VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 13) 20 October 2026

Superintendent's Statement on Civility and Mutual Respect at VMI

Throughout its service to the nation, the Virginia Military Institute has sustained a noteworthy record of producing graduates who become leaders in the armed forces, public service, business, the professions, and many other venues. I believe the quality of the graduate of the Institute derives in no small measure from the historical culture of VMI that places all new cadets on the same level in the "rat line" and as they live together through four years in the closest of environments within the Corps of Cadets. This regimen develops individual and collective talents as a class as they learn and grow through the various programs of the Institute.

As Superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute, I expect us to maintain a culture of civility and mutual respect. Failure by any individual to treat any other member of the VMI community with respect and dignity may constitute a violation of this policy. The daily activities in the administration, the faculty, and the Corps shall be conducted in a manner that meets the highest standards for the equitable treatment of every individual. In pursuit of this goal, any question of impermissible discrimination, including harassment, based on race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, or against otherwise qualified individuals on the basis of disability or based on any other status protected by law will be addressed with impartial process, efficiency and energy. A civil environment in the Corps, where every cadet should expect to bear the same burdens, meet the same expectations and enjoy the same benefits, depends upon each one of us. For instance, each one of us, in any position of authority--from coaches to cadre, from professors to the Commandant's staff--is responsible for application and enforcement of all VMI policies and regulations in a neutral, even-handed manner.

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 23.1-806, VMI employees must report knowledge of incidents of sexual violence directly to the Inspector General. Further, reports of any conduct potentially in violation of General Order 16, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, and General Order 90 Retaliation Policy, must be made to the Inspector General. I am available at any time to discuss and address issues related to impermissible discrimination directly. All reports of conduct in violation of the letter – or the spirit – of this Order, shall be reviewed and addressed in an impartial, thorough and efficient manner, and there shall not be any reprisal or retaliation for any such report.

It is my hope and expectation the environment of civility and mutual respect that is a necessary foundation for our success will be advanced by the direction, VMI organizational structure, procedures, and policies embodied in the following program elements: Superintendent's Open Door policy; General Order 16, Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, General Order 90, Retaliation Policy; and the Office of the Inspector General including the Inspector General's comprehensive training program for cadets and employees.

David J. Furness '87
Lieutenant General, USMC (Ret.)
Superintendent

DIST: E, Cadets