



UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY
300 Steamboat Road
KINGS POINT, NEW YORK 11024-1699

June 10, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR Class of 2021 and Class of 2021 Parents

SUBJECT: Graduation Information

1. **Background:** The 85th Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2021 occurs in less than two weeks. We are very pleased to be able to provide a number of traditional graduation events that, just last year, were not possible. The purpose of this memorandum is to issue guidance and instructions for graduating midshipmen and their attending families, and underclass midshipmen that will be on campus during, and immediately following the commencement exercises. **Please share this with your attending family members so they know what to expect on graduation day.**

2. **General:** Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2021 will be held in Brooks Stadium on Tomb Field at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, N.Y. 11024, on Saturday, June 19, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. It will be a semi-virtual, attended graduation. Each graduating midshipman is allowed to have four family members attend in-person. It will also be livestreamed from Tomb Field. We expect the graduation ceremony will take about two and a half hours to complete.

Streaming information will be released publicly the week of June 14.

3. **Seating:** Seating in the Tomb Field bleachers will be assigned by family units, in "pods." These pods will allow us to seat four-person family units, rather than individuals, and will maximize the number of seats available to graduating midshipmen families. Seating pods will be arranged in a socially-distanced manner in the Tomb Field bleachers. Families may not change seats or mix with other family units. Children two-years-old and under may sit on the lap of a parent, and do not count against the four-person limit. Children attending are not allowed to move about the stands during the ceremony. Seating assignments will be made randomly by the Class of 2021, and attending family members will be able to see their seat assignments outside the Tomb Field entry gates along Stepping Stone Lane, starting on June 18.

4. **Arriving in New York State:** Arriving in New York State (NYS) there are a few simple requirements that must be followed by travelers. Those requirements are different than the NYS requirements for conducting an in-person graduation. Travelers arriving in NYS must complete the [Traveler Health Form](#) unless the traveler is coming to New York from a contiguous state. Contiguous states to New York are Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. The traveler health form is electronic and may be submitted on arrival in New York. Proof of submission is not required for entrance to graduation. As of April 10, 2021, quarantine in NYS is no longer

required for asymptomatic travelers. For more information on arrival requirements in NYS, click [here](#).

5. **Arriving at USMMA for Graduation:** Commencement for the Class of 2021 starts on Tomb Field at 9 a.m. The gates will open between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. We strongly recommend you arrive early and find your assigned seating so you aren't rushed at the entry points. When approaching the entry points for Tomb Field, visiting guests should maintain social distance between groups. Guests should enter as a single family unit.

6. **Parking for Graduation:** When you arrive at Kings Point for graduation, USMMA security will guide you to available parking. You may be parked in the First Class lot adjacent to the stadium, on Upper Roosevelt Field adjacent to the First Class lot, or in Steppingstone Park, about two blocks away. For those in Upper Roosevelt Field or Steppingstone Park, USMMA will operate a shuttle service to expedite and assist in arriving at the entry points. Handicapped parking is available. Please contact us at externalaffairs@usmma.edu for instructions and pre-arrival coordination for handicapped parking. Visitors will not be permitted to loiter on the streets or sidewalks outside the Tomb Field area during the graduation ceremony, nor will they be permitted to tailgate or picnic in the vicinity of Admissions, the First Class parking lot, or Lower Roosevelt Field (see attached off-limits areas).

7. **Entry screening at Tomb Field:** Stadium entry points on graduation day are located only along Stepping Stone Lane, on the east side of (behind) the Tomb Field bleachers. Vickery Gate is not an authorized entry point. We recommend arriving by 8 a.m. to give ample time to pass through screening and make your way to your seats. There will be three separate entry points, based on where assigned seating is located in the stands, and each entry point will have three stations for screening and admittance. To determine assigned seats for graduation, see paragraph three, above.

To enter the stadium, all family members must:

- a. Fill out a form with name, address, email and phone number in the event the information is needed for contact tracing. The form is attached to this packet and can be printed and brought with you (recommended) or filled out at the screening station on graduation day.
- b. All attendees will be asked COVID screening questions prior to being allowed into the stadium:
 - Have you or anyone in your party come in close contact (within six feet) with someone who has tested positive for or shown symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
 - Have you had a fever (greater than 100.4 F or 38.0 C) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough (other than

chronic), shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing in the past 10 days?

- Are you currently experiencing a fever (greater than 110.4 F or 38.0 C) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough (other than chronic), shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing in the past 10 days?
- Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?

- c. **MOST IMPORTANT.** All attendees (this includes children) must either: Show proof of a negative COVID test (PCR or Rapid) within 72 hours of graduation (NET June 16), if you are not vaccinated,

OR, proof that you are vaccinated (two shots plus 14 days, or one J&J shot plus 14 days),

OR for individuals who have fully recovered from a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last three months (Mar 22) and who do not have any recent or current symptoms, provide proof of illness and recovery from a doctor (doctor's note).

NOTE: Participation in clinical vaccination trials will not suffice as proof of vaccination.

