

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER
NUMBER 72)

8 October 2024

FACILITIES UTILIZATION, EVENTS, and SPEECH

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish standard procedures and guidelines for event scheduling and use of Institute property to ensure requests are properly reviewed and coordinated and any necessary safety and security precautions are implemented. VMI is committed to free speech and expression and to the use of its facilities and spaces to enhance the cultural experience of its cadets, employees, and members of the local community. VMI recognizes, however, that such events can raise significant safety and security concerns. Further, VMI's unique and demanding educational and training environment requires the availability of VMI facilities for use by employees and cadets in a manner and at times that may differ from other institutions of higher education. To ensure safety and security while protecting the constitutional rights of those who desire to organize or participate in events and other gatherings, VMI will enforce the following reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions and rules for events on Post. This policy will be applied and enforced in a viewpoint-neutral manner.
2. **Scope:** This policy applies to the use of Institute property for events and other gatherings by VMI cadets, employees, the alumni agencies, the George C. Marshall Foundation, and non-affiliated individuals.
3. **Definitions:**
 - a. **Event:** An occurrence at a given location for some defined period of time including a planned gathering of 15 or more persons and excluding Institute-sponsored routine academic, military and cadet training, and athletic activities.
 - b. **Institute event:** An event organized, requested, scheduled, and supervised by one or more VMI cadets or employees and in furtherance of the educational or training mission of the Institute, or organized, requested, scheduled, and supervised by the VMI Alumni Agencies or the George C. Marshall Foundation.
 - c. **Institute property:** Any property owned, leased, or controlled by Virginia Military Institute. On-Post Institute property includes, but is not limited to, barracks or any structure designed for cadet housing, academic buildings, administrative office buildings, support buildings, military training facilities, athletic facilities, dining facilities, parade ground, faculty and staff housing, green space, roadways, sidewalks, and parking lots. Off-Post Institute property includes, but is not limited to, Stonewall Jackson House, Davidson-Tucker House, Hinty Hall, New Market Battlefield and the Virginia Museum of the Civil War, McKethan Park, Lackey Park, Chessie Nature Trail, and property leased by VMI.
 - d. **Non-affiliated event:** Any event or gathering organized, requested, scheduled, or supervised by non-affiliated individuals.

- e. Non-affiliated individual: Any individual other than currently enrolled cadets and VMI employees, and employees of the VMI Alumni Agencies and the George C. Marshall Foundation.
- f. Non-Institute event: An event organized, requested, scheduled, or supervised by one or more non-affiliated individuals or organized, requested, scheduled, or supervised by VMI cadets or employees, the VMI Alumni Agencies, or the George C. Marshall Foundation that is not in furtherance of the educational or training mission of the Institute.

4. Speech and Expressive Activity:

- a. VMI shall not abridge the constitutional freedom of any individual, including cadets, employees, and invited guests, to speak on Post, except as otherwise permitted by the First Amendment.
- b. Certain categories of speech are not protected by the First Amendment including, but not limited to:
 - i. True threats meant to communicate a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals.
 - ii. Harassment on the basis of sex, race, or other status prohibited by General Order 16 that is unwelcome and sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive, and objectively offensive that it interferes with, limits, or denies the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the Institute's educational programs, services, opportunities, or the individual's employment access, benefits, or opportunities.
 - iii. Words that by their very utterance can lead to injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace ("fighting words").
 - iv. Words that intentionally and effectively provoke a crowd to immediately carry out violent and unlawful action.
 - v. Obscenity.
 - vi. Defamation.
 - vii. Speech that substantially disrupts or interferes with Institute operations.
 - viii. The suppression of otherwise lawful speech in order to appease disruptive, hostile, or threatening members of an audience ("heckler's veto"); and
 - ix. Statements made by VMI employees pursuant to official duties.
- c. VMI prohibits certain speech of cadets in accordance with the Cadet Blue Book as necessary to achieve training or disciplinary objectives. In addition, cadets are subject to the General Policies and restrictions of the VMI Honor Code.
- d. Speech of cadets and employees may be addressed in other Institute policies and regulations to include General Order 71 (Social Media), General Order 79 (Distinguished Visitor and Speaker Policy), the Faculty Handbook, the Administrative and Professional Faculty Handbook, and the Institute Regulations.
- e. Cadets and employees should attempt to address any incidents of disruption of speech on an individual basis. If such attempts are not successful, reports of disruption of speech may be made to any institute official and through the following channels:
 - i. Cadets report to the Cadet Equity Association or the Inspector General, 540-464-7072.
 - ii. Employees report to the Inspector General, 212 Carroll Hall, 540-464-7072.
 - iii. Non-affiliated individuals, as defined above, report to the Inspector General, 540-464-7072.

