

CONGRATULATIONS!

Your loved one has chosen to become a Sailor in the world's finest navy! So now what?

You are probably fairly anxious about what's going to happen: What will your Recruit do in boot camp? How can you keep in touch and encourage them? What about graduation? You are not alone. Thousands of parents and families go through this each year. Hopefully, this guide will help alleviate some of those concerns as well as give you practical advice.

RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND

Recruit training is about transforming civilians into Sailors; teaching the Navy Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment; and preparing Recruits to join the Fleet. It is not easy — training is both physically and mentally challenging — but when you next see your Recruit, they will be a United States Sailor. It is natural to be curious about what your Recruit will experience while onboard Recruit Training Command (RTC), so we invite to check out the Recruit section of our website for a glimpse into their training, ships and classroom education.

CONTACTING YOUR RECRUIT

Because of the structured nature of training, your Recruit will not be able to contact you regularly. We understand how difficult this will be at first, so here are a few things that might help ease the anxiety of being out of contact:

Mail:

- Recruits will mail home a letter with their address during the first week of training. The Privacy Act prevents RTC from releasing Recruit addresses. Only your Recruit can provide you with that address.
- Once a Recruit arrives onboard their ship (barracks), they will begin receiving their mail, usually around week 2-3. To help avoid delays, please wait until you receive your recruit's official address via mail.
- While you can write to your Recruit every day, your recruit can only write to you a few evenings each week and during "holiday routine," meaning Sundays and federal holidays.
- Recruits can receive anything that can fit into a standard-sized envelope and news from home might help ease some of their homesickness as well.
- Resist the urge to send a care package or write on the outside of the envelope. We know you want to send your Recruit their favorite homemade chocolate chip cookies, but Recruits cannot receive these. Also, remember that the envelope will be seen by their RDC, so putting stickers or writing all over their envelopes might make your recruit uncomfortable.

Phone calls:

- **The most important piece of advice here is to make sure that your Recruit has a phone card!**
- Recruits are generally given three phone calls throughout the duration of their training. The first call is conducted upon their arrival at RTC to notify a family member or friend they have arrived.
- Recruits will generally be given the opportunity to place a second call midway through their training. There is no set schedule and no way to know when or if these calls will come.
- **Recruits will be granted a phone call when they fail a training requirement, or become injured or ill, which could delay their graduation.**
- The final call you will receive from your Recruit is the call letting you know they are no longer a Recruit, but a Sailor in the World's Finest Navy! This call comes during their final week of training, generally within 24 hours of completing Battle Stations-21. This is an emotional call for the Sailors and their families. Unfortunately, again, neither RTC nor your local Recruiter will be able to provide Battle Stations-21 schedules, only your Recruit may release this information to you.

Emergency Contact:

Sometimes, there are emergency situations when you need to contact your Recruit. If an emergency should arise, you will need to contact the **American Red Cross at 877-272-7337 or Chaplain Care at 877-418-6824**. They will be able to assist you in getting an official message to your Recruit.



PASS-IN-REVIEW (GRADUATION)

Recruit graduation is known as Pass-In-Review (PIR). It is a formal military ceremony which honors your Sailor's hard work and dedication to a new way of life. It also ties together the future of the Navy with our long-held naval traditions and customs.

During your Recruits first week at RTC, your Recruit will send home an information letter from the Commanding Officer, along with very important information regarding graduation. This letter will notify you of your Recruit's official address, graduation date, the names of intended guests for the ceremony and the password for the vehicle gate pass (**do not misplace this password**).

While a division's graduation date will not change, an individual Recruit's graduation date may change based on performance, which is why we suggest families purchase refundable tickets when possible.

Please keep in mind that Recruits mail this information themselves, so RTC does not know where the information was sent, nor can we send additional information.

Pass-In-Review Access List:

Recruits are permitted to place up to four names on the access list. If the names in the form letter are different than the guests attending, please coordinate with your Recruit as only Recruits may place names on the list. RTC can neither change these names nor release the names of those on the list.

Children age 12 and younger do not need to be listed on the access list and will not count toward the maximum number of guests.

Active Duty and Retired military personnel will not count toward the maximum number of guests, and do not need to be listed on the access list, but must present a valid Active Duty/Retired military ID card.

Please do not call RTC for additional seats.

Graduation Day Schedule

6:30 am: RTC gate opens to guests.
 7:00 am: Ceremonial drill hall doors open to guests.
 8:45 am: All guests must be seated.
 9:00 am: Pass-In-Review commences.
 9:20 am: Divisions arrive.
 10:30 am: Pass-In-Review concludes.

