

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE  
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)  
NUMBER 20)

26 October 2015

**Fitness Standards Governing the  
Admission of Cadets**

1. **Purpose:** This policy explains the process for determining the medical fitness for attendance at the Virginia Military Institute.
2. **Background:** Admission to VMI is a two-step process. First the applicant is reviewed by the Admissions Office to determine academic eligibility. If approved by Admissions, the applicant is offered a “conditional appointment.” The appointment is conditioned upon the applicant completing other requirements, to include fitness approval. Appointees then submit a medical packet that includes a medical history, a medical examination, immunizations, and a certificate of understanding of the physical and psychological rigors of VMI (Appendix A).
3. **Standards:** All VMI cadets including new cadets are expected to be able to accomplish all facets of the VMI educational program, which is a challenging, demanding program that involves significant physical and psychological challenges. A list of those program requirements is at Appendix B. Fitness evaluations for entry or continued enrollment at VMI will be based upon whether or not the prospective cadet can successfully and safely complete these program requirements. VMI uses the Department of Defense (DoD) standards as a reference. However, the ultimate decision to admit or deny entry will be based upon a review of the ability to meet program requirements.
  - A. For further information on DOD standards, Army Regulation 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness (most recent edition 14 January 2008), Chapter 2 - Physical Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction) may be consulted. This site may be viewed at [www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r40\\_501.pdf](http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r40_501.pdf). As detailed below, any applicant interested in commissioning in the Armed Forces must be able to meet the DOD standards.
  - B. Once conditionally appointed applicants submit their completed medical forms, they will be initially reviewed by the Institute Physician. The review will use the abovementioned Program Requirements as the baseline. If there are questions or concerns about an applicant’s ability to meet these requirements, additional information may be sought from the applicant and/or his/her physician. Applicants will be encouraged to submit any other supporting documentation that might affect admission decisions. If following review of this information it is determined that an applicant may not be able to meet VMI’s requirements, the medical packet will be reviewed by the Fitness Review Panel (Institute Physician, Commandant, and Head of the Physical Education Department) with recommendations submitted to the Superintendent for his review and decision regarding admission.

- C. The fact that an applicant is admitted to VMI has no bearing on that cadet's eligibility for commissioning through the ROTC Programs. Only the ROTC Departments determine eligibility for commissioning.
4. **Pre-Appointment Medical Determinations:** VMI does not consider medical history in deciding whether or not a conditional appointment should be offered. Similarly, for those prospective cadets who may be concerned about a particular health issue, VMI will not make a pre-determination of medical eligibility. Prospective students or their parents may contact the Post Physician if they have questions, but no opinions or pre-determinations will be made. Parents and prospective students with such questions are encouraged to review the standards referenced in Appendix B, consult with their personal physician on them, and seek their personal physician's opinion whether or not their son or daughter meets those standards. Providing the family physician with a copy of the health forms (Appendix A) will also be helpful for the family physician to review in providing an opinion. VMI will encourage all appointees to send their medical documents in as early as possible after conditional appointment in order to make the determination of eligibility as early as possible. Applicants who have any reason to question their ability to meet program requirements are strongly advised to have an alternative plan to attend another college should final appointment to VMI be denied.
  5. **Authority:** The Institute Physician reviews the medical forms and collects further information as needed from the applicant, the family, and the examining physician(s) to clarify any questions raised by the medical forms. If there is a history of psychological issues, the Institute Physician will gather any additional information needed to determine if the applicant will be able to safely and competently meet the extraordinary stresses of VMI's program. The Superintendent has the authority to make the final determination of fitness eligibility.
  6. **Medical Histories:** VMI will provide its own health form for use by all prospective cadets to report their medical histories. The DODMERB will not be accepted.
  7. **Information about the Rigorous Demands of VMI's Educational Program:** The Office of Admissions shall provide a "Certificate of Understanding of the Physical and Mental Health Requirements for a VMI Education" for signature by all applicants, their parents, and their personal physicians, by which they indicate that they understand the unique physical and psychological (fitness) demands of the VMI educational program and that the applicant is physically and mentally fit to meet those demands. This form must be returned, together with the Health History and Exam Form, to the Institute Physician. It is contained in Appendix A.
  8. **Physical Fitness Standards:** Because the program requirements of VMI present extraordinary physical and mental stresses that create risks to individual students, weight and body fat standards are employed as part of the evaluation process. Those standards for prospective cadets may be viewed in their entirety at [www.vmi.edu/GeneralOrders](http://www.vmi.edu/GeneralOrders). In some

