

MILITARY RELOCATION

Preserve at Hanover Park

125 New Hanover Street, Beaufort, SC 29906

Prepared March 2026

BEAUFORT RELOCATION GUIDE

Welcome to the Lowcountry! This guide is designed for service members and families PCSing to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. Whether you're arriving from across the country or from overseas, the information below will help you settle in quickly and make the most of your time in Beaufort, South Carolina.

Schools & Childcare

Public Schools

The Beaufort County School District (BCSD) serves approximately 21,000 students across 32 schools, including 21 elementary schools, six middle schools, and five high schools. The district is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and has earned recognition for improving student achievement across all demographics. Military families living off base will enroll their children in BCSD schools based on their residential address.

DoDEA Schools (On-Base)

Families living in the Laurel Bay military housing area have access to Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools serving grades pre-K through 8th grade. The Laurel Bay schools are part of the DoDEA system and exclusively serve children of military and federal personnel residing on base. High school students attend Beaufort County public high schools.

Notable Area Schools

- **Beaufort Elementary School:** Serves the downtown Beaufort area with a strong community reputation.
- **Beaufort Middle School:** Located on Lady's Island, serves grades 6–8.
- **Beaufort High School:** Comprehensive high school with athletics, arts, and JROTC programs.
- **Battery Creek High School:** Located in Burton, popular with military families in the 29906 ZIP code.
- **Riverview Charter School:** K–8 charter school option within the BCSD.

Childcare

The MCAS Beaufort Child Development Center (CDC) offers hourly care for ages 6 weeks through 5 years (up to 25 hours per week) and part-day preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. The Family Child Care (FCC) program provides home-based care for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Contact the CDC at (843) 228-7279 for enrollment and waitlist information. Off-base childcare options include licensed daycare centers and preschools throughout Beaufort County.

Healthcare

- **Beaufort Naval Hospital:** Full-service military hospital located aboard MCAS Beaufort. Provides primary care, specialty clinics, dental, pharmacy, and emergency services to active-duty service members, retirees, and their families enrolled in TRICARE.
- **Beaufort Memorial Hospital:** The primary civilian hospital in the area, located on Ribaut Road. Offers emergency services, maternity care, surgical services, and a network of physician offices throughout the county.
- **TRICARE Network Providers:** Multiple civilian providers in Beaufort accept TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Select. Referrals from the Naval Hospital are required for some TRICARE Prime specialty visits.
- **Pharmacy:** The Naval Hospital pharmacy provides prescription services for TRICARE beneficiaries. CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart pharmacies in the area also accept TRICARE.

Shopping & Dining

Beaufort offers a charming mix of local shops and national retailers. Downtown Bay Street is the cultural heart of the city, lined with boutiques, art galleries, and some of the best Lowcountry restaurants in the state. For everyday shopping, you'll find Walmart, Target, Publix, Harris Teeter, and other national chains along the Robert Smalls Parkway corridor and on Lady's Island.

The Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) is located on base and offers tax-free shopping. The Beaufort Town Center and Cross Creek shopping areas provide additional retail and dining options. For a broader shopping experience, Hilton Head Island (approximately 35 miles) and Savannah, GA (approximately 50 miles) offer outlet malls, specialty stores, and expanded dining scenes.

Dining highlights include Lowcountry seafood staples—shrimp and grits, oyster roasts, and she-crab soup—available at local favorites throughout downtown and the surrounding islands. The restaurant scene ranges from casual waterfront spots to upscale Southern cuisine.

Recreation & Lifestyle

Beaufort's Lowcountry setting offers outstanding outdoor recreation year-round. The Spanish Moss Trail, a paved multi-use path, is ideal for biking, running, and walking and connects several Beaufort neighborhoods. Hunting Island State Park, about 20 minutes east, features one of the most beautiful beaches in the Southeast along with a historic lighthouse, fishing pier, and camping.

On base, MCAS Beaufort provides a fitness center, swimming pools, a movie theater (Lasseter Theater), playgrounds, and walking trails. The Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) office organizes outdoor recreation trips, sports leagues, and events throughout the year.

Golf is popular in the area, with courses on both the Beaufort side and nearby Hilton Head Island. Fishing—both inshore and offshore—is a way of life here, and charter services are widely available. The Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park in downtown Beaufort is a community gathering spot with swing benches, a playground, and regular festivals and markets.

Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Distance to MCAS	Character	
Downtown Beaufort	10–15 min	Historic, walkable, waterfront dining	Lowcountry lifestyle
Burton / 29906 ZIP	8–12 min	Suburban, newer development, convenient	Proximity to base and shopping
Lady's Island	12–18 min	Residential, water views, schools nearby	Quieter setting
Port Royal	15–20 min	Small-town feel, boardwalk, affordable	Waterfront access
Laurel Bay (On-Base)	5–7 min	Gated military housing, DoDEA schools	
Bluffton	35–45 min	Growing town, newer homes, retail	
Hilton Head Island	45–55 min	Resort/vacation area, beaches	Recreation, not recommended for daily commute

Preserve at Hanover Park is in the Burton / 29906 area, one of the most convenient neighborhoods for MCAS Beaufort personnel. You get the benefit of being close to the base and to everyday services while living in a brand-new community.

