

# Sandy Point State Park FAQ's

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ***When do you open?***

Sandy Point State Park is open year-round, excluding Christmas Day. Park hours are 7am to sunset; please verify the sunset time prior to your visit with us.

### ***Are pets permitted in the park?***

Household pets are not allowed in general public areas of the park from May 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup> however, we welcome your furry family members October 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. Pets must be attended and leashed at all times unless they are in the water. Please be a responsible pet owner and clean up after your pet. Pet waste stations are located throughout the park. NOTE: Livestock and/or farm animals, including horses, are not permitted at Sandy Point State Park.

### ***Is alcohol allowed in the park?***

Alcohol is not allowed in the general public area of Sandy Point State Park. Alcohol is allowed in the East Beach shelter area however, it is limited to those with a valid shelter reservation and the purchase of an alcohol permit, which should be purchased at the time that the shelter reservation is made.

### ***Is hunting allowed in the park?***

Permitted hunting is allowed during deer season in the Corcoran Environmental Study Area, adjacent to Sandy Point State Park. Permits are issued through the Myrtle Grove Wildlife Management Area office.

### ***What kind of wildlife will I see on my visit to the park?***

Sandy Point State Park is home to many species of wildlife including whitetail deer, opossums, raccoons, squirrels, songbirds, birds of prey, snakes, turtles, many varieties of waterfowl, shorebirds, fox, rabbits and much more. Most species of wildlife are active early in the morning or just before sunset.

### ***Is metal detecting allowed in the park?***

Metal detecting is permitted in Sandy Point State Park on the sandy beach areas only. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, detecting is restricted to 6:00am-9:00am, otherwise metal detecting is permitted during normal park operating hours.

### ***Where can I buy a season pass?***

The Maryland Park Service Annual State Park & Trail Passport can be purchased at Sandy Point State Park headquarters, at the park entry gate when entering the park, or online at <https://www.shopdnr.com/>.

***If I have a Season Pass, how do I get into Sandy Point State Park if there is no one at the tollgate?***

If you have a Season Pass, stop by the Park Headquarters to pick up an additional entry card that will allow you access to the park when the contact station is not staffed. You may also email ([sandypoint.statepark@maryland.gov](mailto:sandypoint.statepark@maryland.gov)) or mail a copy of your Season Pass and your return mailing address to Park Headquarters and an entry card will be sent to you. In order to avoid having to pick up your separate park entry card, we encourage you to purchase your Season Pass at the park and your entry card will be issued with the Season Pass.

***Can I use the park for a special event or festival?***

Sandy Point is the site of four historic special events annually – Lights on the Bay, the Chesapeake Bay Blues Festival, MD Special Olympics Polar Bear Plunge and the Maryland Seafood Festival. All four events have been held at Sandy Point State Park for many years along with several other smaller events each year.

If you are interested in holding an event at Sandy Point, send an email to [sandypoint.statepark@maryland.gov](mailto:sandypoint.statepark@maryland.gov) or call the park office at 410-974-2149 and request a Special Event Request form. NOTE: Due to the large increase in park visitation, requests for events between May to September are not often approved.

***Where are the trash cans?***

All Maryland State Parks are “trash-free,” meaning there are no trash cans to ruin the view, or to attract flies, bees, and other wildlife. Parks follow the Leave No Trace ([www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org)) principles of “pack it in, pack it out” where visitors are asked to take their trash with them when they leave.

Although there are no trash cans, trash-free bags are available for free to visitors at the entry gate and also from any park staff member. Trash dumpsters for visitor use are located throughout the park and at walkway exits.

***Are there walking or bike trails in the park?***

There are two short, self-guided trails behind the Tollgate Picnic area - the Symbi and Pond trails. There is also a trail between East Beach and South Beach – the Blue Crab Trail. There are no bike trails in the park.

***How do I get to the Park Headquarters?***

Traveling from the Rt. 50 overpass, at the main 4-way park entrance intersection, continue straight across instead of bearing right to enter the park, driving to the left of the park sign and small replica lighthouse. Headquarters is the first building on the left.

***My friend/family member is disabled. Are all areas of the park accessible to the disabled?***

Sandy Point prides itself on being fully accessible to all patrons. All of our facilities are accessible to the disabled. Beach wheelchairs are available on a first come first served basis. If you require special accommodations, please call the park office in advance of your visit at 410-974-2149 to let us know how we can assist you on your upcoming visit.

