow slowly turned to tears of joy because now there is no more doing their laundry, pressing their clothes, preparing their meals, or handing them twenty-dollar bills. Oh, and not to mention, getting them out of bed. You finally get home and start to wonder, what do I do next?

The first thing you should do is go out and get some writing paper, envelopes, and postage stamps. Old-fashioned letter writing is the only communication you will have with your loved one once they arrive at boot camp. The night they process in, you will receive a call from your recruit, and they will let you know that they arrived safely.

**ALSO see this link for Military spouse information - <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal/>**

You will receive a letter from your recruit within 2-3 weeks after arrival in Great Lakes with the graduation date and **FORMS REQUIRED TO ATTEND GRADUATION.**

**There is a reply period on graduation forms. FAILURE TO REPLY WITHIN THE TIME FRAME COULD RESULT IN YOUR DENIAL TO ATTEND GRADUATION.** Normally you will receive a call midway through training, and of course, the infamous “I’m a Sailor” call during the last week of training. There is no timetable for calls. If your recruit fails a portion of training or is injured, you will receive a **scripted call** which could necessitate a travel change. The second thing you should do is **make a check list for your travel to the Great Lakes Navy Base.** If you try to do it by memory, you may forget something. I cannot tell you how many times I am approached at the Meet and Greet and asked by someone “what do I do – we forgot our I.D.?” remember – **REAL ID IS REQUIRED FOR TICKET PICKUP OR A U.S. PASSPORT.**

Here is a simple checklist to start you off. You may want to add to this list as you go along.

## TRAVEL CHECKLIST – RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Get transportation tickets, i.e., bus, train, airline **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE** once you officially know your loved one's graduation date and division number. Check the terms of travel insurance, baggage allowance, and cancellation or change fees.
2. If you do not plan on renting a car, schedule your taxi pickup at airport or train station with me and my team once you have your itinerary on my website <https://www.mynavytaxi.com> **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE WEEK BEFORE GRADUATION. Please make your pickup reservations on the website as soon as possible.** Do not wait until the last moment. Please make your reservations on my website **at least 2 weeks before your arrival.** See airport rates on the website. My team consists of individual contractors who are fully insured and licensed and are vetted by Naval Station Great Lakes for access to GATE 1 Visitors Center.

**NOTE – No taxi cabs, limos, Uber, or Lyft are authorized inside access to RTC or any gate due to security restrictions.**

3. Schedule a dog or house sitters and arrange for trash pick-up.  
**\*\*Gather I.D.'s** as required by airlines and the Navy to enter the bases. **PLEASE make sure they are not EXPIRED. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PICK UP GRADUATION TICKETS AND will be denied access to ALL the Naval Bases and Graduation if you do not have REAL-ID OR PASSPORT.**

**NOTE – REAL ID OR PASSPORT REQUIRED FOR ENTRY INTO THE BASE AS WELL AS PICKING UP TICKETS FOR GRADUATION.**

4. **All guests 18 years and older** must present valid government issued photo identification (REAL ID OR , U.S. passport, military ID card). **Guests 17 years or younger who do not possess one of the items listed above must present one of the following:** Copy of their Birth Certificate, or Social Security card, school ID card, or driver's permit or license. **NOTE: Any identification that is State or U.S. Government issued and is EXPIRED to include military dependent I.D.s, will be confiscated and not returned.**
5. Make sure prescription medications are enough for trip and in their original bottles. If you do not wish to take the original bottles, get a letter from your doctor so you can use it as proof that you are entitled to travel with those drugs. **Prescription marijuana is NOT ALLOWED on Military reservations.**
6. Notify schools for children who will be absent.
7. Ask neighbors to hold mail or notify the U.S. Postal service.
8. Make a security sweep of the house. Ensure that windows are locked, timers are set, and car and truck doors locked, water plants, and adjust heat or air conditioning.

9. Check airline's policy regarding baggage charges and weight limits. **\*\* This is a common uncalculated expense. \*\***
10. Cell phone chargers, laptops, and cell phones. Note – **fully charge all devices prior to leaving home.**
11. Email forwarding for work if needed. Let your co-workers know how to reach you.
12. **Do not advertise on Facebook or other social media that you are traveling.** Thieves can search for anything on the internet and find out you are gone.
13. If you have a smart phone, download the **WAZE** free travel app. Great app to see traffic ahead of you. Do not forget your **EZ-PASS** or **GPS**. If you plan to take the Metra, download the APP.
14. Carry enough cash for a taxi, train, or buses. The Metra train does not accept credit or debit cards on the train when the ticket booth is closed. There is an additional \$5.00 for each ticket purchased on the train when the ticket booth is open at the train station.
15. Most Rental Car Companies in this area **do not accept out of state DEBIT cards without holding an additional \$200-\$400 in addition to passing a soft credit check.** Check with your rental car company! **BEST TO USE CREDIT CARD – NOT A DEBIT CARD.** Keep in mind that the credit card **MUST MATCH** the driver and the driver's license. **We have established a relationship with Avis/Budget in Gurnee, Highland Park, and Libertyville.** **THIS IS A BIG SAVINGS, and the owner fully supports our military.** We provide transportation to Highland Park, Libertyville, and Gurnee for a reasonable fee. **See the rental car section for contact information.** **There is also an app called "TURO" their rates are lower than any national car rental companies.**
16. Charge your hotel room/car rental on a **credit card not a DEBIT Card.** The hotels/rental car companies, in conjunction with your financial institution, **can take up to 7-14 DAYS** to release your debit card funds after you check out or return the car rental.
17. Bring warm clothing during the winter months. If you are staying at a hotel that has a pool, bring your own swimwear. Swimwear is hard to find in this area during winter months.
18. Bring your own child/infant car seats if necessary.
19. If driving - know the Illinois rules. Click this link  
<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/motorist/rorts.html>
20. Bring copies of the auto insurance declaration page, if renting a car or driving.

Bring your registration and proof of insurance if driving.


Bring your sailors' favorite underwear.

21. Bring your sailors' contact lenses or personal eyewear and jewelry.
22. Most hotels are pet friendly. If you drive, bring your pets. They are family also. Also bring a copy of their vaccinations should they require treatment while you are here. Illinois veterinarians require proof of rabies shots before treatment. **Certified service dogs with their proper credentials are permitted in the graduation hall.**
23. **Notify your local banks and credit unions that you are traveling so your credit/debit cards are not declined.**
24. Bring stadium seats or seat cushions to sit on at the graduation hall.

25. Finally, please do not forget to attend the meet and greet the night before the graduation. Make your reservation at <https://www.mynavytaxi.com/events.html> Make your RSVP once you have your sailor's graduation date and division number.

## CHAPTER 2 HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON AIRFARE AND HOTELS \*\* update

### **A Home Away From Home Near Great Lakes Naval Station**

Experience a relaxing, home-like stay just minutes from Great Lakes Naval Station in our beautifully furnished homes in downtown Libertyville — perfect for keeping the whole family together while celebrating your Sailor's big moment 


All of their properties are conveniently located just **2–6 miles** from the base, making it easy to get to and from graduation events while enjoying a more comfortable, spacious stay.

Skip the high hotel prices and enjoy more space, more comfort, and more convenience with one of the best local Airbnb-style stays.

### **Book Direct & Save Big**


**Use promo code SARGE26 to receive:**

- \$50 off your booking
- No Airbnb service fees — save hundreds more

 **Pro tip: Booking direct can save you \$100+ in typical Airbnb fees alone.**

**Ready to book?**

 <https://libertyvillestr.com/>

 708-716-0522

We proudly welcome graduation families and are deeply grateful for your Sailor's service!

### **Will Powers**

Secure Real Estate Management

(847) 804 4037 | [Wpowers@securemgmt.com](mailto:Wpowers@securemgmt.com)

Securemgmt.com

IMPORTANT NOTE –many who purchased airline tickets through websites other than the airlines or hotel websites found it almost impossible to get refunds or credits. **WORD OF CAUTION- Book your travel and accommodations directly from airline or hotel websites.**

**Plane or Train or Bus Reservations.** As I stated earlier, I am not compensated by anyone for the information in this document. The recommendations below are based on my personal travel experience and knowledge of the area.

You should plan your trip early once you know your recruits' graduation date and division number. I highly recommend you buy **travel insurance**. Three reasons why it is necessary.

First, you cannot control external forces. The transportation industry is not required to reimburse or refund tickets due to weather, acts of God, government restrictions, or civil unrest. Also, airlines can bump passengers who have paid for their seat. Recommend that you check-in online prior to getting to the airport. **Also recommend that you travel at least 2 days prior to graduation this way, if there are flight cancellations or severe weather conditions, you have enough time to make alternate plans.**

Secondly, your recruit may fail a portion of their training or get injured and may not graduate as you expected. Wait until you receive the **official graduation date letter** before purchasing tickets for travel. **Also keep in my that airline tickets and hotels purchased online through travel**

**websites, other than the direct hotel or airline websites, are almost impossible to change without paying additional fees.**

**Check the distance of the hotel to the base USING GOOGLE MAPS.** A few loved ones stay at hotels that are over six miles from the base and this is an uncalculated travel time and taxi expense. Being close to the base is not necessarily a benefit. Check what is available **around your lodging, using your own due diligence, especially if you do not have a vehicle.**

**Advertisements can say anything they want to encourage you to book with them. Check YELP® reviews and Google® reviews before you make a final decision on your hotel.** I recommend the Marriott Spring Hill Suites Waukegan, Hampton Inn and Suites Waukegan, the Holiday Inn Express Waukegan, Marriott's Courtyard Waukegan, and the Marriott Town Place Waukegan; because it is right across the street from the meet and greet and, within walking distance of 16 restaurants. Their staff will bend over backwards for their guest.

**Also, there are no D.O.D. OFF LIMITS commercial hotels in this area (Navy Lodge and Navy Gateway Inn have separate rules regarding A-School sailor's restriction).**

**On Boot Camp Graduation weekend, the Navy Lodge, and the Gateway Inn, are not "Off limits" for graduating sailors visiting their families.** For more information regarding off limits and weapons possession on board see this link <https://cnrma.cnmc.navy.mil/>

Lastly, if your sailor graduates and is on hold for security clearances, medical waivers, or other procedures, they will be assigned to a **T.H.U. (Temporary Holding Unit)** and will have extended periods until cleared. I have seen it last for as little as one week and in some cases several months.

Here is a link that tells you your **rights as an airline passenger** in regards to refunds and compensation: <http://www.dot.gov/briefing-room/us-departmenttransportation-expandsairline-passenger-protections>

You can fly into **O'Hare, Midway, and or Milwaukee.** I recommend either Milwaukee or O'Hare.

**Midway airport has brutal traffic to the northern suburbs** during the hours of 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM. It can take up to **2** hours to get to Waukegan. Not every airline fly into Midway. It is normally cheaper to fly in late on Wednesday night and depart early Monday morning.

