SWIMMER GUIDE

BALTIMORE HARBOR 1-MILE SWIM

Sunday, June 7th, 2026

Updated: June 6, 2026

Welcome to the first annual Baltimore Harbor Swim! This event, and the newly founded nonprofit organization, Baltimore Open Water Swimmers (BOWS) marks an exciting beginning for Baltimore!

Founded in 2026, Baltimore Open Water Swimmers (BOWS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering an inclusive community through the sport of open water swimming and advocating for healthy and accessible waterways for everyone.

Celebrating the ongoing efforts to improve the health of our Patapsco River and Baltimore's Harbor, this 1-mile swim, with 100 swimmers, will make history as the first swim of this scale in Baltimore's Harbor in decades! BOWS and this event will continue to put Baltimore on the map for the sport of open water swimming and secure Baltimore as a global leader in the urban swimming movement.

The inaugural Baltimore Harbor Swim, will also support a vital cause: youth swim education and water safety for all. **A portion of proceeds from the Baltimore Harbor Swim will go to support Baltimore City's Rec & Parks' Learn to Swim programs!** Through this event, we aim to highlight the significant impact swimming education can have in a child's life, building confidence and connection to the water. Swimming is not only a life skill, but a life long sport you can join anytime.

Join us as a swimmer, volunteer, or spectator on June 7th, 2026 to celebrate and support the Baltimore Harbor Swim!

