



# Parent/Student Information Guide And Terms for Participation

## Welcome Aboard

Thank you for expressing interest in the schooner *Virginia*! The *Virginia* is a reproduction of the last allsail vessel built for the Virginia Pilot's Association, in 1917. That original ship was used to train apprentice pilots in seamanship, ship-handling and navigation. The reproduction vessel serves a similar purpose for the twenty-first century. Sailing the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic, *Virginia* educates both youth and adults in the traditions, history, literature and science of the maritime world. The *Virginia* is owned by the Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. The organization is governed by a board of directors and managed by a small staff located in our offices in downtown Norfolk, VA. The organization is funded through a combination of sales from youth and adult programs, state and city contributions, private donations and grant writing efforts. Each year, the *Virginia* represents the rich maritime legacy of the Commonwealth of Virginia as she conducts educational programs, visits foreign ports, and participates in major festivals. Become part of the *Virginia* family – sign up for a voyage, become a donor, or join our volunteer program!

## Youth Programs

*Virginia* conducts a number of different youth programs each year. Day sails, weekend excursions for youth organizations, and longer passages are all possible. You can contact our office for more information on the variety of programs we offer and program availability. *Virginia*'s premier youth programs are offered during her yearly summer Youth Sail Training season. These one and two week programs take place in New England waters, based out of Portland, ME. The voyages range from the coast of Massachusetts to Canada. These youth programs utilize the ship as a tool to teach the importance of teamwork, respect, self-discipline and leadership to today's youth. *Virginia*'s programs are an exciting and challenging way to meet new people, see exciting places and have a lot of fun!

## Reserving a Bunk

Choose a program from the schedule found on the ship's webpage. Then, reserve a bunk by filling out page 1 of the registration packet and sending in a deposit - 50% of the cost of the trip. You can make a deposit by check or credit card. The registration packet can be downloaded from the "Book a Bunk" section of our website. The remaining cost for the trip and the rest of the registration packet are due no later than thirty days prior to the beginning of the program. If you are registering within thirty days of the voyage, the full cost of the program and the completed registration forms must be submitted to reserve the bunk.

## Refunds

The deposit or cost of the program is fully refundable until thirty days prior to the beginning of the program. After that point, if you are unable to participate in the program, you may apply your payment to another program within the same calendar year. If the VMHF has to cancel the voyage, for any reason, the VMHF will first try to re-book you on another voyage, if that is not possible, you will receive a full refund.

## Discounts

VMHF offers a number of discounts for their programs. These include:

- ◆ 10% off the full price of the program when the cost is paid in full three months or more in advance of the trip.
- ◆ 10% off the full price of the program for active duty military or their immediate family members.
- ◆ 10% off the full price of the program for one person when they book another person to sail on the same program.
- ◆ 10% off the full price of the program for all members of a group of six or more people participating in the same program.
- ◆ 10% off the full price of your second (or subsequent) program in the same calendar year.

Only one discount per program is allowed.

## Travel

VMHF is not responsible for arranging travel to or from the ship. Details concerning the place and time for boarding/departing the ship will be provided well in advance of a program. VMHF staff will be happy to provide information on the easiest means of travel to/from the ship for each port. ***Parents, guardians and/or chaperones are responsible for the safety and security of students prior to the designated boarding time and following the designated conclusion of the program.*** Student travel forms must be submitted with the registration packet for each student participating in a program.

## Medical History and Physical Forms

Sailing aboard the Virginia is a fun and exciting experience. However, any outdoor adventure activity, especially on the water, has hazards that must be taken seriously. VMHF considers the safety of its ship, crew members and trainees as its number one priority. Therefore, it is vital that our staff be familiar with the physical abilities and limitations of each person participating in one of our programs. Likewise, we must have a clear understanding of all medications being taken by trainees. Therefore, we require that all students fill out a medical history form and have a current physical on file prior to the program. A **current** school physical can be used to meet this requirement. Please be thorough and accurate in filling out these forms! If you have any questions, please be sure to ask one of our staff members. Any student participating in VMHF programs should be sure to bring all of their prescribed regular medicines.

## Passports

Programs traveling outside of the United States require all participants to have a valid passport. A copy of the information/picture page of the passport must be submitted to the VMHF office with the registration packet. This is needed to arrange for customs in foreign ports.

## Communications

Although a replica of an early twentieth century vessel, *Virginia* is equipped with the latest communication and navigational equipment. Our Norfolk office maintains a daily communications schedule with the ship and has the capability of contacting the vessel at any time via satellite systems or cell phones. In addition, our office staff maintain a 24/7 watch rotation. By calling our office's phone number – 757 627 7400 – you will be put in contact with a staff member that can contact the ship. ***After regular business hours, please use this number only in a true emergency!***

One of the goals of our program is to immerse students in an environment very different from their daily experiences and to involve them in a lifestyle that focuses less on the material aspects of our modern world. By developing meaningful relationships with fellow students and facing new challenges, these young men and woman can develop skills that will serve them well as they grow older. ***We ask that parents and guardians assist us in this process by discouraging the use of cell phones, text messaging and other electronic devices during this program.*** There will be opportunities during the programs for students to use phones while on shore, but on the ship these devices take away from the atmosphere and educational program.

