

Military Family Guide to

Hampton Roads

A publication of



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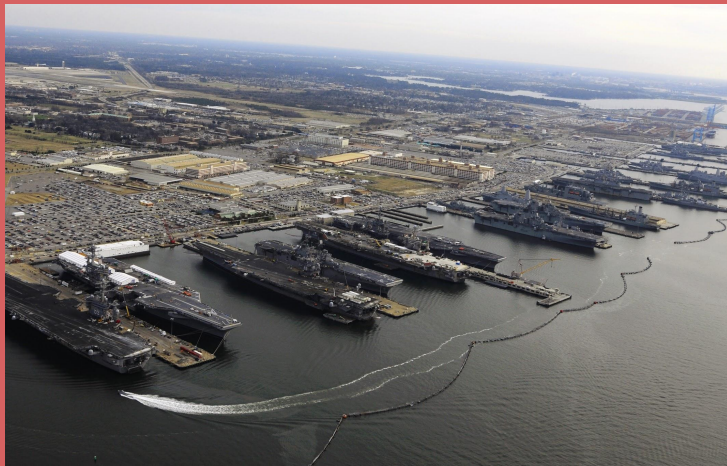
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Welcome to
*Hampton
Roads!*



Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia
Public Domain Image

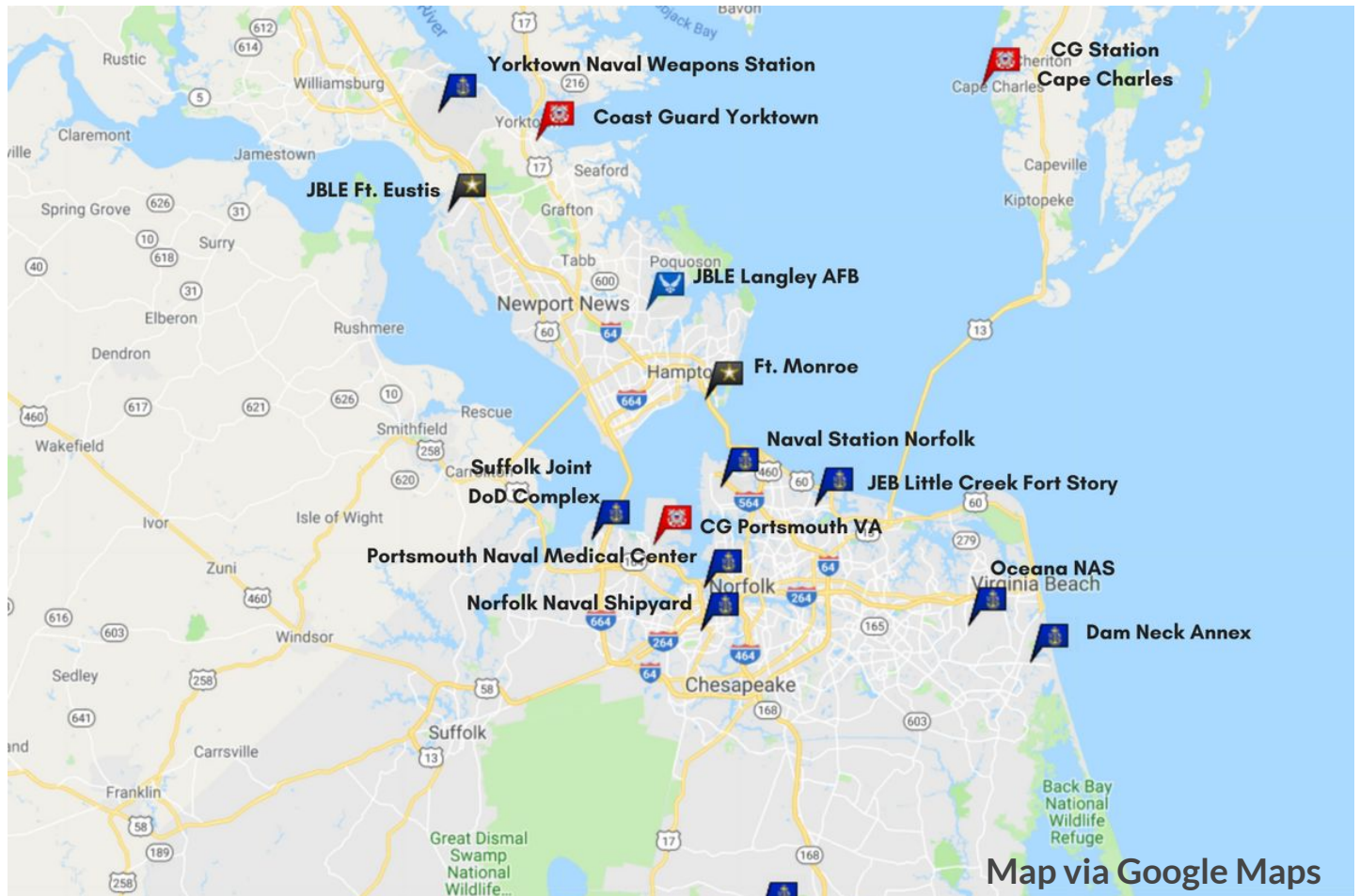
Follow the Eastern Seaboard 200 miles south from Washington D.C., and you'll land in the metropolitan area of Hampton Roads, Virginia.