LOCATION:
Bond Street Wharf
901 S Bond St. Baltimore, MD 21231

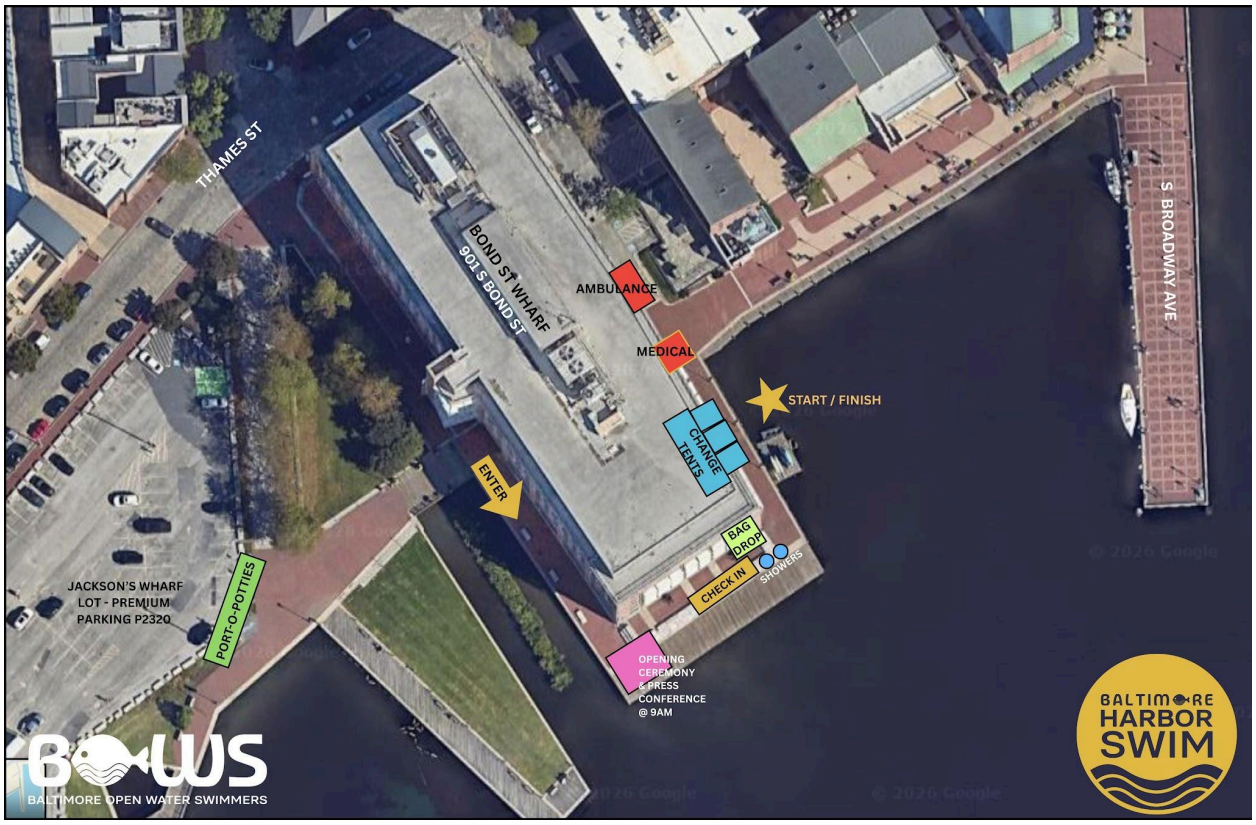
TIMELINE

7:30-9am	Swimmer Check-in (mandatory)
9am	Opening Ceremony & Press Conference
9:30am	Swimmer pre-swim safety meeting (mandatory)
9:45am	Line up in self seeded swimmer waves
10am	SWIM START of self seeded waves

Swimmers will enter for an in-water start in groups of 10, every 10 sec.
11:15am Awards / Post-event activities begin

PARKING: Street parking available, surface lots, & garages nearby:
Jackson's Wharf Lot (1401 Thames St Baltimore, MD 21231)
Harbor East Garage (1530 Thames St Baltimore, MD 21231)

SITE MAP



CHECK IN / PACKET PICK UP
When you arrive you will PRESENT YOUR ID to check in with one of our amazing BOWS volunteers, who will ask your name and give you a swag bag with your event tshirt and the event swim cap.
***You MUST wear the event (silicone) swim cap.**
***Volunteers will also give you a timing chip. PLEASE PUT THAT ON IMMEDIATELY.**

Can I change from wetsuit to nonwetsuit?
YES, be sure to request that change at check-in.

Please also notify us of any changes to emergency contact.

BAG DROP
There will be a designated BAG drop area for swimmers (& volunteers) near the Check-In tables. The Bag Drop will be staffed by a BOWS volunteer during the swim.

CHANGING TENTS
There will be changing tents (near start/finish area) available to swimmers before & after the swim. We ask that only swimmers use these facilities, as there will be limited space. We ask that you NOT dry off or change clothes at the facilities of nearby restaurants/businesses.

RESTROOMS There will be 4 Port–o-potties, including a handicap accessible unit, on site at Bond Street Wharf for our event. (see site map above)

SAFETY

SUPPORT: Swimmer safety is the most important component of the event. We will have a number of safety kayakers, paddle boarders, and safety boats (staffed with certified lifeguards) out on the course with us to ensure swimmer safety at all times. All boats are able to communicate via both hand held and ship to shore radios.

SAFETY BRIEFING: **All athletes will be required to attend the Safety Briefing given to 30 minutes prior to the start.** Safety Briefing for on water support (boats/paddlers) will be given 90 minutes prior to start, along with a packet, including equipment and hand signals. All participants must be checked in and present for the Safety Briefings.

WEATHER: Weather conditions are an important aspect of open water swimming, and the safety of the swimmers, as well as the volunteers, is our top priority. In the event of concerns over weather conditions impacting safety of event participants, the Swim Director and Safety Director will convene with other committee members and members of Emergency Management and a decision will be made to ensure the safety of all. (Please note our cancellation policy.)

WATER QUALITY: Event organizers for the Baltimore Harbor 1-Mile Swim will use water quality testing completed by Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, which is also made available to the public.

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore collects water samples from 5 sites in the Harbor 5 days a week. Samples are taken to the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science to be analyzed according to the EPA's Recreational Water Quality Criteria.

More info on water quality testing and the progress of Baltimore's Harbor at waterfrontpartnership.org/water-quality-monitoring.

*Rainfall in the 24-48hrs before the event will be closely monitored, as all open bodies of water are impacted by heavy rain. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Swim Director and Safety Director shall have the authority to cancel the event. (Please see cancellation policy.)

Reminder: it is recommended swimmers do not swim with open cuts or wounds, or if feeling unwell.