**Remember that reservations booked through a bargain travel site are HARD TO, OR ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE, to change, cancel, or get a refund.**

**It is advisable to travel two days before graduation YES - why?**

If you travel the day before graduation and there is a storm or any delays, or you get **involuntarily booted off the flight because of over booking**, you may not make it to graduation.

**Additionally, all individuals must pick up their OWN graduation tickets prior to the graduation day. If you arrive after the Welcome Center closes on the day before graduation, you must line up to pick up your tickets early on the morning of graduation. There will be long lines on the day before graduation to get the tickets. The hours to pick up the tickets are from 10:00AM until 7:30PM on the day before graduation. On graduation day, although the center opens from 5:30 AM until 8:30AM - expect a long wait and then you must make your way over to the base for graduation. Graduation hall closes at 8:45AM** See the section regarding picking up tickets.

**If traveling on AMTRAK**, get off at Union Station. You can then take the **Metra MILWAUKEE DISTRICT LINE North to Libertyville**. The cab cost from Libertyville Station to your hotel is around \$24.00. Vs. \$150.00 from Chicago Union Station. If you desire us to pick you up in Libertyville, **contact us in advance via my website <https://www.mynavytaxi.com> and click on the contact us link**. Once we know what train you are on your way to Libertyville, we will have a driver pick you up when you arrive in Libertyville. The phone number to reach us is 847-212-0246.

If traveling on **Greyhound or Mega bus**, you can also take the Metra **Milwaukee District North Line** from **Union Station** and get off at the Libertyville stop. A cab cost from Libertyville Station to your hotel costs around \$24-30.00 See above. <https://metrarail.com/maps-schedules/train-lines/MD-N>

NOTE – there are several Greyhound bus stops in Chicago – **make sure you get off at the one downtown on Harrison Street**.

## CHAPTER 3 RENTAL CARS

So, you have decided to rent a car. This could be an excellent choice if you are familiar with driving in the city. Driving in the suburbs is normally stress-free; however, city driving can be challenging.

### Here are some guidelines:

1. If you are going to rent a car at the airport– **USE a CREDIT CARD** not a combo debit/credit card. Here is the reasoning behind that.
2. Most rental companies at the airport **DO NOT ACCEPT DEBIT CARDS.**
  - a. Allow at least an **additional hour** of waiting when arriving at and departing from the airports to receive or return the car. **Check offsite hours** of the rental car companies. Some close before 10:00 PM.
  - b. When returning your rental to O’Hare, **after exiting the tollway, exit the very first exit (Manheim Road North EXIT 2A)**. The new **RENTAL FACILITY SIGNS** have been posted as of this update.

Each company has different policies – make sure you inquire before you get there. Every week we must rescue families who used a debit card. **For peace of mind, I ONLY RECOMMEND the following:**

- A. **Avis Rental in Gurnee Mills (ENTRANCE F) The manager’s number is (847)782-1570.**
- B. **Libertyville Avis/budget 847-549-7000 or 847-573-0226.**
- C. **Avis rental car in Highland Park Illinois. The direct contact is 847-433-5529 or 847–266-1330**
- D. My team and I provide direct transportation from the airports to these locations in addition to all hotels in Lake County. It is less expensive to rent locally rather than at the airports and there is no charge to return the rental car to the airport. Also, **YOU SAVE TIME and MONEY!** They all are military friendly and will bend over backwards for our Navy families. Just mention that you are a Navy Family and that Sarge referred you. **I do not receive any compensation from any AVIS rentals.**

### **Also check out the New “TURO” APP**

**which is a private rental service.**

3. Use the **I-PASS** option (if desired) when renting. **If you have your own I-PASS, SUNPASS, or EZPASS, bring it with you.** It is far better to pay up front for tolls than to risk missing a toll and paying a fine.
4. You only need the Graduation Tickets, rental documentation, and your REALID to access the RTC base. I always recommend that you bring your Insurance Card or Proof of insurance to save time and heartaches. **Only ticketed people will be allowed on RTC.** Driver and occupants must have a ticket, or the vehicle will be turned around.
5. Seat belts and hands-free cell phones are the law. **Wear your belts and get off the phone.**

**Chapter 4 TAXI AND LIMO SERVICES \*\* SEE CHAPTER 18 REGARDING PASSENGERS BILL OF RIGHTS. PLEASE GIVE A COPY OF CHAPTER 18 IF YOUR SAILOR IS STAYING HERE FOR GREAT LAKES “A” SCHOOL OR PRE-SPECIAL OPS TRAINING OR FOLLOW-ON INDOCTRINATION**

**NOTE – HOTELS DO NOT PROVIDE FREE SHUTTLE TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORTS.**

**RATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.** Your confirmation email will contain the cost.

Taxi Cabs are regulated by both the State of Illinois, the Great Lakes Security Forces, and the Municipality which they are licensed in.

If you need a taxi from the airport, **please make a reservation at least 2 weeks in advance** on my website <https://www.mynavytaxi.com> **for last minute pickups at the airport, within 48 hours of your arrival; please call me at 847-212-0246 in addition to making the reservation online.** Reservations from Airports are necessary to ensure that we can accommodate you.

**Here are the guidelines regarding taxi fares.**

If you take a **City Cab from the airport taxi lines that was not a pre-arranged suburban ride**, the fare will be what the meter reads plus an additional one-half of the meter, plus the toll, plus the \$7.50 city departure tax, and an additional \$1.00 per passenger and the \$1.50 toll.

**A city cab from O’Hare** to the Navy Lodge (**ONE WAY**) could cost around **\$120.00 - \$130.00**. From Midway and Milwaukee, it can cost anywhere from **\$174 - \$225 ONE WAY** depending on the hotel if you are NOT USING OUR SERVICE. **REMEMBER – These are ONE WAY FARES.**

Our one-way rates **start from** O’Hare \$87.50 and, from Milwaukee or Midway, starting at \$127.50\*\* subject to change based upon fuel surcharges.

A round trip with us is your best option.

**My Team’s Service options** are far better than the city cab rates or the “SHUTTLE COMPANY RATES.” Our rates include round trip to and from the Airports (**per van**). **No other transportation is included; however, we can take you anywhere to include picking up the tickets for graduation, rides to restaurants, and other trips you need for an additional charge.** Our independent contractor drivers are insured and licensed to do business in the City of Chicago and the Suburbs. Maximum passengers per van are six and one piece of luggage per person.

**O’Hare CAB rate** – starting from (depending on your hotel location) **\$149.50 ROUND TRIP for the van-** Not per person. Note (max 6 passengers with one small carry-on only luggage each,) Round trip includes to and from airport, all tolls and airport departure tax. **Additional fees are charged to go to graduation, pick up tickets prior to arrival at your hotel, or after arrival to your hotel. These additional fees will be a meter run.**

**Midway CAB rate** – Starts from **\$227.50 ROUND TRIP (depending on your hotel location) for the van-** Not per person. Note (max 6 passengers with one small carry-on only luggage each,) Round trip includes to and from airport, all tolls and airport departure tax. Additional fees are charged to go to graduation, pick up tickets prior to arrival at your hotel, or after arrival to your hotel. These additional fees will be a meter run.

**Milwaukee CAB rate** - Starts from **\$227.50 ROUND TRIP for the van-** Not per person. Note (max 6 passengers with one small carry-on only luggage each,). Round trips include to and from airport, all tolls and airport departure tax. Additional fees are charged to go to graduation, pick

up tickets prior to arrival at your hotel, or after arrival at your hotel. These additional fees will be a meter run.

From **Union Station or the Greyhound, or Mega bus depot** the rate is **\$135.50 ONE WAY**. Additional taxi fees are required to go to graduation, pick up tickets prior to arrival at your hotel or after arrival to your hotel. These additional fees will be a meter run.

Any local transportation is either a metered ride or a flat rate. **There is an additional fee for a separate ride to pick up graduation tickets.**

***The list of taxi services that the U.S. Navy sends out in the packet for graduation and the list that the Navy Lodge provides, ARE OUTDATED. Additionally, several companies on the list are not authorized to pick up on Navy property. SHARED RIDE companies cannot pick up on or inside RTC or NTC. If you use any share ride company, you will pay the highest premium if the pickup is in the City of North Chicago.***

Please check before you make reservations with a transportation company because **NO taxi or limo services are not authorized or Vetted for access inside** the Great Lakes Naval Service **TO INCLUDE THE Gateway Inn. All inside access TO THE BASE has ceased due to COVID 19.**

The Navy Lodge offers a shuttle to the graduation. After graduation, the Navy Lodge shuttle picks up at the **RTC NEX**. The shuttle currently drops off passengers at Gate 8 (OHIO STREET) on graduation morning. **Coordinate with the front desk when you arrive.**

**NOTE - RIDE SHARE COMPANIES AND LIMO'S CAN DROP OFF AT THE NAVY LODGE, OFF BASE HOUSING, GATE 1 PUBLIC PARKING LOT, GATE 8 PUBLIC LOT, COMMISSARY, AND THE NAVY EXCHANGE OFF BASE.**

- a. **NON-VETTED TAXI CABS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP** INSIDE THE BASE INCLUDING THE NAVY LODGE, NAVY HOUSING, NAVY EXCHANGE, MEPCOM, MARINE CORP AVIATION GATE OR THE COMMISSARY. SHARED RIDES FROM THESE LOCATIONS WILL BE A PREMIUM COST.
- b. Military and Civilians alike, who use **UNAUTHORIZED DRIVERS or RIDE SHARE** companies to gain unauthorized access inside the base to drop them off, **WILL face disciplinary action because it is a BREACH OF SECURITY, and your sailor will lose liberty.**
- c. **\* INSIDE ACCESS TO "A" SCHOOL HAS BEEN TERMINATED. BY THE BASE SECURITY\*** We can however drop off and pick up 24/7 at the main gate, RTC or the Navy Lodge. Remember, the guest(s) of the military must be escorted always while on Naval Facilities unless their guest(s) have a valid Military I.D. or a valid military dependent I.D. See these additional links for information regarding your visit or on base access.  
<https://cnrma.cnrc.navy.mil/Installations/NAVSTA-Great-Lakes/>

*Note: If you feel that you can get a better deal with a shuttle company, then I STRONGLY SUGGEST you do your due diligence. Remember, the Shuttle companies are shared rides, and you must wait for them to fill up **and they charge by the person.** Keep in mind that the shuttle companies may make multiple stops along the way and your travel time is now extended. They are also **NOT AUTHORIZED** to pick up inside the base or as indicated above.*

Most Navy loved ones prefer **"PRE-ARRANGED SUBURBAN"** companies like ours ([mynavytaxi.com](http://mynavytaxi.com)) to avoid lengthy delays. Most shuttle companies do not pick you up before 5:00 AM for your return to the airport – **PLEASE – do your homework.**

*See what our customers have said at <https://mynavytaxi.com/testimonials> ! Most of my team are military veterans and your support, means a lot to us, and we thank you in advance.*

## **Chapter 5 – PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**


There are several ways to commute to and from the airports using public transportation. Keep in mind that public transportation can save you money; however, **it will take much longer** for you to reach your hotel, and you still must take a cab to your hotel from the public train station.