cases where the physical conditioning of an applicant is in question, VMI may require the applicant to complete the run component of the VMI Fitness Test. Additionally, all cadets will take the VFT on multiple occasions during their cadetship and are expected to achieve a passing score. Information on the VFT and the Corps Physical Fitness Program can be viewed at [www.vmi.edu/GeneralOrders](http://www.vmi.edu/GeneralOrders) (General Order 31, Corps of Cadets Physical Fitness Program).

9. **Medical Eligibility Review Process:** When a student is offered a conditional appointment for admission, a Health History and Physical Exam Form shall be provided and must be completed by the applicant and submitted to the Institute Physician, together with the Certificate of Understanding of the Physical and Mental Health Requirements for a VMI Education, by the deadline contained on the form. The Institute Physician shall determine the initial fitness eligibility of the applicant based upon the Physician's medical determination of the applicant's ability to meet VMI's Program Requirements. A list of these program requirements is at Appendix B. If there is a question or concern, the Institute Physician will contact the applicant and/or their physician(s) for more information. If upon review of all of this information the Institute Physician determines that the applicant's ability to meet program requirements is still in question, he will initiate the process for review by the Fitness Review Panel.
10. **Medical Eligibility:** All medical applications that indicate that there is a condition that may prevent safe and complete participation in all aspects of VMI training as determined by the Institute Physician will be reviewed by the Fitness Review Panel. The members of the Panel are the Institute Physician, the Commandant of Cadets, and the Head of the Department of Physical Education. Their review and recommendations are forwarded to the Superintendent who makes the final determination on the applicant's fitness eligibility.
11. **Fitness Eligibility Procedure:** The Institute Physician will review the initial medical packet. If there is a potential medical problem, the applicant will be notified by letter and requested to provide further information about the condition. The applicant will also be encouraged to send any other documentation that might support admission. The applicant shall include a "Release of Information" authorizing the health care provider to share information about the medical condition. If the Institute Physician determines that the applicant has a condition that may prevent safe and complete participation in the VMI training program despite reasonable accommodations, he will forward his assessment to the Commandant, who will in turn forward it to the Head of the Department of Physical Education. Those three officials shall individually review the medical information and each shall make an individual recommendation as to the applicant's ability to meet VMI's program requirements. The recommendations then go to the Office of the Superintendent. The Superintendent makes the final decision on eligibility for admission.
12. **Notification of Superintendent's Determination:** The Superintendent, or his designee, shall notify the offices of the Commandant and Physical Education of any applicant admitted

by the Superintendent after the Fitness Review Panel's review. This step is taken to insure the safety of the cadet during the training process.

13. **Readmission Applications:** The medical standards, to include the weight and body fat standards referenced above, apply to those cadets applying for readmission to VMI. Questions may be directed to the Registrar's Office for these and other requirements for readmission.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

James P. Inman  
Colonel, US Army (Ret.)  
Chief of Staff

Appendices:

A—Medical Forms

B—Program Requirements

DIST: E

OPR: Chief of Staff



# HISTORY OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORM

THIS PAGE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PHYSICIAN

**APPLICANT'S FULL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth** \_\_\_\_\_

**(REQUIRED)** Blood Pressure \_\_\_\_\_ Pulse \_\_\_\_\_

### REQUIRED - DISTANCE VISION:

If applicant **does not** wear glasses or contacts, please complete:

Uncorrected vision

Right 20/ \_\_\_\_\_ Left 20/ \_\_\_\_\_

If applicant **wears** glasses or contacts, please complete:

Corrected vision

Right 20/ \_\_\_\_\_ Left 20/ \_\_\_\_\_

### CLINICAL EVALUATION (Check each item in appropriate column)

Normal	Abnormal		Normal	Abnormal	
		HEENT (Head, eyes, ears, nose, throat)			Skin (Describe any tattoos)
		Teeth and jaw			Spine, other musculoskeletal
		Neck and thyroid			Upper extremities
		Ears (can hear whisper)			Lower extremities
		Eyes			Feet
		Lungs and chest			Neurological
		Heart			Males only: <b>(REQUIRED)</b>
		Vascular System			Testicular exam
		Abdomen			Hernia exam

**Remarks: (Describe every abnormality in detail.)** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you aware of any psychological concerns now or in the past? YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, describe in detail. Use additional sheet if necessary.) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**The student may participate in VMI's required boxing course? (Required) YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_

**The student is cleared for full participation in NCAA athletics and required PE courses.**  
 (Required) **YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_

Please see that ALL ITEMS ARE COMPLETED before returning this form.

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office address \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ M.D./D.O.  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

VMI IMMUNIZATION RECORD

\*\*\*This form must be completed and signed by the applicant's physician.\*\*\*

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

The following immunizations are required for enrollment at VMI.
Health department, school health or copies of physician's office immunization records will not be accepted in place of this COMPLETED form.

1. Diphtheria-Tetanus: (Mandatory)
(Booster should include Pertussis)

Date of completion of primary series \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Exact date of last booster \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ (Must be within 6 years of matriculation)

2. Poliomyelitis: (Mandatory)

Date of completion of primary series \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of last booster \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

3. Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR): (Mandatory)

TWO IMMUNIZATIONS REQUIRED. THE FIRST ONE AFTER THE FIRST BIRTHDAY; THE SECOND ONE NO SOONER THAN ONE MONTH LATER OR ANY TIME THEREAFTER.

Date of 1st dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of 2nd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

4. Hepatitis B: (Mandatory)

Date of 1st dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of 2nd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of 3rd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

5. Meningococcal Vaccine: (Mandatory)

Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

6. Chicken Pox (had disease) Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ or Immunization Dates Date of 1st dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
(2 Doses are mandatory if no disease) Date of 2nd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

7. Tuberculin Test: (Required for applicants who have lived or traveled extensively overseas)

Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ NEGATIVE \_\_\_\_\_
POSITIVE \_\_\_\_\_ (mm induration: \_\_\_\_\_)

CHEST XRAY RESULTS: (only if POSITIVE) \_\_\_\_\_
Treatment? \_\_\_\_\_

HPV (QUADRIVALENT HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS VACCINE) (Highly Recommended)

Three doses of vaccine at 0, 2, and 6 month intervals.

Date of 1st dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of 2nd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_
Date of 3rd dose \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Physician's Signature

Printed Name

City, State Zip Code

Area Code & Phone Number

Date

**MEDICAL RELEASE FORM**

**CERTIFICATE OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE**

**This form should be read carefully and must be signed by the applicant, the applicant's parents or guardians and the applicant's physician(s).**

The Virginia Military Institute's unique program of undergraduate education requires that cadets fully participate in all aspects of the program and meet its rigorous physical and psychological demands, including the intense fourth-class (rat) year, ROTC physical fitness tests, mandatory physical education and mandatory ROTC classes, including handling and maintaining weapons.

Examples of the specific demands that will be made are provided below. The list is not intended to be complete, but merely representative of the challenges of the VMI program. It is important to understand that none of these activities or expectations occur in isolation but many in combination. The demands placed upon each cadet's physical and mental resources are purposefully extraordinary, but so is the resulting VMI graduate.