*Swimmers will be notified of updates, changes to the swim, or the event of cancellation by email. Notices will also be posted to BMOREBOWS.ORG and shared to the BOWS social media pages.

RULES



All swimmers are required to follow specific procedures to participate in the event, including wearing the designated brightly colored event swim cap and arm/hand markings of each athlete's corresponding race number.

All athletes must check in before 9am and are required to be present for a MANDATORY safety briefing given to 30 minutes prior to the start. CUT OFF TIMES – STRICTLY ENFORCED.

DON'Ts resulting in disqualification

- DON'T cut the course
- DON'T use a kayak or paddle board make forward progress
- DON'T be rude to event volunteers

DO's

- DO use a kayak or paddle board to rest if needed
- DO listen and follow directions given by event volunteers
- DO pace yourself and have fun!

SWIM ATTIRE & EQUIPMENT

Swimmers are encouraged to wear a standard swimsuit made of porous, textile material. **WETSUITS** are allowed, only if water temperature is not greater than 78 degrees Fahrenheit (25.5 degrees Celsius), however **swimmers wearing wetsuits will not be eligible for awards.** Swimmers must wear the swim cap provided. Swimmers are welcome to wear standard swim equipment including: goggles, earplugs, and noseclips.

Swimmers <u>are</u> allowed to use **SWIM BUOYS** during the swim. We ask these be inflatable floats, with short tethers, so that they do not interfere with other swimmers. Should you have a question about the use of a device, reach out to us.
Snorkels, swim fins, hand paddles are STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

CUT OFFS TIMES

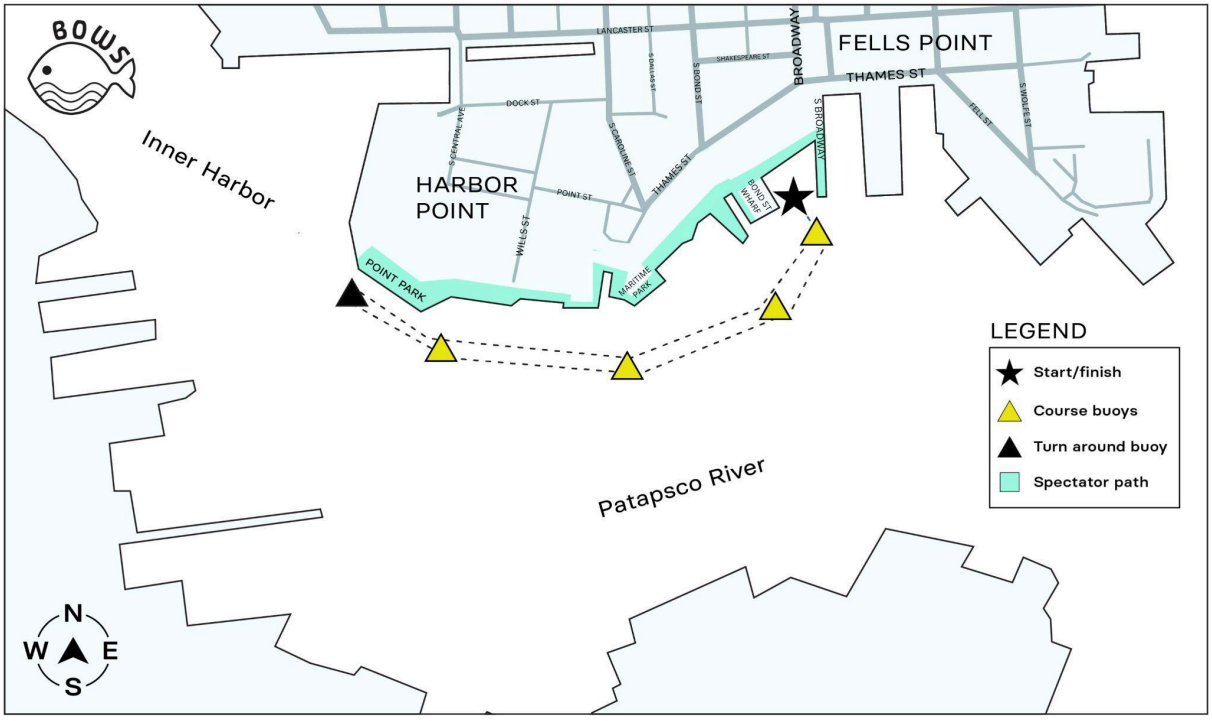
Cut off times will be strictly enforced. Swimmers must be at the ½ mile turnaround buoy 30 minutes after the start, and must complete the 1-mile swim in 1 hour from when you start. Should a swimmer not meet a cutoff time, they will be removed from the course. These procedures are designed to protect swimmers from injury and risk, and will be enforced by the Safety Director.