***What is the closest hotel to Sandy Point State Park?***

Comfort Inn -- Us 50 & Old Mill Bottom Road, Annapolis, MD 410-757-8500

***Is there a place I can get food in the park? When is it open?***

There is a concession stand at the main South beach area of the park which serves hot and cold foods from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The concession stand is open daily from 11:00am to 6:00pm, weather permitting. Also, the marina store, located near the boat ramps and fuel dock, is open seasonally and offers prepackaged snacks and beverages.

## **SHELTERS RESERVATIONS & YOUTH GROUP CAMPING**

***How do I reserve a shelter?***

You can reserve a shelter at Sandy Point by calling the Reservation Center at 888-432-2267 or reservations can be made online at

<https://parkreservations.maryland.gov/Home.aspx>. If you want to purchase an alcohol permit along with your reservation you will need to call the reservation center; permits cannot be purchased online.

***What are the hours for shelter use?***

Shelters are available from 10:00am to sunset. All visitors must leave the park by the scheduled closing time.

***Do the shelter charges include the per person park service charge?***

The shelter reservation fee does NOT include the per person park service charge. Each person entering the park will have to pay the entry charge. Persons reserving the shelter can pre-pay for visitors through the park office and will be issued pre-paid tickets, which must be distributed to guests prior to entering the park.

***I want to have a family reunion in a shelter at Sandy Point. How many people will your shelters accommodate?***

There are twelve shelters available for reservation for large groups at Sandy Point State Park. Nine (9) of the shelters accommodate groups up to 140 people, two (2) shelters accommodate up to 180 people and one (1) shelter can accommodate up to 300 people.

### ***Can I get married on the beach and have my reception in a shelter at Sandy Point?***

The view is why many people consider getting married at Sandy Point State Park however, when considering the location for a wedding and/or reception, please keep in mind that all twelve shelters in the East Beach area share the same beach, which often means an extreme lack of privacy. Weddings on the beach could be interrupted by other beach users. Unfortunately, because it is a shared space, chairs cannot be setup on the beach and areas of the beach cannot be roped off for special events. All shelters in East Beach share the bath house, amenities and restroom facilities. No amplified music or DJ's are allowed. Keep in mind that shelter fees do not include the per person entrance charges; all persons entering the park will be charged the per person fee.

Small and/or informal weddings/receptions work best for the park type of setting. If you have any questions or need further information, please call the park office at 410-974-2149 and we are happy to help you plan your big day.

### ***I have a shelter rented for my event but it's supposed to rain. Can I reschedule or get a refund?***

The shelters at Sandy Point are covered areas; therefore we do not offer refunds or rescheduling of reservations due to weather. The park does not close for inclement weather. Please be sure to review the cancellation and refund policy prior to making your shelter reservation. The policy can be found here:

<https://parkreservations.maryland.gov/ResPolicies.aspx>

### ***Where can I camp?***

Sandy Point State Park offers Youth Group camping only, from April 1st through October 31<sup>st</sup>; no public camping is available. The Youth Group camping area has two primitive camping sites available for rent to youth group organizations with a valid Maryland DNR Youth Group Pass only. Each site accommodates 30 people and includes a covered picnic area and access to portable toilets. Information on the Maryland DNR Youth Group Pass can be found here

<http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/youthgroup.aspx>

### ***How do I make a camping reservation?***

Youth group camping reservations can be made by calling the Reservation Center 888-432-2267. Reservations may also be made online at

<https://parkreservations.maryland.gov/ResPolicies.aspx>

### ***How much does it cost to camp in the Youth Group Area?***

With a Maryland DNR Youth Group Pass there is no per-person charge to camp in the Youth Group Area. Camping without a Youth Group Pass is at the discretion of the park Manager.

***Are there any campgrounds close to Sandy Point State Park? Do they have full hook-ups for RV's?***

Contact the campgrounds directly for information and availability:

Patapsco Valley State Park – 410-461-5005 – 45 minutes North of Sandy Point

Tuckahoe State Park – 410-820-1668 – 45 minutes East of Sandy Point

Breezy Point Beach & Campground – 410-855-1243 – 40 minutes South of Sandy Point

Capitol KOA – 410-923-2771 – 35 minutes Northwest of Sandy Point

Duncan's Family Campground – 410-222-2086 – 45 minutes South of Sandy Point

## **SERVICE CHARGES**

***How much is the facility service charge?***

***Are Veterans free?***

Please refer to the Service Charges for Maryland State Parks section of the Maryland Park Service website, found here <http://dnr.maryland.gov/Publiclands/Pages/oc.aspx>

***Are children free?***

Children less than 8 years old that are properly secured in a car safety seat (infant seat or booster seat) are admitted free of charge to Sandy Point State Park and all Maryland state parks.

