

Your Sailor's Graduation Date: _____ **

The possibility exists your Sailor may experience a disruption in training due to an academic or physical test failure, injury or illness. Should this occur, your Sailor will have the opportunity to call one person to advise of the situation

BLOCK 1: CONTACTING YOUR SAILOR

Write to me at this address!

My personal mailing address:

(SR stands for Seaman Recruit)

SR MY LAST NAME, MY FIRST NAME, MY MI

SHIP _____ DIV _____

RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND

GREAT LAKES, IL 60088 - _____

Due to the structured nature of recruit training (boot camp), your new Sailor will not be able to contact you regularly. We encourage you to send letters and cards: your support is invaluable. **ALL** mail delivery (express and overnight included) typically takes between 5-10 business days. Sailors at boot camp are allowed to receive small packages (something they forgot: eyeglasses, contacts, etc.) but may **NOT** receive any food items, medicine, or anything else to be taken orally.

PHONE CALLS: Sailors at boot camp are **NOT** allowed incoming phone calls. During basic training, new Sailors will normally be allowed to make 3 calls, including the brief phone made the night they arrive. If you miss a call from your new Sailor, please **DO NOT** call back to the number indicated as it will not connect you to your Sailor.

EMERGENCY CONTACT: In case of an **immediate** family member emergency, please contact the American Red Cross at 877-272-7337. The Red Cross relays urgent emergency messages containing accurate and verified details and instructions to Recruit Training Command staff, who will relay the message to your Sailor.

VISITORS: Visitors are **NOT ALLOWED** at all during boot camp training. This is **a restricted base** with access limited only to those who work on the installation. **Active duty, retired, and military veterans are NOT allowed to drive onboard boot camp.** NO ONE presenting military ID, regardless of service status or rank, will be permitted access.

ATTENDING THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Please visit our website at www.bootcamp.navy.mil for more detailed information.

ONLY FULLY IMMUNIZED GUESTS WILL BE ALLOWED ON BOARD FOR GRADUATION (full vaccine plus 14 days past the final vaccination for age 12 and up)
NO EXCEPTIONS ALLOWED FOR ANY REASON

EVERYONE IS REQUIRED TO WEAR MASKS AT ALL TIMES WHILE INDOORS, AT THE WELCOME CENTER, AND THE GRADUATION CEREMONY (WHICH IS INDOORS). IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO WEAR A MASK—EVEN FOR MEDICAL REASONS—YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED INTO THE CEREMONY.

STEP 1: Fill out the enclosed security access form and mail back to your Sailor within 7 days of **receiving** this letter. **Mail the completed FORM directly to your Sailor** at the address above in BLOCK 1.

GUEST SECURITY ACCESS FORM: If you will attend the graduation ceremony, please fill out the enclosed security access form for a TOTAL maximum of _____ guests per graduate, and return to your Sailor at the address in block 1 above, according to the instructions on the form. The number of guests allowed is based on safety regulations and the fire code for the drill hall, where the indoor ceremony takes place. Forms may also be downloaded from our website if required. Children 2 years and younger 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, VETERAN). WHEN DOWNLOADING A FORM FROM OUR WEBSITE, BE SURE TO ONLY COMPLETE INFORMATION FOR THE NUMBER OF GUESTS YOUR SAILOR IS ALLOWED. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE AUTHORIZED for additional guests.****

ONLY YOUR SAILOR CAN APPROVE HIS/HER GUESTS or CHANGE THE ACCESS LIST: Your Sailor will be able to make changes to the access list. If there is a change to be made to the access list (such as a name spelled incorrectly, name-swap, etc...) **please communicate this to your Sailor by mail.** If multiple lists are received, your Sailor must delete names to get down to the maximum number of guests allowed. Last-minute requests are not possible and cannot be accommodated. RTC staff cannot change these names or release the names on the list. **Please do not call for additional seats (including extra seats for children or military members)!** Additional information and the security form is also available at **www.bootcamp.navy.mil**. For questions, **please call 847-688-2405**.

STEP 2: Plan your travel

It is **STRONGLY** recommended you consider purchasing exchangeable/refundable airline tickets/hotel accommodations. **Your Sailor's graduation date could change up to the last minute due to illness, injury, test failure, etc.** The U.S. Navy does **NOT** provide lodging and does **NOT** provide any transportation (including shuttles). Naval Station Great Lakes Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Department has teamed up with SatoVacations to assist with making travel reservations for Navy families attending graduation ceremonies. Visit **www.navymwrgreatlakes.com**, call 847-688-3593, or stay up-to-date with "navymwrgreatlakes" at either Google Play or the App Store.

STEP 3: Pick up your graduation ceremony tickets at the off-base Recruit Family Welcome Center.

Each guest must present a photo ID and CDC vaccination card showing a full immunization plus at least 14 days on the day of graduation (every guest age 12 and older must be at least 14 days past full and final vaccination).

CEREMONY TICKETS: All approved persons (including minors) attending the graduation ceremony **MUST** personally pick-up his or her ticket at the **OFF-BASE** Recruit Family Welcome Center the day before or the morning of your Sailor's graduation. Tickets are free of charge, but you must have vaccination card and 1 of the following forms of valid photo ID:

For adults:

- driver's license
- state ID
- military ID
- passport

For minors:

- student ID
- driver's permit
- Social Security card
- birth certificate

Once you receive your ceremony ticket, ***do NOT lose it:*** it is the only ticket you will receive. Ceremony tickets cannot be transferred to another guest and are the only means to drive on base for the ceremony. Only guests with ceremony tickets are allowed on base at RTC (boot camp portion of the base). Your ceremony ticket will also be required to drive on base when dropping off your Sailor after liberty (free-time). **NOTE:** Everyone in your vehicle must possess a ceremony ticket or your vehicle will not be allowed on board the boot camp.