Any individual who fails to present a negative test result or proof, as described above, will be denied entry to the event.

- d. Once screened at the entry points, family members will be asked to move to the seating area together, but must maintain social distancing from other family groups. Vaccinated family members do not have to wear protective masks on campus grounds. Unvaccinated family members must wear a protective mask and maintain social distancing while on campus grounds. Family members may bring stadium seats or cushions with them. Umbrellas are prohibited in the bleachers.
- e. Family members of graduating midshipmen attending the ceremony must remain in the stands for the duration of the event, except to use the restrooms, which are located under the stands. No one will be allowed to move around the stadium before or during the ceremony. Once the commencement concludes, graduates will be asked to connect with their family members and move off Tomb Field in an expeditious manner. We have asked the graduates to refrain from extended celebration on the field and to make an effort to connect with their families and move out of the stadium. This will ensure we remain in compliance with NYS guidelines that prohibit large groupings at these events, and will get everyone out of the stadium so that contractors may commence disassembly.

8. **Weather:** The month of June on Long Island can be oppressively hot, so guests should expect bright sunshine, high humidity, and hot weather on graduation day. We start early to try and minimize exposure to the heat. Hydration is extremely important while on campus and at the commencement exercises. **There will be no concessions available in the stadium, so we strongly recommend guests bring everything they will need for the duration of the event (water, snacks, cushions, sunscreen, etc.).** Additionally, the National Parents Association will be outside the campus distributing water to attending family members in the vicinity of the entry points on the east side of the Tomb Field stands.

9. **Foul Weather:** There is no foul weather plan for the graduation event on June 19. As always, we plan to go rain or shine.

10. **Photography:** There will be a photography staff in the stadium taking photos of the graduates and attending family members throughout the event. We will make these photos available to families after graduation is complete. They will be posted on Social Media free of charge (FaceBook: @USMMAOfficial). There will also be a professional photographer taking official photos that will be available for purchase after the event.

11. **Post-graduation campus access:** In an effort to capture iconic photos around campus after the commencement concludes, the Class of 2021 requested special access to campus for their families. USMMA is able to accommodate this request under the following conditions:

- a. Graduates from the Class of 2021 and their families will be allowed access to the Academy campus immediately following the completion of graduation until 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 19, 2021. This privilege will be available to the Class of 2021 and their family members that attended graduation only. The campus will not be open to the general public or to underclass midshipmen families.
- b. Once the commencement concludes, graduates will be asked to connect with their family members and move off Tomb Field in an expeditious manner. This will ensure we remain in compliance with NYS guidelines that prohibit large crowds at these events, and will get everyone out of the stadium so the contractors may commence disassembly.
- c. All outdoor areas on the campus will be open for graduates and their families to visit. All indoor areas are off-limits to graduates and families with the exception of Wiley Hall, the American Merchant Marine Museum, and the Barney Square/Land Hall entrances to Zero Deck for the NEX. Underclass midshipmen may move about campus as desired, consistent with their vaccination status and class rates.
- d. Just as we will have done for graduation, each graduate is authorized to escort the same four (limit) family members onto campus after graduation.

Those family members and graduates that are vaccinated may enjoy the campus without wearing a mask or social distancing. Those graduates and family members that are not vaccinated are required to wear masks and maintain social distancing while visiting the campus.

12. **Commissioning:** Due to recent positive changes in mask wear and social distancing guidance, graduates commissioning in the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard will be allowed to hold brief, attended commissioning ceremonies on campus, before graduation on June 19, 2021.

- a. In an effort to control movement of guests on campus, service reps will meet all guests (maximum of four per commissioning graduate) at Vickery Gate (Time: TBD and disseminated via midshipmen), and escort the groups to the appropriate commissioning sites.
- b. Service representatives will personally verify medical clearance of all guests before taking them thru Vickery Gate. A vaccination card (2 weeks post 2nd shot) or a negative test within 72 hours (NET Wednesday, June 16) is required to gain entrance to the Academy. Vaccinated family members do not have to wear masks or socially distance while on campus. Unvaccinated family members must wear masks and socially distance while on campus.
- c. Service representatives and commissioning midshipmen will take the most direct route to the appropriate commissioning site with their guests, avoiding barracks areas and Barney Square.
- d. After the commissioning ceremonies conclude, Service Representatives will escort guests off campus through Vickery Gate. Entry for the graduation ceremony will be through the Stepping Stone Lane entrances behind the Tomb Field bleachers. That will be the only area for guests to access Tomb Field for the Commencement Exercises.

13. Questions concerning the information included in this memorandum can be addressed to graduating midshipmen or the graduation committee representatives at externalaffairs@usmma.edu.

Sincerely,
The Graduation Committee



Family Contact Tracing Information

85th Commencement Exercises
for the Class of 2021

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Acta Non Verba!

Please print, fill out, and bring to graduation for entry.

USMMA Sports Complex Off-Limits Area for the 85th Commencement Exercises



