



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GETTING TO SAIL250® VIRGINIA: YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO PARKING, TRANSIT & SHUTTLES

Everything Festivalgoers Need to Know to Get Downtown and Get Around

NORFOLK, Va. (June 9, 2026) — With tens of thousands of visitors expected across the five-day Sail250® Virginia festival, organizers and their partners have put in place an extensive network of free and low-cost transit options, shuttle services, and parking to make getting to and around the event as smooth as possible.

Whether you're riding the light rail, hopping the ferry between Norfolk and Portsmouth, catching a free festival shuttle, or driving in and parking, here is everything you need to know to get to the Elizabeth River waterfront and make the most of your Sail250® Virginia experience.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19: RIDE FREE ALL DAY — JUNETEENTH NATIONAL HOLIDAY

Friday, June 19 is both the Juneteenth federal holiday and the opening day of Sail250® Virginia. Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is once again making all its services completely free for the entire day. Buses, light rail, the Elizabeth River Ferry, Paratransit, and OnDemand ridesharing will all operate at no charge **on June 19**, making it the easiest and most affordable day to get to the waterfront for the spectacular Parade of Sail, which begins its passage into Norfolk that morning.

SUMMARY: On Friday, June 19: No ticket purchase or pass is required to board any HRT service. HRT buses will operate on regular weekday schedules, while light rail and the Elizabeth River Ferry will run on expanded service schedules in direct support of expected Sail250® Virginia demand.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, JUNE 20–21: FREE LIGHT RAIL AND FREE FERRY CONTINUE

In partnership with the City of Norfolk, HRT will also provide free service on The Tide light rail and Elizabeth River Ferry **on Saturday, June 20, and Sunday, June 21**, to accommodate continued demand for Sail250® Virginia. If ridership on light rail exceeds capacity on either day, free overflow shuttle buses will be deployed to keep festivalgoers moving.

SUMMARY: Fare-free benefits continue Sat. June 20 - Sun. June 21, for localized festival-related travel. The fare-free weekend benefit applies specifically to The Tide light rail and the Elizabeth River Ferry. For routes, schedules, and real-time service information, visit gohrt.com.

SAIL250® VIRGINIA FREE FESTIVAL SHUTTLES: CONNECTING DOWNTOWN VENUES

Getting between the multiple festival venues along the Elizabeth River waterfront is easy with the **Sail250® Virginia Free Festival Shuttle** — a continuous circulator service connecting all major docking and festival locations throughout the event. Shuttles run continuously during festival hours, so there is no need to move your car or retrace your steps on foot between venues.

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Sail250® Virginia Festival Shuttle Stops

- **Boush & Main at Nauticus** — entrance to Town Point Park, the main festival hub, downtown Norfolk waterfront
- **The Pagoda on Harbor Street** — tall ship docking and waterfront viewing
- **Front Street** — southern docking location and official Parade of Sail reviewing stand
- **Look for clearly marked shuttle stops** at each festival venue

The Free Festival Shuttle operating hours:

- **Friday, June 19 – 11:00 AM – Midnight**
- **Saturday, June 20 – 11:00 AM – Midnight**
- **Sunday, June 21 – 11:00 AM – 9:00 PM**

SUMMARY: Shuttle service frequency and hours will be posted at www.sail250virginia.com as the event approaches.

SHUTTLE SERVICE TO NORFOLK NAVAL STATION FOR SHIP TOURS

Sail250® Virginia will provide dedicated shuttle bus service to Norfolk Naval Station for attendees wishing to take advantage of the limited public ship tour opportunities aboard participating U.S. Navy and international military vessels stationed at the base in connection with FleetEx 250.

- **Saturday, June 20 and Sunday, June 21 with departures from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm each day.**
- **Shuttles will board from the Front Street Lot** (at base of Colley Ave, Norfolk)
- All guests and their belongings are subject to search before boarding the shuttle bus. [Go here to learn more about security regulations and tour information.](#)
- This shuttle is separate from the downtown festival circulator and will operate on a designated schedule. Access is on a first-come basis only.
- Boarding locations, departure times, and any access requirements will be posted at www.sail250virginia.com prior to the event.

WHERE TO PARK

Paid Parking —Municipal Lots

All city parking garages are available for use. Special Event rates apply. [Go here](#) to find parking garage locations and fees.

Paid Parking — Sentara Lots

Additional paid parking is available in Sentara-operated parking lots near the Front Street festival venue. Parking rates will be posted upon entry. Sentara lots provide a convenient alternative for attendees who prefer to park close to the main waterfront venues.

Free Parking — EVMS Front Street Lots

FREE parking is available in the Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) lots on the Front Street side of the festival footprint. These lots provide convenient access to the Front Street venue and the Sail250® Virginia Free Downtown Shuttle, which serves all other festival locations.