In the coastal plains of the Tidewater region you'll find seven bustling cities: **Norfolk, Newport News, Hampton, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach.**

This area is brimming with nautical history, and if you're anticipating a PCS move to Hampton Roads, you'll feel right at home with the military-friendly vibe of this expansive area.

MilitaryByOwner is here to help with information for your military family's move to the Hampton Roads area!

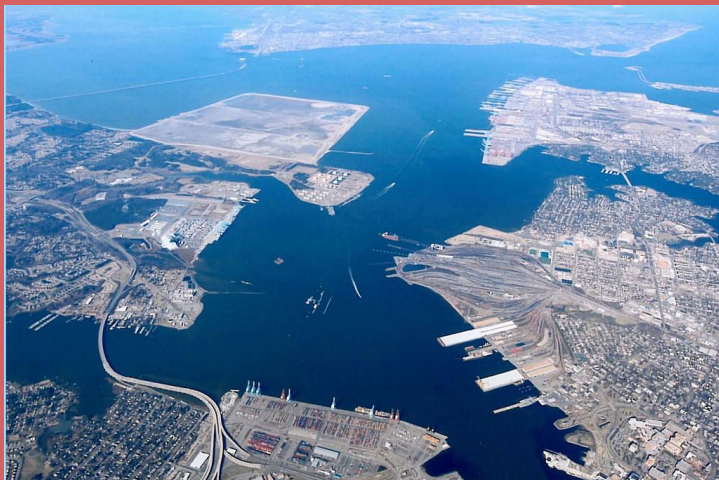
Hampton Roads Area Military Installations



Military bases in Hampton Roads are either located “Southside,” in the Norfolk/Virginia Beach area or “on the Peninsula” across the water.

Naval Station Norfolk is the largest Navy base in the world, and the military presence in Hampton Roads is the largest concentration of military personnel outside the Pentagon. You’ll also note the presence of the Army, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard. This melting pot of military members creates a one-of-a-kind joint forces atmosphere.

What to Expect *in Hampton Roads*



[Hampton Roads Harbor](#)
[Image via Missy Schmidt Flickr](#)

“Hampton Roads” was named for the large body of water formed between the Southside and the Virginia Peninsula by the joining of the James, Elizabeth, and Nansemond Rivers. It’s one of the largest natural harbors in the world.

In “America’s first region,” you’ll see a colonial influence in everything from architecture to store names. Early settlements such as Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg are here.

The HRBT system (Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel) is an important factor for commutes. Traffic regularly backs up at the many bridges and tunnels of this coastal region.

In an area that many think of as a vacation destination, you may end up with a revolving door of visitors!