OFF- BASE GRADUATION CEREMONY TICKET PICKUP ADDRESS/GPS: Recruit Family Welcome Center at Navy Exchange (NEX) Burkey Mall, 2650 Green Bay Road, North Chicago, IL 60088 (generic terms such as NEX, Recruit Training Command or Naval Station Great Lakes may take you to the wrong location).

GRADUATION CEREMONY TICKET PICKUP HOURS:

10:00 am - 7:30 pm the day before graduation **OR**
5:30 am - 8:30 am the morning of graduation

STEP 4: Attending the graduation ceremony

****Summer uniform for graduation is Summer White for E7 and above, Service Dress for E6 and below, or service equivalent****

*****Winter uniform for graduation is Service Dress Blue or service equivalent*****

ARRIVING: Boot Camp gates open to the public on graduation day at **6:30 am**. Once on base, it will take some time to pass through security at the gate and to conduct 100% bag checks before entering the ceremony, ***so please plan accordingly and allow time for these security checks***. Doors into the ceremony will be locked promptly at **8:45 am** when the graduation ceremony starts and no guests may enter the ceremony after that. The ceremony concludes at approximately **10:30 am**.

WALKING ON BASE: Pedestrians may walk onto the base using the Gate 8 turnstile across from the Metra train station. You may have to wait in line outside at the gate to check-in and once on base, it is approximately ½ mile from the gate to the entrance of RTC's Visitor Center (USS YORKTOWN). Please consider these factors during inclement weather.

DRIVING ON BASE: Every person in the vehicle must present a ceremony **ticket** and **photo ID** in order to drive onto the basic training base. Driver must present a driver's license and may also be asked to present vehicle registration and proof of insurance or rental car agreement. **Shuttles, UBER, other share rides and taxis are NOT allowed on base AT ALL** and must drop off passengers at the parking lot next to the Gate 8 pedestrian turnstile. Once on base, vehicles are directed to the parking structure next to RTC's Visitor Center (USS YORKTOWN). Please obey these rules:

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

MULTIPLE SEARCHES POSSIBLE: All graduation attendees are required to enter through Recruit Training Command's Visitor Center, for security screening, prior to entering the ceremonial drill hall. Every person, bag, and vehicle on the base is subject to search. Metal detectors and other security devices are in use onboard RTC.

- **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 cannot be in the bleachers and so must be left in a side room upon entering the ceremony due to space limitations.
- **ITEMS NOT PERMITTED INTO GRADUATION CEREMONY:**
 - NO large bags, backpacks, luggage, posters, signs/banners, gift bags of any size, flowers or leis.
 - NO alcohol, illegal drugs, knives or weapons. These items will be confiscated by security and any person found with these items will NOT be permitted to enter the base or the ceremony.
 - **NO WEAPONS! Weapons' possession on federal installations is highly regulated and those in violation are subject to arrest and prosecution.**

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

STEP 5: Enjoy LIBERTY (free time off base) with your NEW SAILOR! Sailors are allowed to spend time off base (Liberty) with their family following the graduation ceremony. The amount of time spent depends upon where your Sailor is going for follow-on training. The Navy is required to transport Sailors to their next command, so Sailors MAY NOT travel to their next command in your vehicle or with tickets purchased by themselves or by you.

- **SAILORS REMAINING AT GREAT LAKES FOR SCHOOL:** Sailors remaining at Great Lakes for "A" school must check into their school before they are allowed to have free time off base (Liberty) with you and that process could take up to 5 hours. Ensure your Sailor has your phone number to contact you throughout the process. You will normally check the Sailor out on liberty **OFF BASE** at the **Great Lakes National Museum of the American Sailor** the afternoon of graduation and the Sailor can normally remain with you until Sunday evening. For more information about liberty procedures, please contact the school house directly:
 - **Engineering:** For Surface Warfare Engineering School Command Great Lakes:
GRLK_SWESC_PAO@navy.mil
 - **Combat:** For Surface Combat Systems Training Command Great Lakes:
scstc-gl_pao@navy.mil
 - **EOD:** For Center for Explosive Ordnance Disposal, please call 847-688-6819 (for EOD sailors ONLY!)
 - **SUB:** For Groton/New London Submarine Students on hold in Great Lakes:
GRLK_NSTC_PAO@navy.mil
- **SAILORS TRANSFERRING TO SCHOOL OUTSIDE OF GREAT LAKES:** You will normally have free time with your Sailor from the conclusion of graduation until about 8pm. Sailors travelling outside of Great Lakes may transfer to that location as early as Saturday morning. All new Sailors remaining at the boot camp overnight are required to check-in every night by 9pm, so it is a good idea to return them no later than 8pm to allow time for lines at the gate and time for the Sailor to walk back to the barracks and properly check-in by 9pm.

*****WHILE ON LIBERTY WITH YOUR SAILOR, YOU ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE TO WEAR MASKS, SOCIALLY DISTANCE, AND FOLLOW OTHER COVID MITIGATION PROTOCOLS.*****