SPECTATORS

Spectators are asked to stay on the promenade and outside of the start / finish area. If you are spectating from your kayak or paddle board, DO NOT enter the swim course area. Please do not liter.

COURSE

The swim will start at the Kayak Launch in Fells Point at Bond Street Wharf, and the course will follow the shoreline to the new Point Park. Swimmers will then round a buoy next to Point Park and swim back to Bond Street Wharf. Swimmers will keep the buoys on their left at all times.



This is also an incredibly spectator friendly swim with the amazing promenade stretching the whole way! We invite friends, family, and all of the community to come out & cheer on all the swimmers & join us in celebrating Baltimore's Harbor!

SWIM START

Swimmers will be invited to self-seed themselves, lining up based on their average 100 yard swim times– starting at 1:15 or faster 100/pace, up to 3:00+. Seeding signs will be held up by volunteers. Swimmers will line up down the ramp to the kayak launch dock.

The swim will begin with an IN-WATER START— from the dock athletes will jump (feet first) into the water (15-20ft depth). Swimmers will be sent off in groups of 10, every 10 seconds. (This will be explained in Safety Briefing and at start)

SWIM FINISH

There will be a designated, and clearly labeled, swim finish area in the water. Swimmers will swim through the finish area, then exit the water via a ladder. More directions will be given at the mandatory Safety Briefing 30 minutes before the start..

Email hello@bmorebows.org if you will need assistance with entering and/or exiting the water.

*All swimmers must return their timing chip after they exit the water.

POST SWIM

BOWS will be supplying water and some snacks. There will be two **outdoor showers** and **changing tents** near the start/finish area. We ask that only swimmers use these facilities, as there will be limited space. We ask that you NOT dry off or change clothes at the facilities of nearby restaurants/businesses.

AWARDS

Overall Female (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
Overall Nonbinary (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
Overall Male (1st, 2nd, 3rd)

Please note: there will be awards for NON WETSUIT ONLY. Also note for overall times, someone in a later wave may have a faster gun time so awards will be determined at the conclusion of all swimmers.

CANCELLATION

The nature of open water swimming is *nature*- but we do hope the weather cooperates for us! In the unfortunate event of cancellation, your registration fee will become a tax

deductible donation to Baltimore Open Water Swimmers Fund. You will also receive priority registration to next year's Baltimore Harbor Swim! We appreciate your understanding and flexibility, and your support of this event and beneficiaries.

Baltimore Open Water Swimmers Fund is a fiscally sponsored fund of Mission Edge (EIN: 27-2938491), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are made to Mission Edge for the benefit of Baltimore Open Water Swimmers Fund to support the open water swimming community, waterway advocacy, and community programming in Baltimore, and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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BENEFICIARIES

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The Baltimore Harbor Swim also supports Baltimore Open Water Swimmers (BOWS), a nonprofit organization founded in 2026. BOWS is dedicated to fostering an inclusive community through the sport of open water swimming and advocating for healthy and accessible waterways for everyone. BOWS will host open water swims, community events, and build partnerships with other organizations focused on environmental progress, swim education, and water safety. BOWS will help normalize and celebrate the idea that Baltimore's water belongs to its people. *Fore more info visit the link below.*

DONATE AT BMOREBOWS.ORG/DONATE

Can't wait! See you on June 7th!

Contact us: HELLO@BMOREBOWS.ORG
BMOREBOWS.ORG