VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 66) 19 October 2026

COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPATION

1. **Purpose:** The following policy outlines the requirements that must be met in order for cadets to participate in Commencement and/or receive diplomas during the Commencement ceremonies traditionally held in December and May of each year. Note: This does not impact or change the "10-hour rule." This General Order applies to cadets being able to participate during the Commencement ceremony.

2. Awarding of Degrees**:** Pursuant to VMI Regulations, in order to receive a diploma from VMI and be considered a graduate, a cadet must have a conduct record that is satisfactory to the Superintendent, be confirmed by the Academic Board, and complete all course requirements, grade point average requirements, and must have been in residence at VMI for at least three years. This general order does not change or modify any of these requirements detailed in VMI Regulations.

3. Subject to the exception noted in paragraph 4, below, in order to fully participate in VMI Commencement exercises, cadets must have completed all degree requirements. Only cadets meeting all published standards as outlined for the cadet's catalog year and approved by the Academic Board and VMI Board of Visitors may participate in commencement proceedings with all the rights and privileges of a graduating first class cadet.

4. Cadets who are academic first classmen, in full-time attendance in the Corps of Cadets the semester of the commencement proceedings, and a member of the class that is graduating, who do not meet the criteria in paragraph 3, but are in good standing and 6 credit hours or less away from fulfilling degree requirements, may be allowed to sit in the rear behind the graduating cadets. This will be dependent upon the availability of seats. Cadets who are academic first classmen, in full-time attendance in the Corps of Cadets the semester of the commencement proceedings, and a member of the class that is graduating, who do not meet the criteria in paragraph 3, but are in good standing and 3 credit hours or less away from fulfilling degree requirements, may be allowed to walk. Final approval authority rests with the Superintendent.

5. Commencement Participation and Misconduct Cases: Those first-class cadets who have completed exams and expect to participate in Commencement must continue to maintain expected standards of conduct and behavior. Graduating cadets who fail to answer all Special Reports and complete any assigned penalty will not be allowed to participate in the Graduation Ceremony. Cadets will complete all PTs prior to Graduation. Cadets with a PT balance will not be allowed to participate in graduation. The Commandant of Cadets may recommend to the Superintendent to deny participation in Commencement to any graduating first classman who engages in misconduct that occurs during the semester or between the period from the end of classes to the day of graduation. Those cadets so identified will be notified immediately by the Commandant's staff.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

Travis Homiak
Colonel, USMC (Ret.)
Chief of Staff

DIST: E, Cadets
OPR: Registrar

GENERAL ORDER 66 – COMMENCEMENT PARTICIPATION ADDENDUM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

I understand that cadets within 6 hours of graduation are allowed to participate in commencement?

RESPONSE: Cadets must have all degree requirements complete, have a conduct record acceptable to the Superintendent and Commandant, and be certified by the Academic Board and Board of Visitors to be eligible to participate in commencement. Cadets in good standing and within 6 credit hours of fulfilling degree requirements may be allowed to sit in the rear behind the graduating class, but they may not walk across the stage nor be listed in the program.

I understand that commissioning track cadets are automatically an exception?

RESPONSE: There is no differentiation between any groups in the commencement participation consideration.

My adviser/the Registrar's Office did not tell me that I would not be able to participate in Commencement, so I was misadvised.

RESPONSE: Cadets have been provided with access to their program evaluation though out their cadetship, and the responsibility for completion of their program rests with the cadet. Additional reminders are being put into the graduation application process and first class communications.

I don't know where I will be working or stationed for military training once this semester is over, which is why I need to attend commencement with my class.

RESPONSE: This is not considered an extenuating circumstance since this restriction would apply to all cadets.

My family has purchased tickets and hotel accommodations and cannot recoup their money if I am unable to attend commencement.

RESPONSE: VMI policy indicates that cadets must be complete with program requirements in order to fully participate in commencement.