Cost of Living

Beaufort's cost of living is below the national average, though housing costs along the coast have risen in recent years. Here is a general overview of what to expect compared to the U.S. average:

Category	Beaufort SC	National Average	Notes
Overall Cost of Living	~95–100	100	Slightly below to at national average
Housing	~90–100	100	Affordable compared to other coastal areas
Groceries	~95–100	100	Comparable; commissary access helps
Utilities	~95–105	100	Summer A/C costs can be higher
Transportation	~90–95	100	Car-dependent; gas prices moderate
Healthcare	~90–95	100	TRICARE offsets most costs for military

South Carolina has a state income tax (0–6.4% based on income), but military pay earned while stationed in SC may be subject to your state of legal residence rules. SC does not tax military retirement pay. There is no city or county income tax. Sales tax in Beaufort County is approximately 8%.

PCS Tips & Settling-In Resources

Before You Arrive

- Contact the MCAS Beaufort Housing Service Office as soon as orders are received: (843) 228-6000. They provide referrals, lease guidance, and area orientation.
- Coordinate with your Transportation Management Office (TMO) for household goods shipment. Summer PCS season (May–August) is the busiest, book early.
- Research school enrollment requirements for Beaufort County School District or DoDEA schools if you plan to live on base.
- Register vehicles and obtain a South Carolina driver’s license within 90 days of establishing residency (or maintain your home-of-record license).

Temporary Lodging

TLA (Temporary Lodging Allowance) is authorized for up to 10 days while finding permanent housing. Options include the on-base Inns of the Corps (if available), as well as local hotels along US-21 and downtown Beaufort. Book temporary lodging in advance, especially during summer months when PCS volume peaks. The nearest major hotels are along the Robert Smalls Parkway corridor.

Arrival & In-Processing

- Report to the Housing Service Office on your first day of duty, even if you plan to live off base.
- The nearest major airports are Hilton Head Airport (HHH), approximately 14 miles away, and Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV), approximately 37 miles away. No public transit connects the airports to base, plan for a rental car or ride service.
- If arriving by car via I-95: Take Exit 8 toward Beaufort/Hilton Head, follow SC-170 to US-21 North. MCAS Beaufort main gate will be on the right.
- The main POV gate is open 24 hours. The commercial gate is open Monday–Friday, 0600–1800.

Key Contacts

Resource	Phone Number	Notes
MCAS Beaufort Base Operator	(843) 228-7100	General information and directory
Housing Service Office	(843) 228-6000	Housing referrals and lease guidance
Information & Referral	(843) 228-7351	Relocation assistance
Marine & Family Services	(843) 228-7352	Family support programs
Child Development Center	(843) 228-7279	Childcare enrollment
School Liaison Officer	(843) 228-6128	School enrollment assistance
AMCC Tri-Command Housing	(877) 749-3724	On-base privatized housing
Hurricane Hotline	(800) 343-0639	Storm preparedness information

COMMUTING

Drive Times: Preserve at Hanover Park to MCAS Beaufort

Preserve at Hanover Park is located at 125 New Hanover Street, Beaufort, SC 29906. MCAS Beaufort's main POV gate is located along US-21 (Trask Parkway) on the north side of the city. The air station is situated east of Highway 21 on Port Royal Island.

Route	Distance (approx.)	Off-Peak Time	Peak-Hour Time	Notes
Primary: US-21 North (Trask Pkwy)	~5–6 miles	8–12 minutes	12–18 minutes	Most direct; main gate access
Alternate: Ribaut Rd to US-21	~6–7 miles	10–15 minutes	15–20 minutes	Avoids downtown; passes hospital
Scenic: Downtown to US-21 via Carteret St	~7–8 miles	12–18 minutes	18–25 minutes	Passes through downtown Beaufort

Routes & Peak-Hour Considerations

Primary Route: US-21 North via Trask Parkway

This is the most direct route from the Preserve at Hanover Park area to the MCAS Beaufort main gate. Head north on US-21 (Trask Parkway). The main POV gate is located on the west side of the base along US-21. Total drive is approximately 5–6 miles and takes 8–12 minutes under normal traffic conditions. During morning formation times (typically 0630–0730) and end-of-day traffic (1600–1700), expect an additional 4–6 minutes due to gate queuing and local congestion.

Alternate Route: Ribaut Road to US-21

If US-21 is congested or you need to pass by Beaufort Memorial Hospital, take Ribaut Road north to its junction with US-21, then continue to the main gate. This adds approximately one mile but can be faster during peak congestion near downtown. Total drive is approximately 10–15 minutes.

Peak-Hour Considerations

- Morning rush (0630–0800): Heaviest traffic heading toward the main gate. Gate queuing can add 5–10 minutes during high-volume periods. A valid DOD ID or CAC card is required for gate entry.
- Afternoon rush (1600–1730): Moderate outbound traffic from base. Downtown Beaufort streets can slow if using surface routes.
- School zones: Active along US-21 and Ribaut Road during school arrival and dismissal times. Plan accordingly during the school year.
- Hurricane season (June–November): Evacuation routes follow US-21 to I-95. Familiarize yourself with base evacuation procedures.

Commuting Comparison

Compared to other popular off-base locations, Preserve at Hanover Park offers one of the shortest commutes to MCAS Beaufort:

Living Location	Distance to MCAS Gate	Typical Drive Time
Preserve at Hanover Park (Burton/29906)	~5–6 miles	8–15 minutes
Downtown Beaufort	~6–8 miles	10–18 minutes
Lady's Island	~8–10 miles	12–20 minutes
Port Royal	~10–12 miles	15–25 minutes
Bluffton	~28–32 miles	35–45 minutes
Hilton Head Island	~38–42 miles	45–55 minutes