1. **From O'Hare** – take the **Blue line** train downtown and get off at the Jackson St stop. Walk or take a cab west to the **Ogilvie Transportation Center (OTC)**. From Ogilvie station take the **Union Pacific North** towards Kenosha and get off at the Great Lakes Stop. **Not recommended.**
2. **From Midway** – take the **Orange line** and get off at the Washington-Wells stop and walk or take a cab to Ogilvie Transportation Center. From the Ogilvie station take the **Union Pacific North** towards Kenosha and get off at the Great Lakes Stop. **Recommended**
3. **From Milwaukee** – **NO public transportation available** except private taxi/limo/shuttle.
4. **From Union Station** (AMTRAK) or Greyhound or Mega bus, take the **Milwaukee District Line North** to Libertyville. Let us know your schedule in advance (one week in advance) via our website at <https://www.mynavytaxi.com>
5. Keep in mind that this will add time to your travel and the trains do not run at every hour – check the links here <https://metrarail.com/maps-schedules> and also check the CTA (Chicago Transit Authority) times for trains running from the airport to the City. BLUE LINE CHICAGO from O'HARE <http://www.transitchicago.com/blueline/> , **From Midway use** <http://www.transitchicago.com/orangeline/> also realize that you are advertising that you are from out of town with your luggage. If you need transportation from Libertyville station or the Great Lakes station, please call me at 847-212-0246 prior to your trip so we can plan.

## **CHAPTER 6 – HOTEL COMMON SENSE**

### **IMPORTANT NOTE – Save on Your Stay**

Hotels in the area can be expensive. Enhance your visit by staying at some of the best local Airbnb-style accommodations available.

 **Tip:** By booking through our recommended business partners, you can **save over \$100 in typical Airbnb fees.**

Visit: <https://libertyvillestr.com>

**Use promo code: SARGE26 to receive:**

- **\$50 off your booking**
- **No Airbnb service fees (saving you hundreds more)**

Enjoy a comfortable, convenient, and cost-effective stay while celebrating your Sailor's big moment!

***Staying close to the base is not always the best option – please read.***

Some of you are seasoned travelers; however, for many, this is your first time at a hotel. The best advice I can give you is do your own due diligence. Everyone likes to read reviews; however, every person is entitled to their opinion. If you see 20 reviews and 19 say **“it’s the worst place on the planet”** and one says **“it was fabulous just what I expected,”** use your common sense. You get what you pay for; however, more, does not necessarily mean it is best. I cannot recommend any hotel because I could be liable; so, I will give you some guidelines:

**REMEMBER – hotels booked online through a travel site rather than the hotel chain directly, may be almost impossible to cancel or change the dates without a cost!**

You want a hotel that offers a **FULL BREAKFAST without any additional cost.** Why do you ask? – Most continental breakfasts will not fill you up or are limited. **ASK – what their continental breakfast consists of.** **Being close to the base really does not make a difference.** Most hotels in Lake County are not more than 23 minutes from the base.

1. **Check the address of the hotel** – some advertise that they are only **X** miles away and they may be over 10 miles away. **CHECK - CHECK - CHECK.** **REMEMBER – PAID advertisements can say anything they wish in their brochures or newspapers. The Navy nor M.W.R. do not investigate claims or validity made by advertisers in their brochures. It is your responsibility to do your own due diligence.**

I recommend the hotels that are close to or at the Lakehurst Event Center. The address of the Lakehurst Event center (meet and greet) is 300 Lakehurst Road, Waukegan, IL. There are several hotels that are within walking distance of restaurants and the meet and greet and you get more bang for your buck. Based upon reviews, Check the reviews on the **PIR face book pages.** Here are the face book groups you can search and join and ask questions about the hotels they stayed at.

- a. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Rtcgreatlakes>
- b. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Navysupportgroup>
- c. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327167160695549>
- d. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/786122078090192>
- e. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/900Division>
- f. <https://www.facebook.com/NavalStationGreatLakes>
- g. **To join a face book group that graduates on your sailor’s date – search Facebook for USING the following “PIR MM-DD-YY” example “pir 11-06-25.”**

Book online **directly with the hotels** – some hotel chains have better rates than the bargain websites and it is easier to change the dates without a penalty.

## **CHAPTER 7 – SARGE’S MEET AND GREET not affiliated with MWR**

The meet and greet for our Navy loved ones is a private event that my wife and I sponsor the night before graduation. We host these events 48 times a year and on average over two-hundred people each week. **We are not supported by the U.S. Navy or DOW,** or any other organization, **nor are we a 501(C)(3) corporation.** **This event is by invitation only.** If you would like to attend the dinner event you must register at <https://mynavytaxi.com/meet-and-greet> Navy family members and loved ones are invited. Children are allowed. We rely on kind contributions at the meet and greet.

All expenses for the meet and greet (food, labor, supplies, clean up etc.) are provided by my wife and

I, out of our personal funds and supplemented from the week's prior contributions. **None of the food or labor is donated** - it is all purchased from local restaurants and vendors. This is a full meal – not finger food. Previous weeks' contributions helped defray the cost. We believe in paying forward and your kind support ensures that our future Navy families have the same opportunity to attend this gala event prior to graduation.

We kindly ask for a heartfelt contribution of at least \$13.25 per person so we can continue **to host this event 48 weeks a year. Since 2011**, we have provided meals for **over 440,000 Navy loved ones**, our future Navy families thank you in advance. There is a contribution box at the head of the buffet table. An expected contribution of \$13.25 a person is appreciated.

Baskets are not required; however, it is a fun way to generate interest and can be anything you wish to put together, making it interesting so people would want to WIN IT! Alcohol is acceptable. Raffle sales help us defray the cost of the room rental.

The dress is **VERY CASUAL** - come as you like (no bikinis please). Many hotels do not talk about the event. Please, if you see a family at your hotel, tell them about the meet and greet; they may not be on face book or may not be aware of the event. Please spread the word.

The buffet line (**real meals do not finger food**) will remain open until all the food is gone. Beverages are provided at the bar for a reasonable cost. The Lakehurst Event Center allows our Navy Families the use of the room at a reasonable cost. All I must do is make sure the room is in order after the event and provide all the food and labor. The address of the event is 300 Lakehurst Road, Waukegan.

Typical schedule:

4:00 PM - 5:00PM Guest's arrives – cocktail hour (cash bar)

**PHOTOS WITH PIR FLAG** which is donated by

<https://www.buyitproud.com> also see their customized gear.

5:00PM - 5:30PM Division pictures of families

5:30PM - 6:30PM Dinner

6:45-7:15PM Veteran recognitions

7:15- 8:30 Basket raffles.

## **CHAPTER 8 ACCESSING GREAT LAKES RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND (RTC) BASIC RULES OF ENTRY TO BASE**

**Everyone in the vehicle and anyone walking in the gate (gate 8 Ohio Street) MUST HAVE A GRADUATION TICKET!**

**GRADUATION TICKET HOLDERS ONLY ARE ADMITTED**

- When driving onto **Recruit Training Command** please have your **I.D. READY**, **Graduation Tickets (see chapter 9)**, **VALID UNEXPIRED** driver's license, vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and tickets for every passenger ready, as you will not be admitted without them. If you are driving a rental car, the rental agreement and your driver's license, and graduation tickets will suffice. **All occupants (including the driver of the vehicle), must have their identification and graduation tickets available and must wear seat belts in accordance with the Navy Graduation Policy. If someone in the vehicle does not have the aforementioned, the vehicle and occupants will be**

**turned around. No taxi cabs or limos or shuttles are authorized entry on to RTC in the morning. Motorcycle drivers/riders MUST have proper protective clothing/equipment such helmet, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and over the ankle hard-soled boots.**

- Remember – you must fill out the security form prior to graduation. Do not wait until the last moment. As soon as you get your recruits letter with the graduation date, you can download the form here → **NOTE RTC HAS LIMITED ATTENDANCE FROM 3 TO 4 DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF DIVISIONS GRADUATING.** Check the RTC WEBSITE <https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/graduation.html>

Currently the entrance for graduation is gate # 8 which is located on Ohio Street adjacent to the Metra Parking lot. **Note: Gate 6 will be closed** for operational necessity. Gate 6 may be opened with the Commanders' discretion. See the short cut section of this guide. **NOTE – PARKING AT THE ARMED FORCES BANK ACROSS FROM RTC GATE 6 IS PROHIBITED.**

GPS ADDRESS for graduation -> <https://goo.gl/maps/JdJXz7Tk57h8WA9LA> OR 1100-1198 Ohio St, North Chicago, IL 60088

- No hand-held cell phones are permitted for **use by the driver in the State of Illinois**
- **NO BACK PACKS, TRAVEL LUGGAGE, BALLONS, STROLLERS, FLOWERS, WEAPONS, OR SIGNS** are permitted in the graduation hall.
- Seat belts must be worn, and children must be properly secured in accordance with Illinois law regarding approved child restraint devices.
- Obey speed limits and directions of military and civilian guards.
- Military personnel in uniform (**Dress Uniform**) must ALWAYS wear head gear **INCLUDING** inside vehicles while on base.
- Lock your vehicle and remember your parking location. Also, do not forget your identification.
- Remember there are check points for ID. All vehicles and personnel are subject to search.
- Identification must not be expired. **Military or U.S. Government identification cards** that are expired **will be confiscated by the sentry's and entry will be denied.**
- Wheelchairs are available – ask the guard at the entry to the base.
- Walk on sidewalks and cross at crosswalks.
- All comments are taken seriously. No jokes about terrorism or violence.
- Guests should be aware that **LARGE** camera bags, purses, etc. are subject to search or may be placed in a holding area by Security. Contraband, including but not limited to alcohol, illegal drugs, knives, or weapons of any kind, will be confiscated and you will be denied entry and could face arrest. **Prescription marijuana is prohibited on all Naval facilities.**
- Furthermore, smoking or use of vapor devices is prohibited onboard RTC, **including in your vehicle.**

**Outdoor photography and videotaping are not permitted onboard RTC.** The graduation ceremony is held indoors, so ample photo/video taking is permitted in the ceremonial drill hall.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS SAFETY ACT:** If you are law enforcement and are required to carry a weapon at all times as a condition of your service; please contact Great Lakes Police Department, Deputy Chief Knapp at [james.b.knapp@navy.mil](mailto:james.b.knapp@navy.mil) or (847) 688-5555 **well in advance of your visit to meet requirements for doing so on a military installation.**

- When returning your sailor in the evening to RTC (**DO NOT DROP OFF AT GATE 6 ILLINOIS STREET THIS IS FOR DRIVING ON RTC AND MUST HAVE GRAD TICKETS FOR ALL PASSENGERS**) the above rules also apply. Allow plenty of time to get your sailor back. **Make sure you and all occupants have graduation tickets if you plan to drive them back inside RTC on Friday evening. DROPPING OFF your sailor AT Gate 8 (OHIO STREET) IS PERMITTED AND RECOMMENDED. DO NOT DROP OFF YOUR SAILOR ON THE HIGHWAY (BUCKLEY ROAD ROUTE 137 IN FRONT OF Gate 6) NOR AT THE ARMED FORCES BANK ACROSS THE HIGHWAY.**
- Make sure your sailor has his/her I.D., raincoat, Liberty Card, and **locker keys** when they return to RTC.
- Follow the guard's instructions. All drivers **must stop at the stop sign** and await the guards' signal to proceed forward. ***Have everyone's identification and graduation tickets available for the guards.***
- Do not jump the lines to get into the base. Individuals who do so will be denied access and returned to the end of the line.
- **Do not, REPEAT, DO NOT, drop off your sailor on the highway.** If the line is too long, be patient. You will be subject to a ticket and your sailor will be reprimanded if they are let out of the vehicle while in the line

**Finally** – drive defensively. Keep your distance and obey the speed limits. Both The City of North Chicago and the Great Lakes police departments, in the interest of community safety, **strictly enforce** the **30 MPH speed limit** on Buckley Road and speed limits on the base.