Duty Station: *Hampton Roads, VA*



What to Expect:

Military Bases in Hampton Roads

Joint Base Langley-Eustis

Yorktown Naval Weapons Station

JEB Little Creek-Fort Story

Naval Station Norfolk

Norfolk Naval Shipyard

Portsmouth Naval Med Center

NSA Northwest Annex

Oceana Naval Air Station

Dam Neck Annex

USCG Yorktown TRACEN

USCG Base Portsmouth

Suffolk Joint DoD Complex

Neat Things About Hampton Roads

A welcoming populace

Military friendly

Colonial history

Great shopping

Great restaurants

You get to see fighter jets

You get to see Navy ships

Boating

Great fishing

Myriad activities

Great beaches

College town culture

Great farmer's markets

Not So Neat Things About Hampton Roads

Jet noise

Long commutes

Tons of summer tourists

Bodies of water to navigate

Scant public transportation

Bridge & tunnel traffic

Lots of flood zones

Hampton Roads Weather & Climate

If you enjoy four distinct seasons, you're in luck with an assignment to the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. Hot and humid during the summer months, the area also gets snowfall during winter, so keep your winter gear handy.

With an abundance of local beaches and nature trails as well as mountains just a few hours away, outdoor enthusiasts will be in luck.

Need a break after a long day? Unwind at a woodsy park or coastal beach nearby.



Image via [Wikimedia Commons](#)
user Jc7792

Weather Overview:

Hampton Roads, VA = ✓ Temperate and seasonal.

WINTER

December through February



Typical day:

Cold, windy, rainy

Gear you'll need:

Hat, coat, gloves, umbrella

Fun fact:

Whale watching season

Average temperature:

34°F through 53°F

Average precipitation:

9.8 inches + 5 inches snow

Local weather characteristic:

Can get very foggy

SPRING

March through May



Typical day:

Mild

Gear you'll need:

Jacket and umbrella

Fun fact:

Lots of spring festivals

Average temperature:

40°F through 75°F

Average precipitation:

6.8 inches

Local weather characteristic:

AM and PM thunderstorms

SUMMER

June through August



Typical day:

Hot & humid

Gear you'll need:

Sunglasses, sunscreen, hat

Fun fact:

Hurricane season starts Jun 1

Average temperature:

67° through 87°

Average precipitation:

15 inches

Local weather characteristic:

Lots of mosquitoes

FALL

September through November



Typical day:

Mild, sometimes windy

Gear you'll need:

Windbreaker, hat

Fun fact:

Hurricane season ends Nov 31

Average temperature:

45°F through 79°F

Average precipitation:

14.6 inches

Local weather characteristic:

Late Oct is peak foliage period

Area Attractions

Things to Do
and What the
Locals Know!

Whether touring the Peninsula's Historic Triangle or visiting the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, Hampton Roads is a popular place!

With destinations like Busch Gardens, Colonial Williamsburg, and the Virginia Air & Space Center in the region, make sure to check in advance for military discounts.

Day trips to D.C., the Outer Banks, and the Shenandoah Valley are an easy drive away.



Things to See and Do in Hampton Roads, Virginia



Family Friendly Attractions

- Busch Gardens - Hampton
- Virginia Zoo - Norfolk
- Children's Museum - Portsmouth
- Riddick's Folly House Museum - Suffolk
- Chesapeake Planetarium - Chesapeake
- WRV Surf Camp - Virginia Beach
- Virginia Living Museum - Newport News
- Bluebird Gap Farm - Hampton



Local Festivals

- Yorktown Victory Celebration - Oct
- American Indian Intertribal Powwow - Sep
- Blackbeard Pirate Festival - Jun
- Virginia International Tattoo - Apr
- Suffolk Peanut Festival - Oct
- Chesapeake Jubilee Fair - May
- Neptune Festival - Sep
- Seawall Art Show - Aug



Pro & Semi-Pro Sports

- Norfolk Admirals - ECHL Ice Hockey
- Norfolk Tides - AAA Baseball
- Peninsula Pilots - Amateur Baseball
- Hampton Roads Riptides - Arena Football
- Hampton Roads Reapers - Arena Football



Food & Drink

- TASTE Cafe - Newport News
- The Deadrise - Hampton
- Freemason Abbey - Norfolk
- The Coffee Shoppe - Portsmouth
- Egg Bistro - Suffolk
- Greenbriar's Cinema Cafe - Chesapeake
- Duck Donuts - Virginia Beach
- Surf Rider Restaurant - Hampton