Mandatory Physical Education and Training Requirements:

- Boxing
- VMI Fitness Test (Run, Pull-ups, Sit-ups)
- Swimming

Mandatory Rat Challenge Activities:

- Pugil stick training
- 5 mile runs
- Forced marches of varying length and intensity
- High level entry into water
- Group and individual obstacle courses
- Rappelling (Approximately 150 feet)
- Rock climbing

Fourth Class Training:

- Intense workouts of 15 minutes or more to include,
- Pushups
- Running in place
- Crunches
- Leg lifts
- Forced marches
- Constant climbing of four (4) flights of stairs

Living Conditions:

- Close quarters (4 or more to a room)
- Minute regulation of all aspects of conduct
- Constant unpredictable and rigorous demands
- Extremely limited free time
- Mandatory mutual reliance upon others (extreme peer pressure)

\_\_\_\_\_ is, to the best of my knowledge, physically and mentally fit and able to meet  
(Applicant's Name)

all the demands of a VMI education.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Physician

## Appendix B

### VMI PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

#### Rat Year General Activities

Straining (at a rigid position, arms at sides, chin in)

Walking the Ratline (a prescribed route in barracks while straining)

Climbing stairs at a quick pace to the 4<sup>th</sup> Stoop

Running (1-9 miles over hilly terrain)

Marching

Rifle Manual

Calisthenics (upper and lower body)

Push-ups

Periods of prolonged standing/walking/marching

Cadre Week Crucible Event (extended period of physical exertion with intense upper and lower body workouts)

Periods of high stress from adversarial system (receiving instruction and learning from cadre and upperclassmen in a direct, intense manner) and accomplishing required activities in the time allotted

Limited free time with busy daily and weekly schedules of academic, military, athletic, and fitness activities

Limited ability to go off Post during the week

Early morning wake-ups and long daily schedule

Cannot use beds until after 11:15 PM

#### Rat Challenge Activities (Tuesday and Thursdays, Sep—Nov)

Running (2-7 miles)

Calisthenics (including push-ups, sit ups)

Log Physical Training (lifting logs; upper body)

## Obstacle Courses

Timed Obstacle Course (running, climbing; upper and lower body)

Rope Climbing (upper body)

Multiple High Rope Stations (balance, upper body)

Multiple Obstacle Stations (upper body)

Team Wall Climbing (upper body)

Pull-up and Monkey Bar Stations (upper body)

Rappelling (upper and lower body)

Climbing (170 foot cliff and House Mountain; upper and lower body)

Pugil Stick Training (upper body with physical impacts)

Stretcher Carry and Sandbag Relays (upper and lower body)

## Rat Disciplinary Committee and Rat Training Activities

Sweat Parties (high impact calisthenics for 15 minute periods)

Road Marches (3-20 miles with rifles and rucksacks)

Rat Line Culmination Activities (periods of high intensity workouts with upper and lower body workouts)

## Physical Education Requirements

Mandatory boxing class

Mandatory swimming class

Mandatory wrestling class

Other P.E. course elective requirements

## Physical Fitness Requirements (All cadets; minimum of twice per semester)

VMI Fitness Test (pull ups, sit-ups, 1 ½ mile run)

Service ROTC Fitness Tests (vary by service; 1 ½ -- 3 mile runs; sit-ups; push-ups, and pull-ups included)

Physical Training Time (PTT) (Mondays and Fridays) and every third Saturday morning (calisthenics, sit-ups, pull-ups, push-ups, running 1 ½ -- 7 miles)

Remedial Physical Training during free time for VFT and weight/body fat failures

Weight and Body Fat Requirements (see website)

Other Cadet Activities and Environment

Attending mandatory class and/or other formations daily

Weekly parades and parade practices

Field Training Exercises (48-96 hours at off Post locations; involves sleeping in tents, marching with full packs and weapons; military training exercises)

Weapons firing and maintenance

Rifles and bayonets stored in rooms

Mandatory events attendance (athletic, distinguished speakers, and other VMI events)

Non-air conditioned barracks and no refrigerators in rooms

3-5 cadets per barracks room

Academic Requirements

135 credit hours required for degree completion

Mandatory 4 years of ROTC and leadership courses

Mandatory 4 years of Physical Education courses

Minimum 12 credit hours required per semester; normal course load is 15-18 hours