



# Bald Head Island Transportation

## Electronic Ticketing and Reservations Frequently Asked Questions

**Why is the Bald Head Island ferry transitioning to electronic ticketing and reservations?** - Electronic ticketing and reservations allows passengers greater options and flexibility in how they purchase tickets and plan their travel. Providing passengers with the option to purchase reservation-eligible tickets and make reservations for their desired voyage will help even out passenger flows and reduce congestion and wait times at the ferry terminal, particularly during peak travel times. Ultimately, the goal of electronic ticketing and reservations is to provide a better rider experience for all passengers.

**When will the new system go into effect?** - We anticipate doing final testing on the system the week of June 5, 2023. If final testing is successful, the system (mobile app and website) may “go live” as early as Wednesday, June 7, 2023. If we do not feel the system is ready for implementation, we will delay the “go live” date to continue development and testing.

**Do I have to trade my “old” paper tickets for new ones to ride the ferry once the new system is operational?** – Yes. The new system will not recognize previously purchased paper tickets. You may trade your old paper tickets for the same ticket class at the ticket window at no cost.

**Do I have to trade in my Bulk 80, Annual Pass or Employee iCard?** – No. Previously purchased and/or issued iCards will remain valid until available rides are used or the card expires. New purchases and renewals will be issued an electronic QR code which may be stored on your phone or printed out for scanning.

**Am I required to have a reservation to ride the ferry?** – No. Whether you have a reservation for a different date or time or you want to walk up to the ticket window and purchase a ticket for the next available ferry, a reservation is not required. You will board as a stand-by passenger as long as space is available.

**Will I still be able to use my existing bulk tickets or Annual Pass and will I still be able to purchase bulk tickets or an Annual Pass at the reduced price?** - Yes. Previously purchased bulk tickets (Bulk 40 and Bulk 80) and Annual Passes will be honored and will remain available for purchase in accordance with the North Carolina Utilities Commission-approved tariff. Once the electronic ticketing system is

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operational, existing Bulk 40 tickets may be exchanged for QR code tickets at the ticket window. Bulk 80 and Annual Pass cards will remain active until all rides are used (Bulk 80) and will be replaced with a QR code upon a new purchase.

**Can I add other ticket classes (e.g., Child) to my Bulk 40 reservation in a single transaction?** – Yes. The Bulk 40 coupon code will subtract the “cost” of your Bulk 40 ticket and any other tickets or add-ons you select may be purchased at the end of the transaction.

**Will One-Way and No Frills Tickets be allowed to make reservations?** – No. One-way and No Frills tickets will remain available for purchase at the ticket window, but will not be eligible for ferry or tram reservations.

**What happens if I miss my reservation date and/or time?** – Your ticket remains valid and you will be able to board the next available ferry as a stand-by passenger as long as there is space available. You may also use the mobile application or the website to change your reservation to another available time.

**What happens if the ferry is running late?** – Your reservation will be honored on the next available ferry and adjustments to subsequent reservations will be made until we are able to resume our normal schedule.

**Can I receive a refund for my ticket if I cancel my travel plans?** – Yes. Refunds for unscanned tickets purchased through the mobile app or the website may be initiated by the purchaser using the confirmation code provided with their ticket purchase. Refunds may also be issued at the ticket window. Refunds are not available for partially used Bulk 40 or Bulk 80 tickets.

**I made a tram reservation for later this year under the previous system. Will I have to make another one?** – No. As part of the transition process, we will import all existing tram reservations into the new system. If you have not yet purchased tickets, we recommend purchasing tickets online and making a ferry reservation that coincides with your existing tram reservation time. Once the new system is operational, future tram reservations will be integrated into the ticket purchase process through the mobile app, online, or at the ticket window.

**Do I have to purchase a ticket to make a tram reservation?** – Yes. With the exception of previously coordinated chartered tram services (e.g., weddings), you will need to purchase a tram-eligible ticket (e.g., General Fare, Bulk 40) to make a tram reservation. This is most easily done through the mobile app or website.

**Will I still be able to coordinate special events (weddings, bands, etc.)?** – Yes. Special events, including chartered ferry, tram, and dolly services may be coordinated in person and over the phone.

**I have an Employee or Contractor ticket. Will I be able to ride the passenger ferry when the Contractor ferry is not available?** – Yes. Customers with Employee and Contractor tickets will be allowed to board the ferry as a stand-by passenger once customers with reservations have boarded and space is available. The Contractor ferry remains first-come, first-served for all ticket classes.

**As an Employee or Contractor riding the passenger ferry, it seems like I will always get “bumped” under the new system. Why do employees and contractors have to board behind everyone else?** – Since the inception of the Bald Head Island ferry system, those with employee and contractor tickets

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were required to stand aside to allow passengers with other ticket classes to board the passenger ferry first. This policy has not been enforced in recent years for several reasons, including most recently the impacts of COVID-19. To minimize the impact to employees and contractors, the number of available reservations on each scheduled passenger ferry is limited, meaning there will always be stand-by spaces available on every ferry. As we experience the impact of reservations on passenger flows and trends, we may adjust the ratio of available reservations and stand-by spaces to balance ridership demands to available space on the passenger ferry. As is the case today, there will always be potential for passengers to be “bumped” when the ferry meets its U.S. Coast Guard-regulated maximum capacity of 150 passengers.

**Will you be adding more runs to the Contractor ferry?** – No. We do not anticipate adding additional Contractor ferry runs at this time.

**Will you still run an additional ferry during high ridership periods (e.g. 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend) and will reservations be available on the additional ferry?** – Yes. We will continue to schedule an additional ferry during peak ridership periods and reservations may be made on both the regularly scheduled passenger ferry and the additional passenger ferry. There may be times when an unscheduled passenger ferry is put in service. Unscheduled passenger ferries will be first-come, first-served and open to all passengers with or without reservations.

**Will there be a change in the baggage rules for property owners?** – No. As a designated public transportation utility, the baggage limits and definitions ordered by the North Carolina Utilities Commission apply to all riders.