Day Trips & Weekend Getaways

- Chincoteague Island - Eastern Shore
- Luray Caverns - Shenandoah Valley
- Wright Brothers Memorial - Kitty Hawk
- Civil War Battlefields
- Kings Dominion
- Smithsonian Museums - D.C.
- Cape Hatteras Lighthouse - Outer Banks, NC
- National Aquarium - Baltimore



Concert Venues

- American Theater - Hampton
- Attucks Theater - Norfolk
- Chrysler Hall - Norfolk
- Hampton Coliseum - Hampton
- Ntelos Wireless Pavilion - Portsmouth
- Norfolk Scope - Norfolk
- Virginia Beach Amphitheater - VA Beach

An Overview of Hampton Roads Neighborhoods



[Virginia neighborhood image via Wikimedia Commons.](#)

With 13 military installations in the region, there are nearly endless options for housing, whether you're looking for rural living or a city center.

Use the BAH calculator when scouting out listings on MilitaryByOwner to find what fits your budget. Be sure to factor in extra time if you're making the trek across the bridge/tunnel system.

Following are just a few popular neighborhoods near Hampton Roads bases that are highly rated by fellow military families on Military Town Advisor. Note that commute times are estimates and rush hours will affect the commute time listed.

Hampton Roads Neighborhoods Popular with Military Families

Morgan's Trace (Newport News)

Commute: 5 miles, 10 minutes to Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE) Fort Eustis.

Worth noting: Affordable, close to everything.

"Very quiet neighborhood, very close to the highway, Fort Eustis, Yorktown Naval Station, Coast Guard base Yorktown and Langley Air Force Base." - [Military Town Advisor reviewer](#)

Poquoson

Commute: 10 miles, 20 minutes to Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE) Langley Air Force Base, Hampton.

Worth noting: Poquoson, Virginia has been highlighted in CNBC's #5 of "10 Perfect U.S. Suburbs."

"Great small town feel and one of the best school ratings." - [Sara](#)

Larchmont (Norfolk)

Commute: 4 miles, 10 minutes to Naval Station Norfolk

Worth noting: Blocks from Larchmont Elementary, the Larchmont Library, and Old Dominion University.

"Old New England-like homes. Lots of culture and things for the kids to do. Safe for the kids. Some homes flood during storms and some do not: very far north end of Larchmont (Fairwater Dr) does not. Yacht club, pool, museums, baseball stadium, mall. Base is 10 min or less drive with large commissary, Exchange, CDC and Youth Services. Youth Services will bus kids from Larchmont Elementary School to YS center." - [MTA Reviewer](#)

Churchland (Portsmouth)

Commute: 10 miles, 20 minutes to Norfolk Naval Shipyard; 3 miles, 5 minutes to Coast Guard Station Portsmouth; 8 miles, 15 minutes to Portsmouth Naval Medical Center

Worth noting: Family oriented, convenient shopping.

*"Great Neighborhood! Close to base and very quiet from all the drama in other places. North Portsmouth is coming along really nice I love the Churchland area!" - [MTA Reviewer](#)
(cont.)*

Burbage Grant (Suffolk)

Commute: 2 miles, 5 minutes to Suffolk Joint DoD Complex.

Worth noting: Reasonably priced, highly rated elementary school, and easy commute to Portsmouth naval, Norfolk base, and shipyards.

"This neighborhood is amazing. We absolutely loved this neighborhood while we were stationed in the area! There were both civilian and active duty families from all services. We felt our children were well educated in the neighborhood school and that they had so many extra-curricular activities!" -MTA Reviewer

Cheshire Forest (Chesapeake)

Commute: 12 miles, 20 minutes to Naval Support Activity Northwest Annex, Chesapeake.

Worth noting: Mature trees, walkable, recreational activities, dog park in neighborhood.

"Great for kids and being outdoors. Very family friendly: pool, clubhouse, tennis courts, playgrounds, and ponds that you can fish...Many social events and parades. There are always people out walking. Super friendly...We fell in love the moment we drove through here. It will not disappoint!" -Heather

Kempsville (Virginia Beach)

Commute: 11 miles, 20 minutes to Joint Expeditionary Base (JEB) Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia Beach.