## **CHAPTER 9 GRADUATION AND TICKETS \*\* UPDATED \*\***

This chapter includes all the information you will need to visit your recruit for graduation, including the schedule of events and directions to the Recruit Family Welcome Center. Please review the information carefully. If you have additional questions not covered in this chapter, you may get in touch with RTC via the [contact page](#)

### **Pass-In-Review Access List:**

RTC issues tickets for the graduation ceremony. Please coordinate with your Recruit as only the Recruits may place names on the list. RTC can neither change these names nor release the names of those on the list. **Recruits ARE NOT authorized to place additional guests' names under another recruit's name.** All names provided by recruits undergo a security check via Naval Intelligence, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, The Office of Personnel Management, Federal Investigative Services (OPM-FIS), The Defense Security Service (DSS) and other agencies to protect our recruits.

### **ALL GUESTS 3 YEARS AND OLDER MUST HAVE GRADUATION TICKETS**

**No exceptions** will be made for active duty, reserve service members, or retired military personnel. You must have a ticket. **Everyone must pick up their individual tickets – NO EXCEPTIONS.** The address for picking up tickets is **2650 Green Bay Road North Chicago, IL 60088**

- Children aged 2 and younger do not need to be listed on the access list and will not count toward the maximum number of guests.
- **Please do not call or e-mail RTC about additional seats.** Those who do not have tickets will be denied access to the base and **MUST remain off base** and meet with their Sailor once he or she commences off base daytime liberty. The Navy does not have a designated waiting area, nor do they have a standby line. **NO ticket – No Entrance – No Exceptions, DON'T lose your ticket.**

The recruit graduation ceremony, also known as **Pass-In-Review**, is a formal military ceremony which honors your recruit's challenging work and dedication to a new way of life, and ties together the future of the Navy with long-held Naval traditions and customs. **Please dress for success.**

## **Graduation Ceremony Tickets and Guest Policy**

### **STEP 1: Fill out the security access form you received from your recruit.**

**GUEST SECURITY ACCESS FORM:** If you are going to be attending the graduation ceremony, please fill out the security access form, **maximum of 3-4 (DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF DIVISIONS) guests per FORM and return to your recruit,** (using the recruit's address provided in the letter you received from them) according to the instructions on the form. Children under 3 years of age do **NOT** count toward the maximum number of guests and do not need to be listed. **ALL GUESTS 3 AND OLDER MUST BE LISTED ON THE ACCESS LIST, INCLUDING MILITARY GUESTS (ACTIVE DUTY, RESERVE, RETIRED, VET).**

**GRADUATION CEREMONY SPACE LIMITATIONS:** Recruit Training Command may issue up to **FOUR** tickets for the graduation ceremony, per recruit. The maximum number of guests allowed is based on safety regulations and the fire code for the drill hall, where the indoor ceremony takes place **AND THE NUMBER OF GRADUATING DIVISIONS.** Again, recruits are permitted to invite up to **three or four** guests to graduation, **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE AUTHORIZED** for additional guests.

**ONLY YOUR RECRUIT CAN CHANGE THE GRADUATION CEREMONY ACCESS LIST:** Your recruit will be able to update the access list. The last opportunity to make changes will be the week before graduation. If there is a change to be made to the access list (such as a name spelled incorrectly, name-swap, etc....) **please communicate any changes to your recruit by mail well in advance.** Recruit Training Command staff cannot change these names or release the names of those on the list. **Please do not call to verify receipt of security forms, only your recruit can verify that.**

### **STEP 2: Plan your travel itinerary.**

**ACCOMMODATIONS & TRANSPORTATION:** **The U.S. Navy does NOT** provide accommodations, air or vehicle transportation, or shuttle service. Please read further in this guide regarding taxi service from the airport.

**STEP 3: Pick up your tickets for the graduation ceremony.** Tickets are free of charge, but you must have a valid **REAL ID OR U.S. PASSPORT to obtain your ticket.**

**WELCOME CENTER ADDRESS/GPS:** Navy Exchange (NEX) Burkey Mall, 2650 Green Bay Road **North**  
**RECRUIT FAMILY WELCOME CENTER HOURS: [10:00 AM to 7:30 PM]** and **ON GRADUATION DAY FROM [5:30 AM to 8:30 AM]** **\*\*Certain federal holidays may require adjusting days and times. Please refer to the website for those specific updates\*\*** Plan accordingly so each person can check-in to receive a ticket for the graduation ceremony. **If you do not have a ticket, you will be denied entry to the base.** Tickets will only be issued to guests who the graduating recruit has verified will be attending. Please ensure those who check-in to receive their graduation tickets are the same as those who were listed on the security form.

**\*\*DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE BASE WITHOUT FIRST PICKING UP YOUR TICKET\*\***

#### **STEP 4: Attending the graduation ceremony.**

**ARRIVING:** Once the gates open to the public, it will take some time to clear security at the gate, so please plan accordingly. Visitors 18+ will be required **to present a valid photo ID** SUCH AS REAL ID, passport, OR military ID card. Minors who cannot produce one of the forms of ID listed above, must present either a school ID, driver's permit, copy of birth certificate, or Social Security card.

#### ***SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:***

- 6:00 am: RTC gate opens to guests.
- 7:00 am: Ceremonial drill hall doors open to guests.
- 8:45 am: All guests must be seated. **Ceremonial drill hall doors close, no further entry for guests.**
- 9:00 am: Pass-In-Review commences.
- 9:20 am: Divisions arrive.
- 10:30 am: Pass-In-Review concludes.

**\*Please plan to arrive at least 1.5 hours before the ceremony, which begins promptly at 8:45 a.m.**

**WALKING ON BASE:** Pedestrians may walk onto the base using the gate adjacent to the METRA train station (Gate 8). Shuttles, taxis, and shared rides from hotels will drop you off in the parking lot adjacent to Gate 8. Once on base, 100 YARD walk from the gate to the entrance of Recruit Training Command's Visitor Center (USS YORKTOWN).

**DRIVING ON BASE:** A driver's license, vehicle registration, proof of insurance or rental car agreement and graduation ticket must be ready to present to security at all access points. Once on base, attendees will be directed to park in the parking structure next to Recruit Training Command's Visitor Center (USS YORKTOWN). Please obey the following while driving on base:

- No cell phone usage while driving on base!
- Seat belts are always required for all drivers/passengers.
- Motorcycle drivers/riders **MUST have proper** protective clothing/equipment such helmet, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and over the ankle hard-soled boots.
- Recent graduates are prohibited from operating motor vehicles, including motorcycles, and are **NOT** allowed to be a passenger on a motorcycle.

**MULTIPLE SEARCHES POSSIBLE:** All graduate attendees must enter THE Recruit Training Command's Visitor Center, for security screening, prior to entering the ceremony itself. Every person, bag, and vehicle on the base is subject to search. Metal detectors and other security devices are in use onboard the Recruit Training Command.

- **ITEMS PERMITTED INTO GRADUATION CEREMONY:** Small bag/personal item (purse, satchel, etc....), small diaper bag, small camera bag, and personal wheelchair or walker. Strollers and car seats are allowed but discouraged due to space limitations (you may leave them in your car).

- **ITEMS NOT PERMITTED INTO GRADUATION CEREMONY:**

- Large bags, **backpacks**, luggage, posters, signs/banners, large tripods, gift bags of any size, balloons, and flowers. Strollers will be checked in at the graduation hall and retrieved after the ceremony.
- Contraband such as Alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription marijuana, knives, or weapons, will be confiscated by security. **Any person found with these contraband items will NOT be allowed to enter the ceremony and are subject to arrest.**

**NO WEAPONS!** Weapons possession on federal installations is highly regulated and those in violation are subject to arrest.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS SAFETY ACT:** If you are law enforcement and are required to carry a weapon at all times as a condition of your service; please contact Great Lakes Police

Department, Deputy Chief Knapp at [james.b.knapp@navy.mil](mailto:james.b.knapp@navy.mil) or (847) 688-5555 well in advance of your visit to meet requirements for doing so on a military installation.

Please communicate via mail with your recruit well before the final week of training to be sure the right names are on the list and to note any changes.

## **\*\* Departure from Recruit Training Command (RTC) \*\* new change**

**\*\***

Newly graduated Sailors who will attend advanced training (“A” School), OR CS Rates, training) at Great Lakes, will NORMALLY transfer the next day after graduation (\*NOTE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY RTC) On the day after graduation, they will transfer across the street for their “A” school and will be granted overnight liberty.

Those who will attend (“A” School) out of state may leave two days after graduation. Overnight Liberty may be granted on graduation day. They must be returned to RTC no later than 7:30PM On the day before they ship out to their “A” school outside of the Great Lakes area, Overnight Liberty may be granted on that day. Please discuss liberty with your recruit during their phone calls home and be sure to ask them when they are leaving Recruit Training Command for their next assignment. Recruit Training Command Public Affairs does not have access to individual schedules. Only your recruit and his/her supervisor know their specific liberty schedule.

Ensure that your recruit writes down the following items and gives it to you at graduation if they are attending “A” School outside of Great Lakes.

- a. Time they are getting on the bus.
- b. What airport are they going to?
- c. What time is their flight?

You need this information if you are planning to see your sailor off at the airports. AIRLINES WILL OFFER PASSES TO GO BEYOND SECURITY AT THE AIRPORT. Your sailor MUST accompany you to the airline ticket counter to get the pass. The buses drop off at terminal 2. Plan to arrive half an hour before your sailor’s bus arrives.