5. **Prohibited Activities:** All events at VMI must comply with applicable Virginia and federal laws in addition to VMI regulations and policies including General Order 16, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, General Order 50, Acceptable Use of VMI Information Systems, and VMI's regulation prohibiting weapons, 8 VAC 100-10-20. No event may involve the provision of childcare services to attendees. Alcohol is prohibited at most events in accordance with General Order 2, VMI Alcohol and Controlled Substances Policy. The VMI Police Department ("Post Police") enforces the criminal laws of the Commonwealth on Institute property to include, but not limited to, Va. Code § 18.2-127 Injuries to churches, church property, cemeteries, burial grounds, etc.; penalty; Va. Code § 18.2-404 Obstructing free passage of others; Va. Code § 18.2-405 What constitutes a riot; punishment; Va. Code § 18.2-406 What constitutes an unlawful assembly; punishment; Va. Code § 18.2-415 Disorderly conduct in public places; Va. Code § 18.2-423.01 Burning object on property of another or a highway or other public place with intent to intimidate; penalty. In addition, the following activities are prohibited: Disrupting or obstructing the normal living and work environments of other members of the VMI community or the functions or activities of the Institute (as well as activities conducted on the Institute's property with its permission). Examples include: blocking entrances, corridors or exits; interfering with ongoing educational activities cultural events, or recreational, extracurricular or athletic programs; unauthorized presence in a building after normal closing hours or after notice that the building is being closed; interfering with vehicular or pedestrian traffic; creating unsanitary conditions; excessively amplified sounds and interfering with any other effort to protect the health and safety of members of the VMI community or larger public.
6. **Institute Event:** VMI cadets and employees must submit requests for events to the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning at least 60 calendar days in advance of the scheduled event. If a request is submitted less than 60 calendar days before the scheduled event, the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning may disapprove it due to non-compliance with this policy. An Institute event request must include the following information:
- 1) Purpose of the event
 - 2) Name, email, and phone number of the requestor,
 - 3) Institute property requested for the event,
 - 4) Start Date/Time requested,
 - 5) End Date/Time requested,
 - 6) Estimated number of attendees
 - 7) Estimated number of vehicles anticipated for the event,
 - 8) Are you requesting to use a tent(s)? If so, how many? What size are you requesting?
 - 9) What is the purpose of the tent(s),
 - 10) Type of transportation being used to enter and exit event location,
 - 11) Special needs/handicapped support requirements,
 - 12) Cadet or employee support requested,
 - 13) Law enforcement/EMT support requested,

The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning will coordinate scheduling, verify that the requested event is an authorized activity for the requested property, and ensure that all support agencies (Physical Plant, Auxiliary Service, Post Police) have adequate time and resources to support the event, to include set-up and recovery from the event.

The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning has the discretion to direct a safety and security assessment as described in subsection 7(d) below, and to direct appropriate safety and security measures for the event to include, but not be limited to: adjusting the venue, date, and/or time of the event; providing additional law enforcement support; imposing controls or security check points; limiting vehicular access; and creating buffer zones around the venue.

The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning is the final approval authority for Institute events. Once approved, the event will be placed on the Institute calendar.

