

Greetings to the Families and Friends of Marine Security Guard School:

To assist students' families in attending events over the graduation weekend, the following information is provided. Please note that once graduation weekend is over, the Marines will be departing for their new duty station as quickly as host country visas are available, and it is doubtful that there will be any opportunity for additional visits after graduation weekend.

L.I.N.K.S. Class

On the day prior to graduation, there will be a "**L.I.N.K.S. for Parents and Extended Family Members of Marine Corps Embassy Security Group**" class, with a focus on the family and friends of the students of Marine Security Guard (MSG). "L.I.N.K.S." stands for **L**ifestyles, **I**nsights, **N**etworking, **K**nowledge and **S**kills, and the curriculum will specifically address the unique aspects of MSG duty, and the impact of the duty both on the Marine and the family.

Included will be information about the duty, how to send a Red Cross Emergency Message to a Marine on Embassy duty, how to send a care package through the Diplomatic Personal Pouch mail, which has special requirements, and things you might want to know, should you decide to visit your Marine at an Embassy. The class will be held at the Marine Security Guard Training Center, located at 27275 Garand Road, aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico. **Please do not use your GPS to get to the class site.**

Directions are provided on our public webpage.

(<http://www.mcesg.marines.mil/Portals/9/MSG%20Training%20Center%20Directions%20from%20I-95.pdf>) Families are welcome to start gathering at 11:30, but the actual class will run from 12:30pm through 4:00pm. It is recommended that you have lunch prior to the class or bring snacks.

Graduation

The graduation ceremony will take place in the theatre at Little Hall, 2034 Barnett Avenue, Quantico, VA 22134. At 9:00am, instructors will provide a brief overview of the Marine Security Guard (MSG) program, including a video, and an opportunity for questions and answers. This is followed by the Marines arrival shortly before 10:00. The Marines are not permitted to greet their guests at this time. By about 10:00, the Marines enter the building and the graduation ceremony begins. We encourage you to bring your camera to graduation, as photography during the ceremony is welcome. We do not produce videos or photographs, but you are welcome to videotape or photograph any or all of the ceremony. As soon as the graduation ceremony is over, the Marines will be released to greet their guests.

Reception

Immediately following graduation, there will be a reception at Marshall Hall, the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group Headquarters building. This building is located at 2007 Elliot Road, Quantico, Virginia, 22134. Available parking at Marshall Hall is limited, and many families choose to walk from Little Hall to Marshall Hall. Comfortable shoes are highly recommended. The new graduates are usually permitted to spend some or all of the weekend with their families before returning to Headquarters in preparation for departure to post.

General Information

Many of our families ask about graduation "dress code". The weather is unpredictable, so be prepared for a wide range of temperatures. The Marine will be in his/her best dress uniform (the "dress blues"). Many families choose to dress up, while an equal number do not. Please dress in a way that makes you comfortable!

If you will be traveling a significant distance to attend graduation, it may be useful to know that the closest airports are Reagan National Airport (DCA) and Washington-Dulles International Airport (IAD). If you will be using a rental car to enter Marine Corps Base Quantico, you will need both your driver's license, and the rental agreement to show to the guard at the gate on request. Regarding taxicab use in our area, it may be helpful to know that average fares from Reagan National Airport (DCA) and Washington-Dulles International Airport (IAD), are typically higher than \$75.00 for a one way trip, and the cost of a taxi from the nearest off base hotel to the graduation location is more than \$20.00. If you are driving your own vehicle, you will need your license, registration and proof of insurance. Please note that use of a cellular phone while driving on base is strictly prohibited unless the driver is using a hands free device such as a "blue tooth", and certain areas of the base are off limits to photographers.

If your visit will include a hotel stay, an internet search for "Hotel Chains near Marine Corps Base Quantico" or "Hotel Chains near zip code 22134" or "Hotel Chains near zip code 22554 or 22556" should generate a significant and varied list to fit almost any budget. The Northern Virginia area often experiences a high volume of traffic, please allow ample travel time.

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