## **Graduation Streaming Live**

Watch the graduates live at 08:45 Central Standard Time **GRADUATION DAY**. Follow the link [https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/graduation.html#grad\\_liveSection](https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/graduation.html#grad_liveSection)

## **Honor Graduates**

<https://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/Graduation/Honor-Grads/>

## **Recruit Review Graduation**

*Each Award Winner will receive a Letter of Commendation from the Commanding Officer in recognition of their superlative achievements during recruit training.*

**Cushions for seats** – seats are bleacher style. Recommend cushions be bought at nearby stores for comfort. Division numbers found on floor pedestals – if you want to ensure a seat in front of the division you must get there early. Graduation Hall opens at 7:00 AM. NOTE – check your surroundings prior to leaving the graduation hall. Your excitement may cause you to leave your camera, purse, or wallet behind. **AGAIN, CHECK YOUR SURROUNDINGS BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE HALL.**

**Guests with Disabilities** – Recruit Training Command will be happy to provide an on-site qualified interpreter for the graduation ceremony when a person with a disability requests the service prior to the event. **Please place your request with the Public Affairs Office as soon as possible via e-mail at [rtc.pao@navy.mil](mailto:rtc.pao@navy.mil) or via phone at (847) 688-2405.**

Use of wheelchairs and/or manually/auto powered mobility aids are authorized onboard RTC. RTC supplies wheelchair spaces and a companion seat in a special seating area in the ceremonial drill hall. RTC has wheelchairs available on a first-come, first-served basis which will only be used to transport guests through the check-in process and after the ceremony to their vehicle or transportation service. **Strollers must be checked** in at the graduation hall. If you require handicapped parking, please show your parking placard to security staff and you will be directed to the proper parking area. Service animals with proper documentation are allowed.

*This is a formal Military Ceremony and guests should dress appropriately. Although suits, dresses, and ties are not needed, this is a proud day for you and your sailor. They will be in their dress uniform. Make them proud. All Military must be in their DRESS uniforms.*

## **CHAPTER 10 – AFTER GRADUATION**

**NOTE: \*\* MAJOR CHANGE \*\***

**Group 1** This pertains to Departing “A” School Graduates who will ship to another base **OUTSIDE OF RTC Great Lakes**. This does not include those Sailors who will be going across the street for indoctrination prior to going to Ft. Lee VA for Culinary Services.

**GROUP 2.** Temporary Holdover Unit stays at RTC until matters are resolved.

**GROUP 3.** Naval Training Command (NSTC) “A” School sailors training OR CS Rate Students.

**\*\* Group 1 Departing “A” School Graduates who ship to another base outside of Great Lakes.**

Departing Sailors who are going to “A” Schools outside Great Lakes normally leave on Saturday early morning. In some rare extreme cases, they may leave on Sunday. They will be available to you at once following the Graduation Ceremony and must be returned to **RTC (GATE 6) OR GATE 8 with enough time to be on their ship’s toe-line N.L.T. 19:30 hours (7:30 PM) after liberty expires. Check with your sailor – some ships MAY HAVE different return times. (see maps page for location)**. Please ensure that they have their I.D. cards, **locker key**, I.D., and raincoats.

**If you are driving your sailor back on RTC that evening, EVERYONE IN THE VEHICLE MUST HAVE THEIR GRADUATION TICKETS IN ADDITION TO IDENTIFICATION, OR ACCESS WILL BE DENIED, AND THE VEHICLE WILL BE TURNED AROUND. The GPS ADDRESS for RTC GATE 6 is 3355 Illinois Street, Great Lakes IL 60088**

**\*\*NOTE\*\* At Gate 8 (OHIO STREET) there is an electronic entry for SAILORS only. If you (the loved one) desire to walk on to RTC that evening, you must go through gate 6 and have your graduation tickets available. **Sailors must be driven to gate 6 OR DROPPED OFF AT GATE 8.****

You can meet your sailor at the Airport and can give them their cell phones and laptops if they gave you their box. No sailors may bring any electronics or non-issued gear back to RTC that Friday evening. Your

sailor can get you a security pass from the Airline Counter. **DO NOT CALL THE AIRLINES OR THE USO.** Only your Sailor can get you a pass at the airport from the airline that he is traveling on, so you can spend more time with your Sailor.

**No Sailors are authorized to leave the airport** under any circumstances.

**\*\* IMPORTANT\*\*** Write to your sailor and tell them to write down the following either on a post card or in their notes **and HAND it to you at graduation.**

- a) What airport are they shipping out of? (you need to know this, so you can get to the right airport to see them off.
  - b) What time are they getting on the bus? (so, you can set a time to meet them). c) What time is their flight.
- Park in the Short-term garage or hourly parking. Check with other families and try to share the cost. Remember; **if you get a security pass (ISSUED WHEN YOUR SAILOR CHECKS INTO THE AIRLINE TICKET COUNTER)** you will be treated like a flying passenger and you will have to meet all FAA and TSA guidelines for flying. You can meet your sailor at the airport the next morning if you wish to spend more time with them before they leave. Your sailor will know at graduation, The time they are getting on the bus, which **airport** they are going to, and the **airline departure time**. Coordination is the key, and a meeting place and time should be set up.
  - You **CANNOT** transport your sailor to the airport **nor are they allowed to leave the airport** once they have checked in, however; you may, however, get a room for yourself at the **Hilton O'Hare** which is connected to **terminal 2** where the USO is located, so you can get a good night's sleep before you see your sailor off. The restaurant at the Hilton is the only restaurant that is open at 6:00 AM before security.
  - The bus will drop off the sailors at **Door 2A-UL (terminal 2 UPPER LEVEL)** at O'Hare. Those flying out of **Midway** will be dropped off at **Entry # 1 UPPER LEVEL. NORMALLY – SAILORS MAY SHIP OUT FROM MILWAUKEE UNDER SPECIAL ORDERS.** Round trips to the airport to see your sailor off are available at a fair price. Contact me (847)212-2046 if you wish to use our services or to make reservations to meet your Sailor at the airport.
  - Finally - if you plan to see your sailor off at O'Hare, the Extended Stay America which is located right next to the airport, is an additional option and has an excellent rate and has a free shuttle back and forth to the airport. Here is an example of how you can benefit from this.
  - **SCENARIO** - Your sailor leaves from Great Lakes at 00:30 (12:30 AM) on the bus from Great Lakes to O'Hare. You wish to meet him at O'Hare and give them their Phone/Laptop/x-box, etc... You do not have to arrive when the bus does; however, you are going to be exhausted and want to see him/her later. Your flight leaves also on Saturday let us say at 2:00 PM. So now you must decide - do I get up right after midnight and drive to O'Hare or do I leave in the AM - see him/her off and then catch my flight. Remember - you must still pay for your hotel room for Friday unless you check out before 11:30 AM. You are going to be exhausted!
  - Here is what I tell parents at the meet and greet. "Check out of your Hotel on Friday and put your luggage in your car or give it to your cab driver to hold. Enjoy the day with your sailor and when you drop him off at 7:30 PM; go to the Extended stay at O'Hare or the Hilton. Now you can get a good night's sleep and either drive less than 4 minutes to the airport or take their shuttle (Extended Stay 1207 Touhy Ave) or walk 100 yards from the Hilton to Terminal 2. Spend time with your sailors and when they leave, you can either go back to your hotel or stay at the airport

and catch your flight. Simple and less tasking on your part. I will explain this in more detail at the Meet and Greet.

- NOTE: There are **NO HOTELS attached to or at Midway Airport**. The closest hotel is ¾ of MILE from Midway.

## **GROUP 2. Temporary Holdovers staying at RTC**

This group of sailors has fully graduated and must have additional processing or waivers prior to departure from RTC for their new assignment including those who assigned to “A” school across the street. Additional processing can include but is not limited to: *Reclassification, Medical Waivers, Security Clearances, Additional Medical Treatment, Administrative Waivers/Review, OR Awaiting “A” School date at a location other than Great Lakes or awaiting orders*. These sailors will have only a brief time with you after graduation (about 30 minutes). They will return to their boot camp ships and will be out-processed and then moved to **T.H.U. on RTC** for holdover in-processing. They will remain at RTC until matters are resolved or school dates are assigned. **They may have** overnight Liberty on graduation day Check with them for their return times. **If you are driving on RTC – everyone in the vehicle must have graduation tickets.**

## **GROUP 3 GREAT LAKES “A” SCHOOL STUDENTS \*\* MAJOR CHANGE\*\***

These groups of sailors have fully graduated and **ARE NOT HOLD OVER’S** and will be transferred across the street to the NAVAL TRAINING COMMAND (NSTC) for either “A” school or follow-on **Special Ops pre-training or indoctrination. They will transfer the day AFTER GRADUATION (subject to change by RTC).** On the day of graduation, they **WILL NOT** have overnight liberty. This also applies to those who have a rate of CS and will go to Ft. Lee, Virginia for their culinary service training. Overnight liberty is granted once they in process at the MAIN BASE GREAT LAKES.

*The sailors will be marching out to the museum, and you will sign out your sailor for the OVERNIGHT LIBERTY.* The GPS ADDRESS to pick up your sailor THE DAY AFTER GRADUATION is 2531 Sheridan Road, Great Lakes, IL 60088.

***Captain Raymond C. Leung, THE PAST Commander Naval Station Great Lakes*** instituted a long overdue change in February 2019 to better help the families and loved ones on Graduation weekend. This change **can be revoked anytime** if sailors abuse the program.

On Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019, sailors were **GRANTED OVERNIGHT WEEKEND LIBERTY WITH THEIR FAMILIES and LOVED ONES** Until Sunday evening and in some cases on Monday holidays such as MEMORIAL DAY/LABOR DAY. If the Navy decides to re-institute the old policy because of abuse, please follow the directions below. Please ensure that your sailor is returned on time and allow enough time for the long lines at Gate 1.

**REMEMBER YOUR SAILOR MUST CALL IN DAILY TO THE QUARTER DECK ON OVERNIGHT LIBERTY.**

**\*\* NO CHANGE TO THE FOLLOWING\*\*** You may drive your sailor to his ship **if everyone in the vehicle has a valid I.D (SAME REQUIREMENTS AS R.T.C).** and is properly seat belted. No graduation tickets are needed when your Sailor goes with you, or if you have a valid Military I.D. when driving them back to the “A” school base.