7. Non-Institute Event:

- a. Non-affiliated individuals must submit a Facility Use Request available from the VMI Physical Plant (<http://www.vmi.edu/about/offices-a-z/physical-plant/facility-use-request/>) at least 60 calendar days in advance of the scheduled event. VMI cadets and employees, the VMI Alumni Agencies, and the George C. Marshall Foundation seeking approval for an event that is not in furtherance of the educational or training mission of the Institute also must submit a Facilities Use Request at least 60 calendar days in advance of the scheduled event. If a request is submitted less than 60 calendar days before the scheduled event, the Deputy Chief of Staff may disapprove the event due to non-compliance with this policy. A non-Institute event request must include the following information:
 - 1) Purpose of the event,
 - 2) Name, email, and phone number of the requestor,
 - 3) Facility requested for the event,
 - 4) Start Date/Time requested,
 - 5) End Date/Time requested,
 - 6) Estimated number of attendees,
 - 7) Estimated number of vehicles anticipated for the event,
 - 8) Are you requesting to use a tent(s)? If so, how many?
 - 9) What is the purpose of the tent(s),
 - 10) Type of transportation being used to enter and exit event location,
 - 11) Special needs/handicapped support requirements,
 - 12) Cadet or employee support requested,
 - 13) Law enforcement/EMT support requested,
 - 14) VMI Employee Point of Contact,
- b. The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning will coordinate scheduling, verify that the requested event is an authorized activity for the requested property, and ensure that all support agencies (Physical Plant, Auxiliary Service, Post Police) have adequate time and resources to support the event, to include set-up and recovery from the event. Institute property may be made available for use for a non-Institute event provided the area is not needed by the Institute at that time and use for the non-Institute event does not disrupt Institute business or activities. **Priority for the use of Institute property will be given to the departments of the Institute including the Reserve Officers' Training Corps detachments at the Institute.**
- c. Major events. A non-Institute event will be classified as a major event if one or more of the following criteria apply:

- 1) Over 75 individuals are expected to attend.
- 2) The event is likely to significantly affect Institute safety and security, based on assessment by the Post Police.
- 3) The event is likely to significantly affect Institute services (including roads, parking, dining services).
- 4) The event has a substantial likelihood of interfering with Institute functions or activities.
- 5) The event involves elected officials or candidates for public office.
- 6) The event is a dance or a concert.
- 7) The event will include the sale or consumption of alcohol or,
- 8) Outdoor amplified sound is requested.

The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning will determine if a requested non-Institute event is a major event without regard for the content or viewpoints anticipated to be expressed during the event. All major events will be subject to the safety and security assessment and requirements in subsection 7(d), the insurance requirements in Paragraph 6(F), the Facilities Use Agreement and fees requirements in subsection 7(g), and the coordination meeting requirements in subsection 7(h), and may be subject to other fees and requirements.

Use of tents at any event. Events, both Institute and Non-Institute, approved to be held on VMI property which also want to utilize tents must submit a request for approval through the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning. Tents shall include any structure, enclosure, or shelter with or without sidewalls or drops that is constructed of canvas or pliable material supported in any manner except by the contents it protects.

This policy does not apply to tents or canopies temporarily erected on the parade ground and property adjacent to athletics facilities or fields during athletics or entertainment events, and up to four hours before or after those events, so long as those tents otherwise comply with and are assembled in accordance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code and the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, do not impede ingress or egress to pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and do not create a safety or security hazard.

Sleeping in tents or camping on On-Post Institute property is prohibited. Camping is defined as the act of using any part of On-Post Institute property for living accommodation purposes, such as establishment of temporary or permanent living quarters, sleeping outdoors overnight, making preparations for overnight sleeping (including the laying down of bedding), storing personal belongings, using any tent, shelter, or similar structure regardless of size for sleeping, sleeping in, on or under parked vehicles, or setting up temporary or permanent sleeping areas outdoors or in structures not designated for human occupancy. Camping does not include the use of On-Post Institute property that has been wholly or partially designated as sleeping areas, a tailgating activity in conjunction with an Institute event, or the use of temporary hammocks used in recreation or studying activities outside during non-overnight hours.

