

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I take home a souvenir of my ferry ride? Yes, the Ferry Division's Ships stores have magnets, postcards, tee shirts, coffee mugs and more mementos for purchase. In addition to ferry-related merchandise, the stores also provide directions and other information to help make your travel more enjoyable. Stores are located at the following ferry terminals: Hatteras, Ocracoke, Southport, Bayview and Cedar Island. Souvenirs can be purchased with cash or travelers checks.

2. How can I apply for a job with the N.C. Ferry System? Job vacancies and state applications are available on NCDOT's Web site at www.ncdot.org/careers. Anyone wishing to work on the ferry boats must have a Merchant Mariner document obtained from the U.S. Coast Guard. Captains must have a minimum 1600 Ton Master License on Inland Waters. Information on obtaining documents and licenses is available on the USCG's Web site at www.uscg/stcw.

3. How do I apply for a commuter pass? Commuter passes are available for each of the ferry system's toll routes. The pass is good for one year from date of purchase. A registration card for the vehicle to be stickered must be presented, as well as a valid driver's license. If the stickered vehicle is wrecked or sold and replaced, the old sticker is voided and a new sticker will be issued with the same expiration date. These passes can be used at any toll route. The price is \$150 for a vehicle and/or combination up to 20 feet in length; \$200 for a vehicle and/or combination 20 feet to 40 feet in length; and \$250 for a vehicle and/or combination 40 feet to 65 feet in length. The pass can be purchased at Swan Quarter, Ocracoke, Cedar Island or Southport terminals.

4. How do I apply for a priority pass? This is only available at the Hatteras-Ocracoke route. Since ferry boat is the only way to access Ocracoke Island, businesses, services and individuals who travel back and forth more than twice a week, each week can apply for a priority pass. Passes are issued on an as-need basis at the beginning of each year. Call the Hatteras operations office at (252) 986-2353 or Ocracoke operations at (252) 928-1665 for further information.

5. What is the policy on pets? Pets are allowed in personal vehicles as they board the ferries. A dog can get out and walk on the main deck of the ferry, but must be leashed at all times to ensure the safety of all passengers. If a dog is in the back of an open pickup truck or in a vehicle with windows down, the animal must be restrained so that it cannot reach passengers walking by. Horses must be transported on board in a horse trailer, they cannot be ridden onto a ferry. Any pet accidents must be cleaned up by the owner.

6. Is drinking and/or smoking allowed on the ferry? Smoking is strictly prohibited aboard North Carolina ferry vessels. Drinking of alcoholic beverages is also prohibited.

7. Can I get coffee, other beverages or food onboard the ferries? Snack and drink vending machines are available on some ferries and at all operations terminals. Coffee is no longer provided on sound class vessels.

8. Are handicapped restrooms available? Handicapped facilities are available at all operations terminals. Most sound class vessels also can accommodate wheelchairs, except for the Motor Vessel Hyde. When making a reservation, make sure you will be on a handicap accessible boat. The Hatteras-Ocracoke vessels and some of the Cherry Branch-Minnesott ferries do not accommodate handicapped individuals in the restroom. Any new ferries built in the future will feature handicap accessible restrooms.

9. What are the university affiliations? Each ferry is affiliated with a college or university within the state of North Carolina and is painted in the respective school's colors and displays the school logo. Go to the photo gallery page and as you click on the individual vessel it will tell you its school affiliation.

10. Are there tie downs for motorcycles? No, the ferries do not provide any type of tie downs for bikes. Owners are asked to stay with their motorcycles and secure them by hand as the boat docks, especially in rough waters.

11. What are the safety features on board the ferries? All ferry vessels have life vests for passenger capacity, including vests for children. Life rafts and rescue boats also are on board each vessel, along with a trained and certified crew with life saving and CPR credentials. Each vessel also has a defibrillator on board and approved safety plans in place. Customer safety is the Ferry Division's number one priority and we make sure all of our personnel are trained and professional.

12. What vehicles can be accommodated? The Ferry Division can accommodate any size car, trailer or RV that can legally operate on the highway.

13. Are weddings and funerals allowed on ferries? The scattering of cremated ashes is allowed on ferries as long as it is handled in accordance with state guidelines and doesn't obstruct the crew's performance of duties. Weddings are also allowed if the party makes all provisions including their own minister and making arrangements for reservations if boarding a toll ferry.