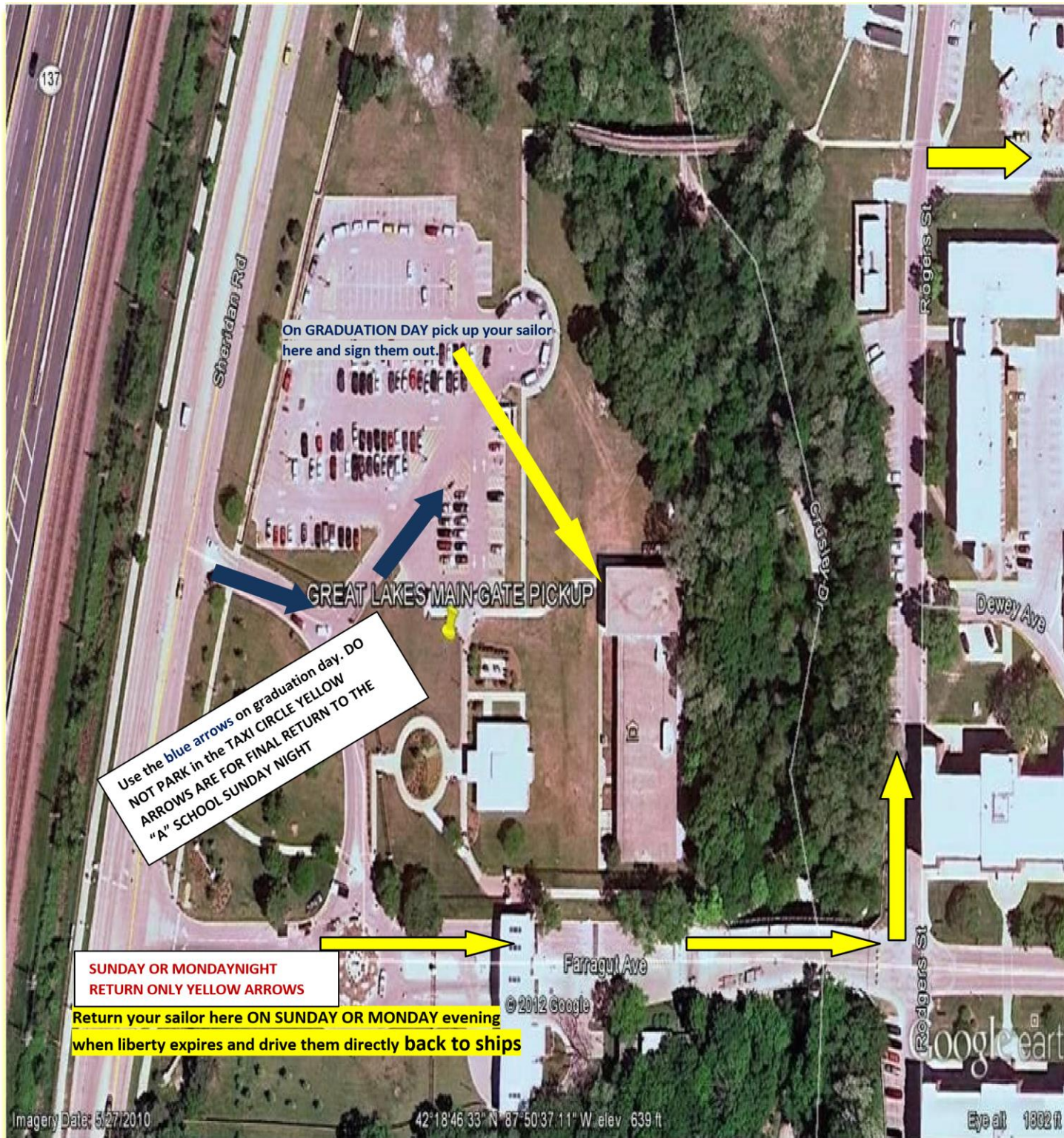
**To access the main gate without your Sailor you must have a VALID MILITARY I.D. or Military Dependent I.D.** if you do not have the I.D. as mentioned above, you must meet your sailor at

MAIN GATE (Farragut Ave), and he/she will escort you into the base to sign them out. **REMEMBER** – the current security requirement is 100% I.D. check. All passengers and/or visitors must have a valid – unexpired I.D. to access the gates. Instruct your sailor to meet you at the museum. The visitor center is small and does not offer refreshments like the museum does.

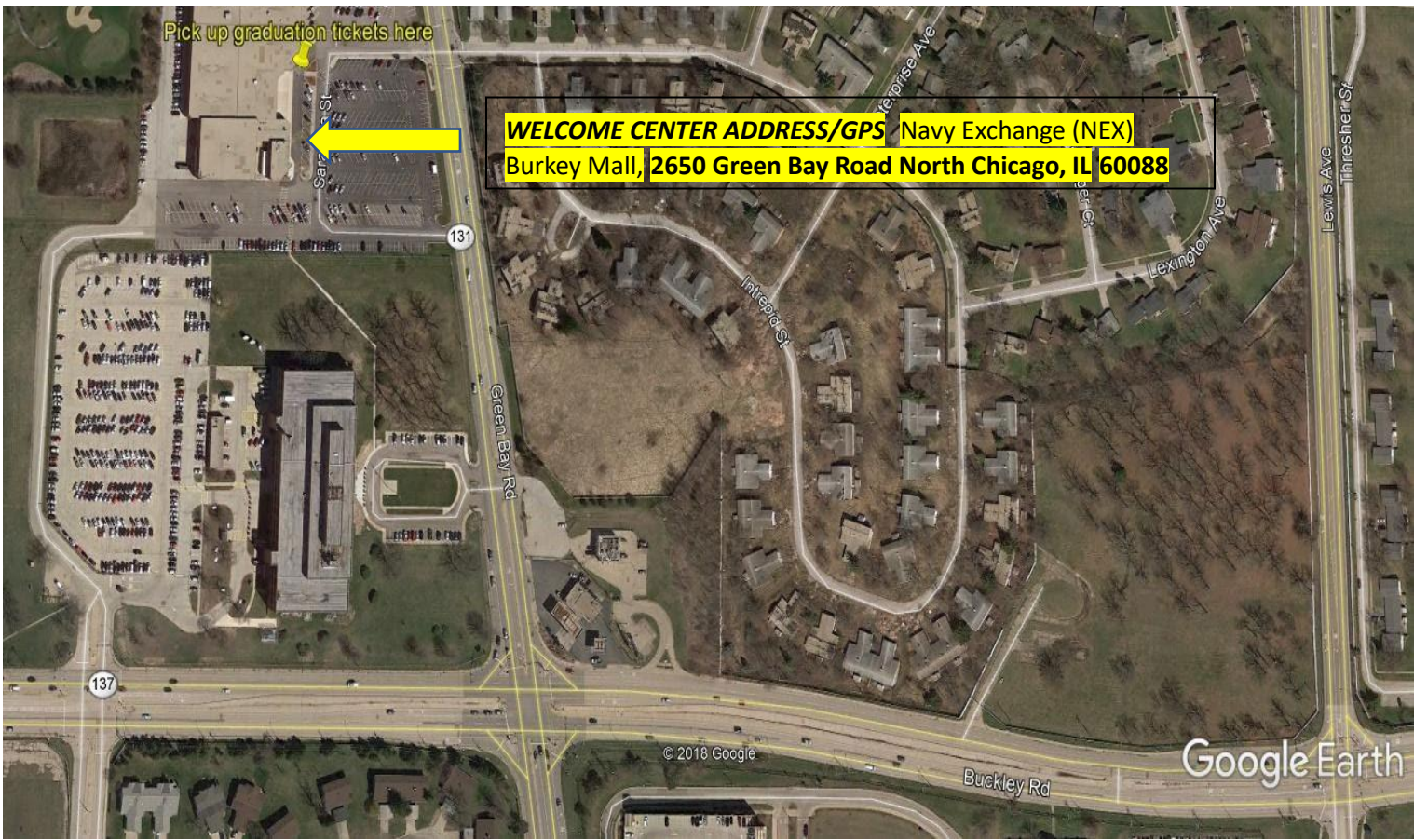
## **CHAPTER 11 – MAPS AND DIRECTIONS.**

**GATE # 1 'A' SCHOOL**

**SET YOUR GPS FOR 2531 SHERIDAN ROAD-GREAT LAKES ILLINOIS**



You must have a military I.D. or be escorted by your sailor beyond this point. **Please exit the circle and wait in the parking area** if you are not in the military or are not escorted by your sailor. DOD employees may be denied access based upon their DBIDS access restrictions.,





## **CHAPTER 12 – HELPFUL LINKS AND ON-LINE BROCHURES.**

Everything you need to plan for if you are going to tour Chicago or Waukegan – If you notice a broken link – please let me know.

Ship Challenge Coins and other goodies [www.pirgifts.com](http://www.pirgifts.com) (EBAY SITE TO ORDER)

CUSTOM APPAREL <https://www.buyitproud.com>

PICK IT UP AT MEET AND GREET OR HAVE IT SHIPPED TO YOUR HOME.

Historic Waukegan and Waterfront. <http://www.waukeganweb.net/index.aspx?NID=31>

City of North Chicago <http://www.northchicago.org/>

Chicago <http://www.choosechicago.com>

City Events <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en.html>

Great Lakes official face book page -  
<https://www.facebook.com/NavalStationGreatLakes>

RTC OFFICIAL WEBSITE - <http://www.bootcamp.navy.mil>

OFFICIAL GREAT LAKES “A” SCHOOL WEBSITE <https://cnrma.cnrc.navy.mil/Installations/NAVSTA-Great-Lakes/>

RTC OFFICIAL FACE BOOK PAGE  
<https://www.facebook.com/NavyRecruitTrainingCommand>

LAKE COUNTY OFFICIAL VISITORS WEB SITE <http://www.visitlakecounty.org>

METRA (RAIL ROAD) <http://metrarail.com/metra/en/home.html>

MILWAUKEE VISITORS GUIDE <http://city.milwaukee.gov/home>

### **RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS**

Ruth Chris <http://www.ruthschris.com/restaurant-locations/northbrook/>

Jimmy’s Char House <http://www.jimmyscharhouselibertyville.com>

Stevens Steak House <http://www.stevensofgurnee.com>

### **GIFTS AND GOODIES FOR LOVED ONES**

*Available at MEET AND GREET*

*Customized last-minute gifts for you and your family. Avid supporters of the meet and greet. OR BUY ONLINE AT <https://www.buyitproud.com>*

INK’N TEES 2901 Delany Rd - Suite 105 Waukegan, IL 60087

CLICK HERE → **GREAT GIFTS** and **CHALLENGE COINS** ([WWW.pirgifts.com](http://WWW.pirgifts.com))

Other goodies <https://bluewaterstitching.etsy.com> Navy mom website.

## CHAPTER 13 – IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND WHAT TO DO IF AN EMERGENCY ARISES WHILE YOUR LOVED ONE IS AT BOOT CAMP OR NTC.