With the exception of Event Tents, all tents erected on On-Post Institute property must be removed not later than 11 p.m. An "Event Tent" is a tent of not less than 400 square feet

or a tent that requires professional installation and removal. Event Tents must comply with all other Institute policies. Event Tents may not be occupied or used during the hours of 12 a.m. and 6 a.m.

The construction or occupation of Camping Tents on On-Post Institute property is prohibited. "Camping Tent" means any collapsible tent or structure, typically having as its basic components a flexible material supported by a framework, designed, intended, or used as temporary shelter while camping or on recreational outdoor outings. Camping Tents may include tents known as "pup tents," "dome tents," "cabin tents," "hiker tents," and "backpacking tents." A Camping Tent does not include a tent with all sides entirely open and where there is an unobstructed view into such tent from the outside at all angles.

Any tent which is not erected in conjunction with an approved event is prohibited. Any tents or other structures must also comply with safety requirements imposed by federal, state, and local law. If the actual use of tents or other structures is in violation of any of these requirements, the approval is revoked. The prohibitions of this policy shall not apply to the Institute, or tents erected for Institute use.

d. Safety and Security Assessment.

A safety and security assessment are required for major events and may be required, at the discretion of the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning, for other events. The Post Police will assess safety and security needs based on objective and credible evidence of specific risks, and not on the viewpoints or opinions of the non-affiliated individuals requesting the event. Such assessment may include, but is not limited to: (a) the requested location for the event; (b) the estimated number of participants; (c) the time of day and the day of the week the event is planned to take place; (d) the proximity of the event to other activities or locations that may interfere, obstruct, or lessen the effectiveness of the safety and security measures being implemented; (e) the resources needed to secure the event; (f) the anticipated weather conditions; (g) the estimated duration of the event; and (h) similar viewpoint-neutral considerations relevant to an assessment of safety and security needs.

The Post Police will make safety and security recommendations that, in the Post Police's professional judgment, will address safety and security threats identified through the assessment described above. The goals of such recommendations will be to minimize risks to the health and safety of the event participants and members of the VMI community and to protect the exercise of free expression by the event sponsors and participants. Recommended safety and security measures may include, but are not limited to, adjusting the venue, date, or time of the event; providing additional law enforcement support; imposing controls or security checkpoints; limiting vehicular access; and creating buffer zones around the venue.

Consistent with Va. Code § 18.2-422, any individual who is present on Institute Property or attending an event who is wearing a mask, hood, or other device whereby a substantial portion of the face is hidden or covered so as to conceal the identity of the wearer, must present an

Identification Document when requested by an Authorized Institute Employee or otherwise establish their identity to the satisfaction of the Authorized Institute Employee.

- e. Approval/Denial. The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning is approval authority for non-Institute events. A request for a non-Institute event may be denied for the following reasons: (1) non-compliance with this policy; (2) the requested venue is unavailable due to use by cadets or employees or another non-affiliated event; (3) the planned date of the event is during a VMI administrative holiday period or holiday weekend; (4) it reasonably appears that the event will present an unreasonable danger to the health and safety of the VMI community; (5) the event is of such nature or duration that it cannot be reasonably accommodated without interfering with or disrupting VMI educational, athletic, or training activities; (6) the event will entail a gathering taking place in front of the barracks or other on-Post housing; (7) the requested venue is for an area in excess of the reasonable needs of the requesting individuals or organization; (8) the event will unreasonably interfere with traffic or cadet formations; (9) the requesting individuals or organization previously violated this policy or the terms of a Facility Use Agreement in the past 24 months; (10) the requested event is scheduled between the hours of 11:00 pm and 7:00 am; (11) the requested event will unreasonably or unnecessarily obstruct the free passage of persons to and from or within the VMI Post in violation of Virginia Code § 18.2-404; or (12) the requested event will involve the possession, carrying, or storage of a weapon in violation of 8 VAC 100-10-20.

Denial of requests for non-Institute events may be appealed to the Chief of Staff, who is the final decision authority.