We also realize that families and friends want to keep up with the adventures of the students. Each evening, students will take turns writing a blog about the program and their adventures. These blogs will be posted on the ship's webpage. Pictures and/or videos will be added as often as possible. Our website's interactive map is updated with the ship's position approximately every four hours during programs.

## Weather

*Virginia* is designed to sail vast expanses of ocean. Modern navigational and communications systems allow our crew to observe weather forecasts and plan accordingly. When faced with the possibility of bad weather, the captain will determine the proper course of action based on the severity of weather, the schedule, and the abilities of the students in the program. Our number one goal is to ensure the safety of the ship, her crew and the program's participants. It is not unusual for the ship to face normal summer thunderstorms and rain during a program. However, if a weather system of greater strength develops, the captain will take steps to protect the ship and seek a safe harbor as able.

It is important that all participants in *Virginia*'s programs are prepared for a variety of weather conditions that they may face. A complete packing list is included in this packet to help prepare trainees. In preparation for packing, we encourage trainees to look at the weather for the region they will be sailing. Checking the temperatures and climate summaries for a city or town in the area is a good start. However, it is always different, and normally much cooler, at sea. The NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) weather page is the best resource for this kind of information. By visiting [www.weather.gov/om/marine/usamz.htm](http://www.weather.gov/om/marine/usamz.htm), you can choose the region of the program and get an idea of the weather. Checking this during the week prior to the trip will allow you to plan accordingly.

## Packing List

The following list is a general packing list for the different regions where *Virginia* sails. Please keep in mind a few things. First, you should be familiar with the general weather conditions *at sea* for the region in which the ship is sailing. Second, space is limited and anything brought aboard must be kept in the trainees bunk. Although bunks are comfortable, it is not like staying in a hotel! During a one or two week program, there will not be an opportunity to do laundry.

### *All Regions*

Foul weather jacket and pants (No Ponchos)

Waterproof boots are optional, but recommended

Water Bottle

Toiletries, including sunscreen

All required medications for duration of program

Two flat bed sheets and pillow case

Towel/washcloth

Underclothing and socks for the length of the program

Pajamas for communal sleeping area

Swim suit

Flashlight with red or blue lens

### *Summer programs in Maine/Canada (one week)*

Sweatshirt or medium weight sweater

Windbreaker or light jacket

Four t-shirts

Two medium weight shirts

Two pairs of cotton pants or jeans

Two pairs of shorts

Sandals with a strap for the heel (i.e. Teva or Keens)

Comfortable sneakers or light boots for hiking (make sure they are already broken in)

Ball cap or other brimmed hat

Scarf and light gloves

Sleeping bag

### ***Spring/Fall programs in the Chesapeake Bay and off-shore (one week)***

Hooded sweatshirt (fleece is very good)  
Heavy Wool Sweater  
Liner for rain jacket or separate cold weather jacket  
Wool cap  
Long underwear  
Four t-shirts  
Two heavy shirts (wool or flannel are suggested)  
One medium weight shirt  
Two pairs of medium weight pants/jeans  
One or two pairs of shorts  
Three pairs of wool socks  
Sneakers and/or boots  
Sandals with a strap for the heel  
Warm scarf and gloves  
Ball Cap  
Sleeping bag

### ***Caribbean (one week)***

Medium weight windbreaker or sweatshirt  
Two long sleeve light weight shirts  
Four t-shirts  
One pair cotton pants  
Three pairs of shorts  
Sneakers or light boots for hiking (make sure they are already broken in)  
Sandals with strap for heel  
Ball cap or other brimmed hat  
Light blanket

### ***Further Suggestions***

- ◆ **Do not bring** hair dryers, electric razors or other devices that require electricity.
- ◆ Feel free to bring cards, books, musical instruments and cameras.
- ◆ The ship will provide a pillow and a wool blanket. Each bunk has a reading light and a privacy curtain.
- ◆ It is important to layer properly in your dress. Many layers are better than one thick layer!
- ◆ Please remember that clothes will get wet and they are difficult to dry aboard ship.
- ◆ Clothes will get dirty during these programs. It is appropriate to bring one set of clothes for going ashore, but do not bring your finest duds!

### **Electronic Devices**

Use of electronic devices during our youth programs is prohibited on board the *Virginia*. Students may use their electronic devices during their travel to and from the ship and cell phones may be used at designated times during shore excursions while in the program. Cell phones and electronic devices will be collected and stored in the ship's safe during all Youth Sail Training programs.