

BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT BEACH PASS PROGRAM (Updated 2024)

The Fire District over the past several years has worked diligently to make improvements to Kelly beach. It has made changes that enhance its beauty, functionality, security, maintenance, and safety.

A few years back, we added signage, and a security guard on weekends to ensure that the beach is used solely by its residents, guests and renters. This system did help to limit outsiders using the beach, but the District felt that we may be able to improve on that premise. As taxpayers, we want to make sure that your tax dollars for cleaning, trash, lifeguards, etc. are being used by Bonnet taxpayers and their guests.

In 2016, the district decided to conduct a survey using a doodle poll (an online survey site) to vet an idea to help ensure that Kelly beach is only used for residents, renters and their guests. The concept is simple and based on programs in other communities. It would provide 2 tags per home. Those tags can be used by residents, renters and guests and would be **assigned to the address of the home**. **A person could take as many people at one time to the beach on that tag.** The tags would be left in the house so that if the house was rented, the renters could access the beach with no difficulty. We recommended that residents who rent their homes stipulate in their contract documents that if the tag is taken, the renter will be charged a fee. This fee should be high enough (like \$100 dollars) if the tag disappears after their stay. This program basically just enhances the existing system by eliminating the practice of providing an address to the security guard, which outsiders have learned, and also be quicker. This tag will also be used on the beach shuttle bus. When a home is sold or otherwise changed owners, it is the responsibility of the owner to pass along the tags to the new owner of the home.

The results of the survey in 2016, which was mailed to almost 700 residents, showed that 75% of 141 of those who responded supported the concept. A public hearing was also held at the May council meeting, to receive any additional comments. The concept was seen as a great enhancement to the existing program.

The Fire District Council approved the implementation of the program for the season. In 2016, volunteers distributed tags to all the households in Bonnet in June. (Records are available in the District office of all homes that received those tags) Please remember that **besides the tags, residents can also use their RI license if it has a Bonnet address.** Also if needed in a pinch, you may bring a copy of a current utility bill with the address of home in which they are a guest. This is your beach and we are NOT trying to limit any Bonnet resident, guest or renter from using it. **These tags will only be used on weekends during the summer season.**

Owners who wish to replace the tag can do so by purchasing a new tag from the District at a cost of \$50 per tag.

Our security guard will be on duty weekends at Kelly Beach, similar to before but the guard will be stationed on the beach side of the boardwalk to ensure that beachgoers are either residents, guests or renter. The boardwalk will continue to be enjoyed by anyone, but the beach itself is private property of the Fire District. This policy is a way of addressing complaints of overcrowding and use of the beach by non-residents of Bonnet.

We kindly ask your cooperation in enforcing the beach pass program.