- f. Insurance. The organizers of all approved non-Institute events classified as major events shall be required to obtain within fifteen business days of the event general liability coverage of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence naming VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE and COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA as additional insureds. Failure to provide a Certificate of Insurance documenting coverage consistent with this requirement within fifteen business days of the event will result in cancellation of the event. The Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning has the discretion to waive this requirement for major events based on the safety and security assessment, and to impose this requirement for other events.
- g. Facilities Use Agreement, fees, and guidelines. A Facilities Use Agreement will be required for all non-Institute events. The Agreement must be executed in advance of the event and identify its proposed location. It will also include a requirement to follow VMI facility use rules and not to violate state law. The reserving person must acknowledge these obligations and agree to comply. VMI assesses a facility fee for all non-Institute events. The current fee structure is included in the VMI Operating Budget available on the VMI website. Facility fees cover use of the facility only and do not include related support costs such as facility oversight, specialized trainers/training, custodial, maintenance and other support. Related support that is required will be calculated at established rates and included in the Facilities Use Agreement. In addition, organizers of major events must agree to reimburse additional costs of the event based on the safety and security assessment of the VMI Police. Fees will be based on standard rates for VMI Police

personnel, associated equipment, and other resources deemed necessary for the event and not based on concerns that the subject matter of the event or the viewpoints, opinions, or anticipated speech of the individuals participating in the event might provoke disturbances or response costs required by such disturbances.

The Facilities Use Agreement will include the agreement of the organizers of the non-Institute event to (i) use reasonable care to prevent damage to Institute property and to leave Institute property in the same condition as before the event; (ii) not film or photograph VMI employees or cadets without prior written permission from the individuals depicted; (iii) not state or imply any endorsement by VMI of the activities of the organization or individuals organizing or supervising the event; (iv) indemnify and hold harmless VMI and its employees, board of visitors, officers, agents, and assigns from any loss, damages, costs, and expenses resulting from breach of the Facilities Use Agreement; (v) submit to search for contraband, weapons, drugs, alcohol, and other illegal and prohibited materials; and (vi) any other provisions deemed necessary given the specific circumstances of the non-Institute event.

The Facilities Use Agreement will further include explicit agreement by the organizers of the non-Institute event not to engage in any of the following prohibited activities:

- 1) Wearing of riot style clothing or gear.
- 2) Covering the entire face of any participant in the event.
- 3) Disrupting or interfering with cadets who are traversing Institute property or seeking ingress and egress from Institute buildings and property.
- 4) Coercing, intimidating, or harassing any other person with physical contact, light, odor, or noise.
- 5) Congregating or processing on the parade ground and streets on Institute property rather than the sidewalks.
- 6) Entering Institute property with weapons in violation of 8 VAC 100-10-20 or any item that could be used as a weapon (e.g. bats, clubs, torches, poles).
- 7) Entering Institute property with open flame or an open flame device unless approved by the Institute Fire Officer in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's Office.
- 8) Entering Institute property with animals other than trained service animals.
- 9) Placing objects within three (3) feet of statues or memorials on Institute property, to include: the statues of Francis Smith, George C. Marshall, George Washington, and David; the memorial to Jonathan Daniels and the Daniels Courtyard; and the burial site at the Virginia Mourning Her Dead monument and at New Market.
- 10) Holding events or congregating within 150 feet of barracks; and
- 11) Crossing police lines, perimeters, or barricades or obstructing law enforcement activities of the Post Police.

All events must have an Institute-affiliated sponsor. The Institute-affiliated sponsor must have someone onsite or immediately available throughout the event. Certain locations are altogether prohibited from usage for events, including the cadet barracks, administrative buildings, and academic buildings during class time. Groups and individuals participating in the activities, whether affiliated or not, are accountable for compliance with the

provisions of this policy. In the case of VMI affiliated individuals, violations of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action. Individuals or groups who invite non-VMI participants may be held accountable for such participants' compliance with this policy. No illegal activity will be permitted at events and users cannot obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic, or block ingress/egress to facilities.

Failure to execute a Facilities Use Agreement and to pay the required fees within fifteen business days of the event will result in cancellation of the event.