1. If there is an emergency or a death in the family, contact the American Red Cross at once. Please have your sailor's name and social security number and boot camp address ready.  
<http://www.redcross.org> or call Toll free **1-800-733-2767** or the **Chicago office (312) 729-6100**
  - a **BOOT CAMP PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE** – 847-688-2405 OR VISIT  
<http://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/contact.html>
  - b **NSTC PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE 847-688-2201** (“A” SCHOOL STUDENTS)
  - c GREAT LAKES HISTORY AND FUN FACTS  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval\\_Station\\_Great\\_Lakes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Great_Lakes)

## CHAPTER 14 – SHORT CUTS TO GRADUATION.

### **SHORT CUT DIRECTIONS**

**GPS ADDRESS 11025 Downey Rd., North Chicago IL 60064**  
**Or USE Metra Station Great Lakes GPS**

**Recommend that you DO NOT GET ON THE SHORT CUT LINE PRIOR TO 6:15AM.**

### **Do not get on the short cut line before 6:15AM**

**FROM THE NORTH** – Take either Green Bay Road, or Hwy 41(Skokie Blvd), or Hwy 43 (Waukegan road) SOUTH to 22<sup>nd</sup> street (Martin Luther King Blvd), turn LEFT heading east for about 1 mile. Once you pass Commonwealth Ave, turn right at the next intersection (Hwy 137 – Bobby E. Thompson expressway). **Stay in left lane** and continue about ¾ of a mile and you will see the train station (OHIO STREET).

**REMEMBER stay in the left lane** and cross the intersection and head into the gate. Have I.D.s ready.

**FROM THE SOUTH** – Take either Green Bay Road, or Hwy 41(Skokie Blvd), or Hwy 43 (Waukegan road) NORTH to 22<sup>nd</sup> street (Martin Luther King Blvd), turn right heading east for about 1 mile. Once you pass Commonwealth Ave, turn right at the next intersection (Hwy 137 – Bobby E. Thompson expressway). Stay in left lane and continue about ¾ of a mile and you will see the train station. **REMEMBER stay in the left lane** and cross the intersection and head into the gate. Have I.D.s ready.

**FROM THE WEST** – Take Buckley Road (RT 137) to Hwy 41. Turn Left onto Hwy 41 and go one light to 22<sup>nd</sup> street (Martin Luther King Drive) and turn right and head east until **HWY 137 Bobby E. Thompson Expressway**, turn right and head straight into Ohio Street (**REMEMBER STAY IN LEFT LANE**)

**See maps in previous chapter.**

## CHAPTER 15

### GREAT LAKES “A” SCHOOL INFORMATION

While your sailors are stationed here for either their “A” school or PRE-SO or CS training, there are a several items you need to know. **The most important item is - NO WEAPONS OF ANY KIND are allowed to be brought on base.**

Access to the Naval Training Command is restricted. **Proper unexpired identification is needed for entry.** Only authorized Active Duty, Reserve, Military Retired (with DOW Retiree I.D.) and their dependents (with a DOW Dependent I.D.), and those who have Common Access Cards (CAC), and military sponsored guests, are allowed access to the Great Lakes Naval Service Training Command (Gate 1). All others **must be escorted** by an authorized person and have a valid unexpired identification. Veterans who have a “Veteran Card” **are not authorized access unless an authorized member escorts them.**

**COMMERCIAL VEHICLES INCLUDING TAXI CABS ARE NOT** authorized access **INSIDE** Great Lakes. Share Ride companies such as Uber, Lyft, Sidecar, Door Dash, Drizly, Sherpa Share (**also known as Transportation Network Companies**) **ARE NOT AUTHORIZED** inside access during certain hours.

Guests of authorized people must be escorted always if they do not possess a military or dependent ID. After a sailor is returned to their ship and signed in, the guest must take the most direct route to exit the base and do not need to be escorted off base.

People, military or civilian, walking or driving on base, cannot use handheld devices while they are in motion.

No photography or video recording at any time on base, including at the Visitor Center. Video and camera recording are authorized inside buildings unless otherwise prohibited. ~~Guest~~Guests of Sailors are not authorized beyond the quarterdeck of their ship. During Colors, Retreat, and the National Anthem, **all vehicles must stop**. Military personnel outside of buildings or outside of vehicles must stand fast and give proper salutes and military courtesy. Civilians must give proper respect by standing. Disabled persons who cannot stand should be seated.

Sailors in uniform **must wear reflective belts** when walking on the base in accordance with base regulations.

Student sailors are prohibited from possessing or having alcohol on their person, or in their vehicles, including their backpacks or sea bags. Students cannot operate motor vehicles on base unless they have **Live-Ashore privileges or a driving chit**. Smoking is allowed only in designated areas on NSTC.

**Students will receive their first briefing when they transfer over to the “A” school. It is imperative that they know and follow all the rules. This is not a complete set – there are other restrictions and regulations’ that apply. For the latest information, see the links below.**

## OTHER Helpful official links

### OFFICIAL BOOT CAMP WEBSITE

<http://ngis.dodlodging.net>

<http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site> (free travel for military and dependents)

<https://www.history.navy.mil>

### OTHER UNOFFICIAL HELPFUL LINKS.

<https://www.mynavytaxi.com/goodies.html>

### WWW.NAVYDEP.COM

<https://www.uso.org/centers/united-states>

<http://www.visitlakecounty.org>

## Chapter 16

Frequent questions and answers.

**For new military spouses/dependents see chapter 17.**

**Q. My recruit is in RCU (Recruit Convalescent Unit) or on hold to pass a fitness test (FIT). Are we authorized a visit?**

**A.** A recruit who is in RCU or FIT is still in training, therefore are not authorized visits. If you receive a phone call from your recruit stating they have transferred to RCU/FIT, please note you will not receive another phone call from your recruit until they complete their training requirements. Recruits are only granted phone calls when they have a change in status, meaning they are going to graduate. You should not plan to attend the graduation if you have not received a phone call from your recruit stating they have met the requirements and will be graduating.

**Q. My recruit failed their physical fitness test. When will he/she graduate or what is their status?**

**A.** While recruits are listed in this status; they are not scheduled to graduate. They will not get another phone call until they have passed their test. When the status of a recruit changes for failing their fitness test, the recruit will know how their training is going to be affected. Some could be placed in our Fitness Improvement Team (FIT); others could be set back in training THREE or FOUR weeks. Again, your recruit will know which category they are placed.

**Q. My recruit failed their swim qualification. When will he/she graduate or what is their status?**

**A.** While recruits are listed in this status; they are not scheduled to graduate. They will not get another chance to place a phone call until they have passed their test. If they pass their test after their original division has graduated, they will then go directly on to "A" School. They will not participate in the graduation ceremony as their original division would have already graduated and we do not wish to delay their training any further.

**Q. When will I receive tickets/passes to graduation?**

**A.** Tickets will be issued at the Recruit Family Welcome Center the week of your recruit's graduation. Please follow the instructions you received in the mail and fill out/return the

security forms to your recruit, so your names are placed on the access list. **Recruits cannot obtain additional 'seats' from other recruits.**

**Q. I am not sure I am on the access list. Can you find out and make changes if I am not?**

**A.** It is the recruit's decision whom to place on the access list. Please communicate with your recruit well before the final week of training to be sure the right names are on the list. Please follow the instructions on the security forms you received in the mail from your recruit. **\*PLEASE DO NOT CALL FOR ADDITIONAL SEATS\***

**Q. How much weekend liberty will my recruit receive?**

**A.** Recruits staying in Great Lakes for their A School will check into their new command THE DAY after graduation. That check-in process can take up to five hours. You may wait at Gate 1, 3355 Sheridan Rd, Great Lakes. **The Great Lakes "A" Schools ARE NOT** located onboard Recruit Training Command. Your recruit will be able to contact you when they have completed the check-in process. They will receive guidance regarding their exact liberty hours upon checking into their "A" school.

If your recruit will be attending A School out of state (except for CS Rate), they will fly out two days after graduation. There may be a delay if there is a flight availability issue; however, only your recruit is permitted to give you their exact flight/departure information. Their graduation daytime liberty hours will be determined by their Recruit Division Commander (RDC) prior to commencing liberty and can vary by ship.

Please ensure your recruit returns to RTC with adequate time for their arrival at the barracks prior to expiration of liberty.

**Q. Where is the Recruit Family Welcome Center located?**

**A.** The Recruit Family Welcome Center is located at the Navy Exchange Burkey Mall, 2650 Green Bay Rd. North Chicago, IL. 60088.

**Q. What are the hours of operation for the Recruit Family Welcome Center?**

**A.** The Recruit Family Welcome Center is open **THE DAY BEFORE GRADUATION** [10:00 AM to 7:30 PM], and **ON GRADUATION DAY** [5:30 AM to 8:30 AM]. It is **HIGHLY** recommended that those attending the ceremony do not wait until the morning of graduation to obtain your tickets. \*\*\* Certain federal holidays may require adjusting days and times. Please refer to the command website for those specific updates. \*\*\*

**Q. I received a letter from my recruit with a security form, what do I need to do?**

**A.** The security form you received must be filled in according to the instructions on the form and **returned to your recruit within seven days of the postmark.** This will ensure the recruits' graduation ceremony attendees are properly accounted for. Again, this needs to be returned to your recruit at the mailing address they provided in the letter you received. This is also the same address you will use to write your recruit while they are attending boot camp.

**Q. The letter I received from my recruit says only up to four guests may attend?**

**A.** The graduation ceremony occurs indoors. Due to safety regulations and fire code, Recruit Training Command only allows a certain number of people inside the building at one time. For this reason, they must restrict the number of attendees for the graduation ceremony. Please be aware, although they can allow up to four guests, there may be times that number is reduced due to the number of graduating recruits. The enclosed security form will state the number of guests allowed. **\*PLEASE DO NOT CALL FOR ADDITIONAL SEATS\***

**Q. What items can we bring or not bring to graduation?**

**A.** All people, articles and vehicles are subject to security searches. Metal detectors and other security devices are in use onboard the Recruit Training Command. Expect a delay at the security checkpoints due to this added security requirement.

**ITEMS PERMITTED INTO GRADUATION CEREMONY:** personal items (purse, satchel, small diaper bag, small camera bag, and personal wheelchair or walker. Strollers and car seats are allowed but discouraged due to space limitations (you may leave them in your car). **BACKPACKS and LUGGAGE OR SUITCASES ARE NOT ALLOWED**

**ITEMS NOT PERMITTED INTO GRADUATION CEREMONY:** Large bags, backpacks, luggage, posters, signs/banners, gift bags of any size, and flowers. Alcohol, illegal drugs, knives, or weapons will be confiscated by security. Any person found with these items will NOT be permitted to enter the ceremony.

***NO WEAPONS! Weapons possession on federal installations is highly regulated and those in violation are subject to arrest and prosecution.***

**Q. My Sailor is being placed in the Temporary Holding Unit. What does this mean? A.**

Sailors placed in this unit are Sailors who have graduated from Recruit Training Command and are awaiting follow-on orders to their school. The reasons for placing a graduated Sailor on hold can vary from clearance issues, needing a special physical, or sometimes it is as simple as waiting for a class to fill up.

These Sailors, however, are not just waiting around. They follow a daily schedule. Many maintain work assignments while awaiting their follow-on orders, to include staffing the Ship, acting as escorts for recruits transiting to medical or legal appointments, or performing office duties at locations throughout the base.

They are also housed separately from other recruits and can enjoy liberty and are permitted to leave the base for recreation or for visiting with family members. They may also call home during their non-duty hours.