Free parking in these lots is available:

- Beginning at 6:00 PM on Friday, June 19
- All day Saturday, June 20, during festival hours
- All day Sunday, June 21, during festival hours

(more)

GETTING HERE FROM VIRGINIA BEACH / THE OCEANFRONT

Visitors staying at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront have two convenient options to reach downtown Norfolk and the Sail250® Virginia waterfront:

- **Drive & Ride Light Rail:** Drive to Newtown Road Station (Newtown Road and Kempsville Road), park for free, and board The Tide light rail — also free all weekend for festival travel.
- **Express Bus — HRT Route 960:** Board HRT Route 960 at Parks & 19th Street near the Virginia Beach Convention Center for an express ride directly to the Downtown Norfolk Transit Center. The bus also stops at Newtown Road Station, where riders can transfer to The Tide light rail for additional destinations. **Route 960 is free on Friday, June 19; standard HRT fares apply on Saturday and Sunday.**
- Plan your trip, visit: gohrt.com.

OTHER WAYS TO ARRIVE

- **E-scooters are permitted as a means of arriving** at the festival but are subject to geofencing and reduced speed limits within the event footprint.
- **Bicycles are welcome for arriving at Sail250® Virginia.** Bike racks will be available at festival venues. BICYCLES MAY NOT BE RIDDEN WITHIN THE FESTIVAL FOOTPRINT — plan to lock it at a designated rack before entering the crowd.
- See the [city ordinance for details on restrictions](http://www.norfolk.gov/FestivalWeekend) on bikes and e-scooters. (<http://www.norfolk.gov/FestivalWeekend>)

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Sail250® Virginia support includes:

In Partnership with VA250.

Sponsors: Virginia is for Lovers, The City of Norfolk, Sentara, TowneBank, W.F. Magann Corporation, Crofton, E.G. Middleton, Inc., Dominion Enterprises, McLeskey, VIGOR Marine | MHI Norfolk, The Port of Virginia, Dominion Energy, Robbins Maritime, Hampton Roads Shipping Association, Fairlead, Light Tech, Inc., Colliers, Virginia Pilot Association, Nauticus, Carnival Cruise Line, ICON, Colonna's, Inc., Perry Family Foundation, Hilton Norfolk The Main, Visit Norfolk, City Cruises, BAE Systems, Coastal Precast Systems, LLC, Elizabeth River Concrete, S.B. Ballard, Bay Power Solutions, Caligari Gerloff Painting Inc., STIHL, Coastal Virginia Tourism Alliance, Rivers Casino Portsmouth, Navy League of Hampton Roads, City of Virginia Beach, Bruce Bishop, Decker Law, Sherwin Williams, Centennial, Schaubach Fund/Suffolk Foundation, Town Point Club, New Journal & Guide, 13News Now, WAVY TV 10. Produced by Norfolk Festevents Ltd.

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About Sail250® Virginia

Sail250® Virginia, hosted by the City of Norfolk, is part of the United States' national commemoration of America's 250th anniversary. This signature event is planned as the largest public event in the Commonwealth for the 250th. Scheduled June 12–23, 2026, the event will bring a fleet of international tall ships, military ships, historic and character vessels to Norfolk (June 19–22, 2026) and Affiliate Harbors (June 12–21, 2026) in the Chesapeake Bay Region for multi-day waterfront festivals, featuring ship tours, fireworks, concerts, and educational programming. Sail250® Virginia will showcase Virginia's role as a maritime gateway to the world, bringing together participants and visitors from around the globe.



QUICK PLANNING TIPS FOR SAIL250® VIRGINIA ATTENDEES

- ✓ **Arriving Friday?** Ride any HRT service FREE all day — no ticket needed. (Juneteenth)
 - ✓ **Coming Saturday or Sunday?** The Tide light rail and Elizabeth River Ferry are FREE both days.
 - ✓ **Driving in Friday evening, Saturday, or Sunday?** Free parking in EVMS Front Street lots.
 - ✓ **Coming from Virginia Beach / Oceanfront?** Take HRT Route 960 express to downtown Norfolk, or drive to Newtown Road Station and ride The Tide light rail FREE.
 - ✓ **Visiting multiple venues?** Use the free Sail250® Virginia Festival Shuttle — it's continuous.
 - ✓ **Touring ships at Norfolk Naval Station?** Watch for Naval Base shuttle details at sail250virginia.com.
 - ✓ **Arriving by bike or e-scooter?** Lock up at designated racks — no riding inside the festival area. See the [city ordinance for details on restrictions](http://www.norfolk.gov/FestivalWeekend) on bikes and e-scooters. (<http://www.norfolk.gov/FestivalWeekend>)
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- ✓ **For the most current schedules and updates**, visit www.sail250virginia.com.
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HRT FARE-FREE QUICK REFERENCE

Friday, June 19 (Juneteenth):

ALL HRT services are free all day — buses, light rail, ferry, Paratransit, and OnDemand

Saturday, June 20:

The Tide light rail + Elizabeth River Ferry FREE; regular bus routes at standard fares

Sunday, June 21:

The Tide light rail + Elizabeth River Ferry FREE; regular bus routes at standard fares

Schedules, routes, and service alerts: www.gohrt.com