Worth noting: The Summit is a gated community with neighborhood parks, well-manicured landscaping, and a neighborhood pool.

"Great middle ground between a commute to Naval Station Norfolk and Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, being roughly 20 mins each way." -Katie

Ocean Lakes (Virginia Beach)

Commute: 6 miles, 15 minutes to Oceana Naval Air Station; 3 miles, 5 minutes to Dam Neck Annex.

Worth noting: Family friendly, quiet, easily navigate to restaurants and shopping.

"Ocean Lakes is close to many amenities and it is generally quiet of loud jet noise....nice mix of families, couples, and single people. There are lots of playgrounds, parks, and Ocean Lakes is located near a few restaurants and a shopping center. We have been friendly acquaintances with our neighbors and loved the sidewalks for riding our bikes, running, or walking our dog. I would recommend the Ocean Lakes area." -LCallahan

**View Hampton Roads Area
Homes for Rent or Sale**

Hampton Roads

Schools & Education



[Image via PXhere](#)

It's no secret that Virginia takes pride in ranking high on the list of the best schools in the nation. Each individual city and county administers its own K-12 program.

If applying for a private school, refer to the [Virginia Council for Private Education website](#). To find out which private schools are favorite choices in your new area, take a look at [Private School Review](#).

For details on home education, follow the guidelines from the Virginia Department of Education handbook. Additionally, the [Home Educators Association of Virginia \(HEAV\)](#), the [Virginia Homeschoolers organization](#), and the [Moore Expressions bookstore](#) offer helpful tips.

Hampton Roads Counties



Map via [Hampton Roads Chamber](#). For more information for individual school districts, visit each school district's website for the most current data (see next page).

Hampton Roads School Districts

The county you live in will determine which schools your star students will attend. As the area of Hampton Roads is vast, be sure to check school reviews on Great Schools and Military Town Advisor.

- [York County](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Williamsburg/James City County](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Newport News](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Poquoson City](#) Public Schools
- [Hampton City](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Norfolk](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Portsmouth](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Isle of Wight](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Suffolk](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Chesapeake](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)
- [Virginia Beach](#) Public Schools & [Map](#)

Military Spouses

Employers,
Volunteering,
Higher Education
& Childcare

Key industries in Hampton Roads include financial and corporate services, maritime, manufacturing, and much more. As of May 2017, the unemployment rate was 4.2%, down 0.1% from the previous year.

When looking for resume' assistance and local job openings, stop by the Fleet and Family Support Center (or base equivalent) at your installation.

Higher education opportunities are plentiful, as are numerous childcare options (see next page for more details).





Military Spouse Information



Hampton Roads, VA

Major Area Employers

Navy Exchange

Stihl

Starbucks

Geico

Sentara Healthcare

Bank of America

Nearby Education

Tidewater Community College

College of William and Mary

Christopher Newport University

Old Dominion University

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Regent University

Volunteer Opportunities

USO of Hampton Roads

Sentara Hospice

Up Center

American Red Cross

Virginia Beach Aquarium

Habitat for Humanity

Area Child Care

On base CDC's

JumpStart Creative

Giggles and Learning Academy

Great Bridge KinderCare

Childtime of Hampton

Building Blocks preschool

Local Social Groups

Hampton Roads Moms

Military Spouses Meet-ups

Toddlin' Around Tidewater

USO

The Carrying On Project

Family Support MWR

Enjoy Hampton Roads!

We wish your military family all the best during your time in Hampton Roads! Of course, there's nothing like connecting with others in the area. Below are links to some helpful organizations and groups.

[Naval Station Norfolk MWR](#)

[Navy Spouse Connection: Norfolk](#)

[Joint Base Langley-Eustis Family Readiness](#)

[Hampton Roads Chamber](#)

[Hampton Military, Family, & Veteran Resources](#)

[USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia](#)

[MOAA Hampton Roads](#)

[Hampton Roads Moms](#)

All links are for informational purposes only and do not constitute endorsement.

**Find Off-Base Housing in
Hampton Roads**

Want more info on the
Hampton Roads area?
Follow our Hampton Roads
Pinterest board for tips and
resources and connect
with us on social media!