***Are Senior Citizens free?***

Senior citizens are not free however the Maryland Park Service Golden Age Pass entitles adults, ages 62 and older, free day use entry (cardholders only) to all State Parks that charge service fees. This pass is valid for half price camping Sunday through Thursday. The boat launch fee at Maryland State Parks is eliminated for seniors who possess a Golden Age Pass. There is a one-time service charge of \$10 to purchase the pass. The Golden Age Pass can be purchased at the park entry gate, at park headquarters or online at <https://www.shopdnr.com/>.

***Do persons with disabilities get in free?***

There is no charge to persons with disabilities if they possess a DNR Universal Disability Pass. The pass holder and one caretaker are admitted at no charge. Handicap tags on the vehicle or the rear view mirror do not entitle visitors to free access to the park. Applications for the Universal Disability Pass can be found at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/udpfaq.aspx> or by visiting any Maryland Service Center.

***Do you honor National Park Service Golden Eagle Passports?***

No, we do not accept the National Park Service Golden Eagle Passport; however, the Maryland Park Service offers the equivalent with its Golden Age Pass. Any park can issue you a Golden Age Pass if you are 62 years old or older.

***Do you honor AARP membership cards?***

No, we do not honor AARP membership cards.

***I'm coming to the park on a bus with a group. Is there a charge for a bus?***

There is no additional charge for visitors arriving by bus; everyone on the bus must pay the applicable park entrance charge.

***I forgot something and need to leave to get it. Can I get a refund? Or do I have to pay when I come back in?***

Facility service charges are non-refundable. If you leave the park, you must pay to re-enter.

## **FISHING – CRABBING – BOATING**

***How deep is the pond?***

The pond, named after one of Sandy Point's previous owners, Baptist Mezick, was dredged to eight feet.

***How much is the boat ramp charge?***

No additional charge is required to use the boat ramp after the facility service charge has been paid at the park entry gate.

***Can I leave my boat trailer overnight or for several days?***

Boat trailers and vehicles can be left overnight in the large marina parking lot while you are out on your boat. If you intend to leave your trailer overnight or longer, please check in at the Marina store and fill out a yellow float plan form with registration and information. If the store is closed, the yellow forms are available at the bulletin board by the marina restroom. If no forms are available contact a park ranger and inform them of your intentions. The trailers and vehicles should then be secured and parked at the top section of the parking lot.

***Can I get gas or diesel fuel for my boat?***

Fuel is available at the marina store during park operating hours. The fuel pumps are on the dock in front of the store. If the marina store is closed, call the Duty Ranger at the number provided at the storefront.

***Where can I rent a boat?***

Boat rentals are available at the marina store. Once in the park, take the first paved right and then the next right to the Marina store. Rentals are available from late April through September. A deposit is required and both hourly and daily rates are available. Boat rentals are weather permitting.

***What size boats do you rent?***

15'11" outboard motor boats with a maximum capacity of four people. The motor is a 6-horse power. Sandy Point State Park abides by all Maryland boat operation laws. Check at the marina store for details regarding Boater Safety Certification requirements.

***Where can I fish or crab?***

Fishing and crabbing are allowed anywhere at Sandy Point except in designated swimming and boating areas. The best spots are off of the rock jetties located at South Beach and East Beach and off of the pier in Mezick Pond.

***Do you sell bait?***

Yes, a variety of bait is available at the marina store during operating hours, including bloodworms, spot, night crawlers and peelers.

***Where can I get bait or fishing equipment outside the park?***

Anglers Sporting Center is located nearby. When exiting the park, make a left at the park front entrance intersection. Take the overpass over Rt. 50; make a right at the stop sign onto Whitehall Rd. Angler's is approximately 2 miles on the left.

***Do I have to have a license to fish or crab at Sandy Point?***

All Maryland license requirements and fishing/crabbing regulations apply when fishing or crabbing in the park. You must possess all licenses that are required by Maryland State law.

***Where can I buy a Maryland fishing license?***

Licenses can be purchased at most "Mart" stores, some hardware stores, and most sporting goods stores. Fishing licenses can also be purchased online at <https://compass.dnr.maryland.gov/dnrcompassportal> or by phone at 855-855-3906. Licenses for fishing and crabbing can also be purchased nearby at Angler's Sporting Center, directions above.