**Q. How can I get a tour of RTC?**

**A.** Due to the high operational tempo of RTC, The Command cannot support personal tours at this time.

**Q. Where can I find additional information? Click this link**

<http://www.bootcamp.navy.mil/faq.html>

**Q. My sailor needs transportation to the airport for taking leave – who does he contact?**

**Sarge's Taxi** <https://www.mynavytaxi.com/to-airport.html>

## **CHAPTER 17 DEPENDENT I.D. CARDS.**

Welcome spouses to our new Navy family. The following information is **VERY IMPORTANT**, and you should take the time to read this.

- 1.** If you are married to a military member your sailor should have procured the paperwork required for you to receive a **DOW DEPENDENT IDENTIFICATION CARD**. Your sailor should have enrolled you in the **DEERS network and Tricare**.
- 2.** You should have a **"power of attorney"** in your possession prior to your sailor shipping out.

Why is this important? All financial institutions, schools, physicians, require a “power of attorney” be on file should you have to intercede on your sailor’s behalf.

**If the sailor got married or divorced while in the delayed entry program, the sailor must take the ORIGINAL marriage certificate, your birth certificate, and your social security card (with your new name) indicated on it, or divorce paperwork when he ships out from the MEPS. The MEPS IS REQUIRED TO UPDATE THE CONTRACT prior to them shipping out to boot camp.**

Failure to do so could result in benefits such as health care, additional allowances, and entry into government facilities being denied. Your sailor is also required to bring all adoption papers and or birth certificates for children, so they are added to DEERS.

If your sailor was married to you prior to entry into the delayed entry program, make sure that his records are **noted as being married**. If records indicate not married, follow the procedures above.

Here are some helpful **OFFICIAL LINKS** so you as a military spouse/dependent have no issues.

*Again, welcome to our military family. One Team – One Family.*

<https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/Eligibility/DEERS/RequiredDocuments>

<https://tricare.mil/forms/>

<https://tricare.mil/Plans/Eligibility/DEERS>

<https://tricare.mil/Plans/Eligibility>

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/index.jsp>

<https://www.tsp.gov/index.html>

## **CHAPTER 18 Taxicab passenger “Bill of Rights”**

Please pass it on to your sailor if they are assigned to NTC for “A” school or follow-on training such as PRE-Special ops, or CS Rates or Undesignated. If they need service, please give me and my team a chance to prove our worthiness. I can be reached at 847-212-0246.

**INSIDE ACCESS BY ANY COMMERCIAL TAXI, LIMO, UBER, LYFT OR ANY SHARE RIDE IS PROHIBITED (CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION). ABUSE IS SUBJECT TO UCMJ ACTION IF MILITARY, OR ARREST IF CIVILIAN.**

We receive many complaints from families and sailors alike who have used other Taxicab companies **other than our team**. The following are excerpts from the North Chicago ordinances regarding taxi fares and procedures for recovery if you feel that you were overcharged or mistreated. In all cases, if you need to make a complaint you need proof such as a receipt, date, time and place of pickup, date, time, and place of drop off. **Call this number and ask to speak to the patrol supervisor 847.596.8774. Be prepared to discuss the above with back-up documentation.**

**\*asterisked** items are actual excerpts from ordinances.

**The City of North Chicago ordinances pertaining to taxi fares can be found at**

[https://library.municode.com/il/north\\_chicago/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=TIT5BULIRE\\_CH25V\\_EREBU\\_ARTBPUPAVE](https://library.municode.com/il/north_chicago/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT5BULIRE_CH25V_EREBU_ARTBPUPAVE)

See **5-25B-11: - RATES AND FARES:**

Here it is in simple language.

1. There are flat rates in certain areas including the airports. Drivers can add \$1.00 for each passenger over one year old.
2. Other than the flat rates, **DRIVERS MUST RUN THE TAXI METER for your protection. \*These rates are from the City of North Chicago and the base including housing, to the following areas: Tolls and taxes are extra.**

**RATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO FUEL COST.**

- a. Flat rate – To O’Hare - \$70.00
  - b. Flat rate to Midway - \$110.00
  - c. Flat rate to Milwaukee Airport and downtown Milwaukee \$110.00
  - d. Flat Rate to Downtown Chicago \$110.00
  - e. Flat Rate to Gurnee \$20.00
  - f. Flat Rate to Vernon Hills \$25.00
3. \*For all travel **not covered** by subsection A-F above
    - a. Two dollars (\$2.00) upon hire for the first passenger and one dollar (\$1.00) for each additional passenger above the age of one year old.
    - b. Two dollars and forty cents (\$2.40) for each mile or fraction thereof that is traveled in the taxicab; and
    - c. Forty cents (\$0.40) for each one minute of waiting time or traffic delay.
    - d. Retail shuttle services may not charge more than two dollars (\$2.00) per person per trip. (Ord. No. 2010-56, § 11, 4-19-2010; Ord. No. 2010-83, § 6, 7-26-2010; Ord. No. 2011-120, § 3, 4-25-2011; Ord. No. 2012-41, §§ 1—3, 10-1-2012; Ord. No. 2013-01, §§ 1—3, 1-22-2013; Ord. No. 2014-19, § 2, 5-19-2014; Ord. No. 2016-41, § 1B., 12-52016)

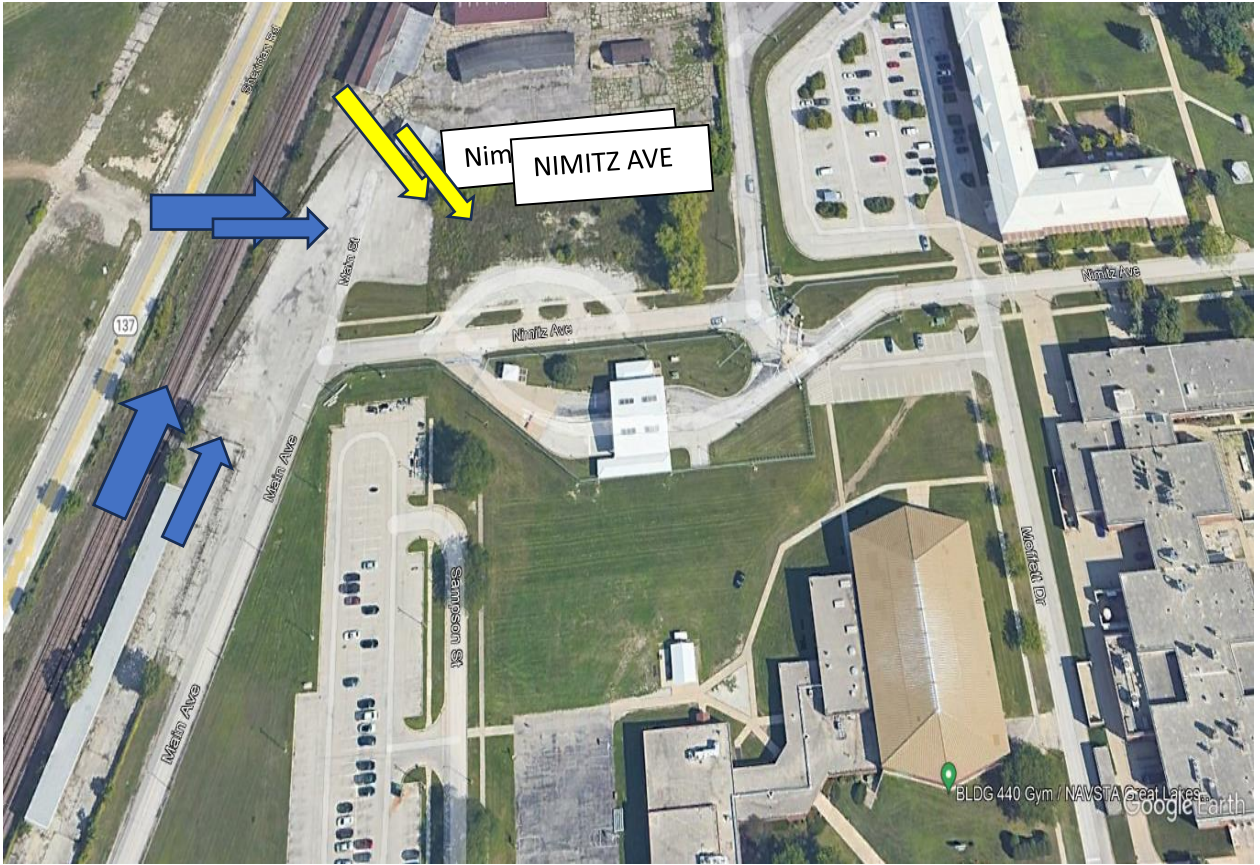
# **Bill of Rights**

**BILL OF RIGHTS FOR SAILORS AND GUEST DEPARTING FROM EITHER THE MAIN GATE 1 OR GATE 5 OR RTC GATE 8. Please pass this on to your sailor.**

- a. Any passenger can choose any taxicab they prefer. Pre-arranged pickups are encouraged.
- b. Pickups and drop-offs are authorized **24/7** at the **Main Gate (Gate 1)** at the taxi circle located to the north of Museum. Other than the flat rates mentioned above, **the METER MUST BE RUN** for your protection.
- c. **CURRENTLY SUSPENDED DUE TO SECURITY PROTOCOL** The only authorized **ON BASE** pick up and drop off point during the hours of **2:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Monday through Friday; and on Saturday, Sunday, and Federal Holidays, during the hours of 6:00 AM – through 10:00 PM, is located at the EPIC CENTER, Building 525. Note: Only properly vetted vehicles can access the MAIN GATE for entry on base. All passengers must have Military I.D. or a Dependent I.D. or be escorted by a military member; either retired or active, for access onto the Main Base. Other than the flat rates mentioned above, the METER MUST BE RUN for your protection.**
- d. RTC taxi pickups and drop offs can **ONLY BE MADE** at Gate 8 (Ohio Street). **No pickups or drop offs are authorized at gate 6 (Illinois St).** For all travel other than the **FLAT RATES, the meter must be run.**

**GATE FIVE RETURN YOUR "A" SCHOOL SAILOR HERE When gate 1 is closed.**

<https://www.waze.com/live-map/directions/gate-5-great-lakes-nimitz-ave?to=place.w.178389415.1783632008.56.07867>



*I want to thank you for taking the time to read this information. I look forward to seeing all the families at the Meet and Greet each night the day before graduation. If I can be of any assistance or you need taxi service, please call me at 847-212-0246 or email: [taxisarge@gmail.com](mailto:taxisarge@gmail.com) our website address is [www.mynavytaxi.com](http://www.mynavytaxi.com)*

***If you notice any broken links, please email me.***

*Regards, John Spadaro (A.K.A. Sarge)  
Sergeant First Class,  
Viet Nam Veteran (21 YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE) United  
States Army Retired.  
Serving those who serve us.  
847-212-0246*

*Thank you to those who served in defense of our Great Nation and those who are currently standing watch over our beloved U.S.A. **One team – One fight**  
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