- h. Coordination meeting. A coordination meeting will be scheduled with the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning or his designee and the requestor of the non-Institute event at a minimum of 15 business days prior to the event date. Such meeting will include a discussion of the safety and security assessment, if required, and any safety and security recommendations.
 - i. Termination of event. A non-Institute event may be terminated for (i) violation of state or federal law or VMI policy, including this policy and those detailed in Section 4, above, by participants in the event; (ii) violation of the terms of the Facilities Use Agreement; (iii) damage to Institute property; (iv) an imminent threat to safety or property arising during the event; (v) obstruction to cadet and employee access to Institute property caused by the event; (vi) substantial disruption of Institute educational and training activities; or (vii) grounds that would have justified denial of the event under subsection 7(e), above.
8. **High Level Visitors / Dignitaries / International / Foreign Visitors and/or Guests to VMI.**
- a. Departments or offices must notify and coordinate with the office of the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning if a high-level visitor or dignitary has been invited to visit VMI. Coordination should start no later than four to six weeks out from the date of the event.
 - b. All International or Foreign visitors to VMI must be coordinated with and through the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning's office no later than four to six weeks out from the date of the visit.
 - c. Coordination for these visits may include the following:
 - 1) Meet with the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning to:
 - i. De-conflict the Institute calendar and any other events during that time.
 - ii. Confirm venue(s) for event.
 - 2) Coordinate with the Director of Global Education and Senior International Officer (for International and Foreign visitors)
 - 3) Meet with the Executive Officer to the Superintendent for possible office call with the Superintendent.
 - 4) Coordination with the Protocol Office.
 - i. VMI gift
 - ii. Request VIP Bus, Shuttle, Golf Cart (as needed)
 - iii. VIP Quarters as applicable
 - 5) Admissions Office for possible VMI information and tour during visit (as applicable)
 - 6) Communications & Marketing Team
 - 7) VMI Post Police (Security concerns)

- 8) Auxiliary Services (for Parkhurst support as applicable)
 - 9) Corps Sergeant Major for flags (as applicable)
9. **Spontaneous Events by Non-affiliated Individuals.** A spontaneous event is an unplanned or unannounced coming together of non-affiliated individuals which may occur in response to unforeseen circumstances or occurrences of immediate and obvious importance or other gathering of non-affiliated individuals for which non-Institute event approval was not obtained. Spontaneous events may be terminated for (i) violation of state or federal law or VMI policy, including this policy and those detailed in Section 5, above; (ii) engaging in the prohibited activities in Section 5, above; (iii) damage to Institute property; (iv) an imminent threat to safety or property arising during the event; (v) obstruction to cadet and employee access to Institute property caused by the event; (vi) substantial disruption of Institute educational and training activities; (vii) grounds that would have justified denial of the event under subsection 7(e), above, or engaging in any of the following prohibited activities (consistent with section 7.g.):
- 1) Wearing of riot style clothing or gear.
 - 2) Covering the entire face of any participant in the event.
 - 3) Disrupting or interfering with cadets who are traversing Institute property or seeking ingress and egress from Institute buildings and property.
 - 4) Coercing, intimidating, or harassing any other person with physical contact, light, odor, or noise.
 - 5) Congregating or processing on the parade ground and streets on Institute property rather than the sidewalks.
 - 6) Entering Institute property with weapons in violation of 8 VAC 100-10-20 or any item that could be used as a weapon (e.g. bats, clubs, torches, poles).
 - 7) Entering Institute property with open flame or an open flame device unless approved by the Institute Fire Officer in conjunction with the State Fire Marshal's Office.
Entering Institute property with animals other than trained service animals.
 - 8) Placing objects within three (3) feet of statues or memorials on Institute property, to include: the statues of Francis Smith, George C. Marshall, George Washington, and David; the memorial to Jonathan Daniels and the Daniels Courtyard; and the burial site at the Virginia Mourning Her Dead monument and at New Market.
 - 9) Holding events or congregating within 150 feet of barracks; and
 - 10) Crossing police lines, perimeters, or barricades or obstructing law enforcement activities of the Post Police.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT

John M. Young
Colonel, Virginia Militia
Chief of Staff

DIST: E

OPR: Operations & Planning