**BEACHES – SWIMMING*****Do you have lifeguards? What days and times?***

Sandy Point's main beach has lifeguards on stand daily from 10:00am to 6:00pm, Memorial Day to Labor Day. The beach area in East Beach, where the reservation-only shelters are located, has lifeguards on stand when shelters are rented and staffing is available. Days and times are subject to change based on availability of staff. If sections of the beach do not have lifeguards on duty, signs/flags indicating "No lifeguard on duty, swim at your own risk" will be visible. Visitors should never swim in areas that are marked for fishing or in areas marked as No Swimming areas.

***Can I sunbathe nude at Sandy Point State Park? Can I wear a thong bathing suit?***

Sandy Point State Park is a public, family-friendly facility. There are no "private" areas of beach in the park. Public nudity is prohibited by law. When in the park we ask that you wear bathing attire that is appropriate to be viewed by adults and children alike. If bathing attire is inappropriate, you may be asked to cover up.

***Do you have jellyfish?***

Because Sandy Point beach is located directly on the Chesapeake Bay, jellyfish can be found in the water during the warm summer months, mainly from late July through the first frost. As the water temperature rises, the number of jellyfish increases. Please be aware of your surroundings when swimming. You can check with any lifeguard on duty about the status of jellyfish when you visit.

***Can I put up a tent on the beach for shade?***

Tents (camping, clamshells) are not permitted in the main beach area of the park; this includes the beach and grassy areas. Small shade canopies can be put up on the beach as long as they are open-sided and do not exceed 10 foot square in size. For the safety of our guests, shade canopies cannot have closed sides (including tarps or side shades) and staff must be able to see through all structures.

***Is the water at Sandy Point's beach salt water or freshwater?***

The portion of the Chesapeake Bay where Sandy Point is located is brackish water. Brackish water is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as sea water and is a result of salt water mixing with freshwater in this portion of the Chesapeake Bay.

***Is it ok to swim in the water? Is it polluted?***

Water in the swim area is sampled weekly between May and September by the Anne Arundel County Health Department. You can view the water quality results on their website at [www.aahealth.org](http://www.aahealth.org).

**Maryland Park Service Policies**

<http://dnr.maryland.gov/Publiclands/Pages/Statewide-Maryland-Park-Policies.aspx>

**Additional Information**

**Facts, Directions, Etc.**

**1. How long is the Bay Bridge?**

Overall length, shoreline to shoreline is 22,840 feet or 4.33 miles.

The William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial Bridge is composed of two spans. The original span opened July 31, 1952 and is 21,286 feet or 4.02 miles. The parallel span opened June 28, 1973 and 21,051 feet long or 3.98 miles.

**2. How did people living on the Eastern and Western shore near Sandy Point get across the bay before the bridge was built?**

In 1939 the Maryland General Assembly passed an act establishing a ferry system for bay travelers. Three ferries linked the bay's shores at Annapolis and Kent Island. One ferry, the Majestic, once used Sandy Point and Matapeake as landing areas.

**3. What was Sandy Point used for before becoming a state park?**

Sandy Point was previously used for agricultural purposes until the State purchased property in February, 1949. In the summer of 1949, Sandy Point was used as a correctional camp as a supply of labor for the parks and various state agencies. In 1952, Sandy Point was officially opened as a state park.

- 4. When was the Sandy Point farmhouse built and what is the architectural design?**

The Sandy Point farmhouse was constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and followed the Georgian style of architecture.
- 5. Who lived in the farmhouse?**

John Gibson was the first to reside in the farmhouse although, in fact, Charles Carroll owned the house. Henry Mayer occupied the farmhouse after Gibson. Mayer sold the farm to Baptist Mezick in 1833. The farmhouse had many owners after Mezick until it was purchased by the state in 1949.
- 6. Why is the Corcoran Tract fenced off?**

The Corcoran Tract was deeded to the State of Maryland for the purpose of creating an environmental area which would be untouched by the mechanization of the modern world. The fence was built so that the tract would only be open for foot travel or state vehicles needed to maintain the area.
- 7. Which State agency is responsible for Sandy Point and the Corcoran Tract?**

The Maryland Park Service, a unit of the Department of Natural Resources.
- 8. What is the Sandy Point Lighthouse and does someone man the station?**

The lighthouse is a navigational device off of the beach of Sandy Point used for channel direction in the bay. It is not manned, and is owned by a private citizen.
- 9. What kinds of fish can be caught off of Sandy Point beaches?**

The main species caught off Sandy Point are bluefish, white perch, sea trout, striped bass and spot, although there are numerous other species in the Bay.
- 10. Where can you fish or crab?**

