

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE  
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)  
NUMBER 90)

9 October 2024

**Retaliation Policy**

The Virginia Military Institute is committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and worth of every member of its community and that ensures administrative investigations, and their participants are free from retaliation during and after the investigation process. Retaliation is taking or attempting to take materially adverse action by intimidating, threatening, coercing, harassing, or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by law or policy, or because the individual has engaged in a protected activity. This policy addresses complaints or reports of retaliation against those who have filed complaints of violations of any other VMI policy or regulation and/or those who have participated in any way in the investigative process, including but not limited to complainants, respondents, witnesses, investigators, decision makers, advisors, or appeals officers. In pursuit of this goal, any reported allegation of retaliation will be investigated under VMI's Grievance Procedures, which is found at Appendix A in General Order 16. Questions regarding retaliation prohibited by this policy may be referred to the VMI Inspector General and Title IX Coordinator (IG), Ms. Alyssa Astphan, 303 Letcher Avenue, 540-464-7086, [ig@vmi.edu](mailto:ig@vmi.edu)

**Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to establish clearly and unequivocally that VMI prohibits retaliation by individuals subject to its control or supervision and to set forth procedures by which such allegations shall be filed, investigated, and adjudicated.

**Applicability.** This policy applies to on-Post conduct involving VMI cadets, employees, faculty, and staff. This policy also is applicable to any conduct that occurs off Post that may have retaliatory effects. Conduct by cadets in violation of this policy that occurs off Post will be addressed in a manner consistent with other cadet misconduct off Post that is subject to discipline under the Blue Book or as an honor offense. Allegations of on-Post or off-Post violations of this policy should be reported to the IG in accordance with the guidance below and the Grievance Procedures.

**Definition.** Any form of retaliation, including intimidation, threats, harassment, and other adverse action taken or threatened against any complainant or person reporting or filing a complaint alleging violations of any other VMI policy or any individual testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in an investigation pursuant to another VMI policy. Retaliation may result in disciplinary or other action independent of the sanctions or interim measures imposed in response to the underlying allegations of another VMI policy. Retaliation prohibited by this policy includes any intimidation, threat, or coercion against the IG, an Assistant IG/Title IX Coordinator, or an external investigator for the purpose of interfering with his or her job responsibilities.

**Reporting.** Conduct in violation of this policy should be reported promptly by all cadets, employees, faculty and staff. Reports may be made to the VMI IG's office at [ig@vmi.edu](mailto:ig@vmi.edu), 540-464-7086, or <https://www.vmi.edu/reportnow>. VMI's IG is responsible for overseeing the investigation of all reports of alleged retaliation.

**Sanctions.** If it is determined that conduct in violation of this policy has occurred, sanctions will be determined in accordance with the Grievance Procedures. Consequences for violation of this policy will depend on the facts and circumstances of each situation, the frequency and severity of the offense, and any history of past conduct in violation of this policy. Sanctions may include penalties up to and including dismissal for cadets and termination for employees. In addition to sanctions that may be imposed on an individual found in violation of this policy, the Institute will take steps to prevent recurrence of any retaliation.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

Gary A. Bissell  
Colonel, USAR (Ret.)  
Interim Chief of Staff

DIST: E, Cadets / OPR: IG