When you take your Recruit out on liberty, we know you will want to spend as much time with them as possible. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind:

- Your Recruit should be given ample time to walk to their ship before the expiration of liberty.
- Recruits may not travel more than 50 miles from base during liberty, meaning no further than downtown Chicago.
- Recruits may not use alcohol or tobacco products, nor drive a vehicle.
- Recruits must remain in uniform at all times.
- Recruits may not bring civilian items (clothes, mobile phone, MP3 player, etc.) or food back to RTC.

DEPARTING RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND AFTER PASS-IN-REVIEW

Sailors transferring to Great Lakes "A" School:

If your new Sailor is attending "A" school in Great Lakes please note they will need to check into their new command before they can go on liberty. The Great Lakes "A" schools are not located onboard Recruit Training Command. The check-in process may take up to 5 hours. Please ensure your Sailor has your phone number so they can contact you once they have completed the check-in process.

Sailors transferring to "A" School Outside of Great Lakes:

If your new Sailor is attending "A" School outside of Great Lakes, generally they will depart RTC the day after graduation. Travel arrangements are made by RTC; therefore, Sailors are required to travel on their government orders. If your Sailor is flying out of state they must travel to the airport using government transportation, you may not escort them to the airport; however, you may meet them at the airport.

Your Sailor will receive guidance from their Recruit Division Commander regarding their liberty period on the day of graduation. Your Sailor may be required to check out with their RDC prior to commencing liberty. Please ensure you return to RTC with adequate time for your Sailor to reach his barracks prior to expiration of liberty.

RTC does not have your Recruits liberty or travel schedule, so you will need to stay in contact with them. Only your Recruit and their supervisor know their specific liberty schedule.

ACCESSING BASE

Access to Naval Station Great Lakes has been greatly modified in response to our heightened security posture. Guests should be aware that camera bags, purses, etc. are subject to search by Security. Contraband, including but not limited to: alcohol, illegal drugs, knives or weapons of any kind will be confiscated and you may not be permitted entry.

Furthermore, smoking is not permitted onboard RTC.

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

For security and privacy reasons, guests are not permitted past the Chapel parking lot or the parking garage structure for any reason.

RTC supports the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004. If you are a peace officer (policeman, etc.) and are required to carry a weapon at all times as a condition of your service; please contact Great Lakes Police Departments' Deputy Chief Knapp at james.b.knapp@navy.mil or 847-688-5555 well in advance of your visit to discuss procedures and requirements. Weapons possession on federal reservations is highly regulated and those that violate are subject to arrest and prosecution.

All guests 18 years and older, must present valid government issued photo identification (**driver's license, state ID card, passport**). **Guests 17 years or younger** who do not possess one the items listed above must present **one of the following: school ID card, driver's permit, copy of their birth certificate or social security card**.

When driving onto Recruit Training Command please have your driver's license, vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and vehicle gate pass ready as you will not be admitted without them. If you will be driving a rental car the rental agreement and your driver's license will suffice.

Alternative Transportation:

For alternative transportation, the Metra train offers a stop at Great Lakes on the Union Pacific North line. The station is located about a block from the RTC gate. For schedule information, visit www.metrarail.com.

Guests may also take local taxis or hotel shuttles to the gate. If you walk onto RTC, be sure to check-in at the USS YORKTOWN (RTC's Visitor's Center) to have your ID checked and your hand stamped. Without this, you will not be able to access the drill hall for graduation.

AIRPORTS, DIRECTIONS, ACCOMMODATIONS

RTC is located approximately 35 miles north of Chicago on Lake Michigan near the Wisconsin border. RTC is conveniently located near three major international airports, so you may want to check fares into all three to find the best rate.

- Chicago's O'Hare International Airport is located 30 miles from RTC.
- Chicago's Midway International Airport is located 45 miles from RTC.
- Milwaukee County's General Mitchell International Airport is located 50 miles from RTC.

If you are utilizing a Global Positioning System (GPS) please input the following address:

- 3355 Illinois Street, Great Lakes, IL 60088

From the south (Chicago):

- Take the Kennedy Expressway/I-90/I-94 WEST toward Wisconsin.
- At the I-90/I-94 split, stay to the left and take the Edens Expressway/I-94 NORTH toward Wisconsin.
- Take Exit 29 (left) for US 41 NORTH for approximately 12 miles.
- Turn right on Buckley Road/IL 137 EAST. The entrance to RTC is 1.3 miles ahead on the right.

From the north (Wisconsin):

- Take I-94 SOUTH.
- Exit (left) for US 41 SOUTH just beyond the Wisconsin/Illinois border.
- Continue south on US 41 for approximately 15 miles.
- Turn left on Buckley Road/IL 137 EAST. The entrance to RTC is 1.3 miles ahead on the right.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

If you have a question that has not been answered here or on our website, please contact the RTC Public Affairs Office at 847-688-2405 or via e-mail at rtc.pao@navy.mil. Be sure to also visit our Facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/NavyRecruitTrainingCommand>

WELCOME TO THE NAVY FAMILY!