Fishing and crabbing are allowed anywhere but in designated swimming and boating areas. The best spots are off of the rock jetties located at South Beach and East Beach and from the pier in Mezick Pond.
- 11. What equipment is needed to crab?**

Some type of bait will be needed. Eel and chicken are used often. You can tie the bait onto string and use a weight to sink the bait. A net on a six foot pole can be used to scoop crabs off of the bait line. Crab traps and pots can also be used. Park patrons need to be aware of crabbing regulations.
- 12. What is the purpose of rock jetties off the beaches of Sandy Point?**

Although often used by fisherman, the rock jetties were constructed to slow erosion of Sandy Point beaches.
- 13. At what time of year can the geese be seen at Sandy Point?**

The geese are here year round, but the best viewing time is winter.
- 14. What is the significance of Sandy Point to bird watchers?**

Sandy Point is a sanctuary stop over for East Coast migratory bird species.

**15. What type of wildlife can be seen in the park?**

Many types of waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds can be seen, as well as mammals such as deer, raccoons, fox, rabbits and squirrels.

**16. Are there any nature trails at Sandy Point?**

There are two self-guided trails behind the Tollgate Picnic area, the Symbi and Pond Trails. There is also a trail between East Beach and South Beach, the Blue Crab Trail.

**17. What are the main shellfish around Sandy Point?**

Oyster and Razor Clams are the most common species. The Chesapeake Blue Crab, often described as shellfish, is actually a crustacean, and is also found in park waters.

**18. What tree species has a star-shaped leaf?**

The Sweet Gum tree, (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), is one of the major hardwood species found in the park.

## **DIRECTIONS IN THE PARK AREA**

**How do I get to the beach?**

Follow straight down the main road to the end. Parking can be found on the right and left at South Beach. When parking is limited, Rangers will direct beach traffic to available lots.

**How do I get to East Beach?**

Straight down the main road, take the first paved road on the left after the Contact Station. This lot is restricted to visitors who have rented shelters.

**Where are the volleyball and basketball courts?**

South Beach: Volleyball – on the beach close to the concession.  
Basketball – grassy area located to the right of the bathhouse.

**How do I get to the boat launch area?**

Take the first paved road on the right and follow the road around to the large Marina parking lot. Ramps are at the bottom of the lot in Mezick Pond.

**How do I get to the small craft launching area?**

Take the first left after the large white house (Mansion) on the left. The launch area is beyond the parking lot at the end of the road. NOTE: Turnoff is marked for small craft launch area. Windsurfers, small sailboats, and kayaks launch from this area.

**How do I get to the Marina Store?**

Take the first paved road on the right, the Marina Store is on the right.

**How do I get to C.R.A.B.? (Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating)**

Directions are the same as those for the Marina Store and look for CRAB on the right before the marina store.

**How do I get to Park Headquarters?**

If in the park, go back to the front entrance intersection and make a right. It is the first building on the left. From outside of the park, at intersection either stay straight from Rte 50 or from East College Parkway make a left.

**Where can I rent a boat?**

Boat rentals are available through the Marina Store. Take the first paved right to the Marina store. A deposit is required and both hourly and daily rates are available.

**How do I get to the picnic area?**

There are several picnic areas in the park. Right past the Contact Station, the first right onto a gravel road will take you to the "Tollgate Picnic Area". The main picnic area is located straight down the main road, along the beach. Tables are located throughout the park.

**DIRECTIONS OUTSIDE THE PARK AREA****How do I get to Baltimore?**

Take Rt. 50 West to Rt. 97 north towards Baltimore.

**How do I get to downtown Annapolis?**

Rte 50 west to Rowe Blvd. Follow Rowe Blvd to the State Capital Bldg. Take a right on Church Circle. Take Duke of Gloucester to parking lots downtown.

**Where can we camp?**

The closest campgrounds are a KOA in Millersville, or Tuckahoe and Martinak State Parks on the Eastern Shore. Written directions can be found at the Contact Station.

**Where can I find an ATM or MOST machine?**

Continue straight out of the park onto East College Parkway. A bank is across the street from the 7-11.

**How do I get to the Eastern Shore?**

Go left at the intersection at the front entrance to the park. Go up the Rt 50 overpass. Take the ramp for Rt. 50/301 East on the right. There is a Bridge toll.

**How do I get to the outlet stores?**

Take Rt 50 East over the Bay Bridge approximately 10 miles. The Queenstown Outlets are on the left.