

Parents

A Word from the Parents Council

Dear Families,

On behalf of the Parents Council, we welcome you to Virginia Military Institute. “No Ordinary College. No Ordinary Life.”

We are thrilled you have chosen VMI, and we are confident that this will be a life-changing experience for you and your family! The Parents Council provides a forum for the interchange of ideas and information between parents, cadets, and Institute officials. As Council members, we understand that the transition to VMI is unparalleled, full of anticipation coupled with the challenges that exist in a spartan environment. For your convenience, our parent volunteers will be available to assist you during matriculation, Family

Weekend, and various sporting and other VMI events.

The regimental staff has prepared this document to help in your transition. If Parents Council can assist, please contact us directly at **VMIPCPresident@gmail.com**. You may also follow the Parents Council on Facebook. For parents of incoming rats, please be sure to join the Official VMI Rat Mass 2025+3 Parent’s Page. This is an invaluable way to connect with other families and to stay informed about what is going on at VMI. We look forward to seeing you on post soon!

Rah Virginia Mil!

Sam and Wendy Chapman
Parents Council Co-Presidents
Parents of Noah Chapman
Class of 2025

Parental Perspective and Support

As the parents or guardians of a cadet, you can take pride and comfort in the VMI system. Even though it may be difficult to contact your rat by telephone, you can rest assured that we know where your cadet is at all times. Attendance is mandatory, and your cadet is concentrating on college work. Rats acclimate to VMI at different paces. Many rats have trouble in at least one area of VMI life (the Rat Line, academics, or the military). Fortunately, there are many people and resources available to help cadets overcome obstacles. There is no challenge your cadet may experience that others in the past have not faced, met, and overcome. As all cadets will learn, this is a team effort: they cannot make it through VMI alone.

A team of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) is paired with each company. These EMT teams supervise all of the rat events. There are also two separate and equally important groups, known as the Cadet Equality Association (CEA) and the Officer of the Guard Association (OGA), which monitor all interactions between rats and other cadets. The CEA monitors and investigates reports of discrimination of any kind and sexual harassment or misconduct, while the OGA is charged with enforcing the rules governing cadet-rat interactions and VMI’s strict anti-hazing policy. Between our EMTs, CEAs, OGAs, faculty, and staff, you know your cadets are being well cared for.

During your rat’s first six months at VMI, your support will be vital. If you are

able to attend football games and tailgate on the weekends, they will be grateful for your support. And for those who live out of state, don't worry, you can be assured that your rat will be picked up by another family for support during this time. Cadets may or may not want to talk about their rat experience by telephone or during parental visits to post. Parents are likely either to hear about or to sense frustration and should be prepared simply to listen and be supportive. A modicum of parental sympathy mixed with expressions of firm confidence in the cadet's ability to

handle the VMI system will probably be the best help during the cadet's first year. Parents are advised not to worry if the Rat Line seems stressful; it is intended to be. If, however, your cadet's response is not within the range of what you would expect, please contact a VMI counselor for consultation at 540-464-7667 or the Infirmary after hours at 540-464-7218. You may also wish to refer to the Cadet Counseling website which offers guidance to parents in recognizing when a cadet may need professional help.

Communicating with Your Son or Daughter During the Rat Line

Email

Email is the most effective way to communicate with cadets. Cadets are assigned email addresses at matriculation and they are required to check their email at least once a day. Rats in particular constantly check their email in hopes of hearing from friends and family. Be aware, however, that rats are not allowed to use their personal computers until after Cadre Week.

Mail

A package from home is one of the best gifts a cadet can receive. Rats often feel they are alone in the world while at VMI. Letters and packages brighten their day. Each cadet is assigned a box at the Mail Room, which will be the mailing address throughout his or her years at VMI. An occasional package of food is most welcome by cadets and does wonders for morale. Frequent small packages are preferable as food storage space is limited and no refrigeration is available. Cadets can send letters and packages from the

Mail Room via UPS or USPS. The Mail Room uses a postage meter and processes parcel post packages.

Cards & Letters

Cadet (*followed by name*)
Virginia Military Institute
VMI Box 8XXXX (*see prefixes*)
Lexington, VA 24450-0304

Packages

Cadet (*followed by name*)
510 Burma Road
Virginia Military Institute
VMI Box 8XXXX (*see prefixes*)
Lexington, VA 24450-0304

Prefixes

Use 800 prefix for two-digit box numbers (10-99) example: *VMI Box 10 is 80010*

Use 80 prefix for three-digit box numbers (100-999) example: *VMI Box 100 is 80100*

Use 8 prefix for four-digit box numbers (1000-2050) example: *VMI Box 1000 is 81000*

Telephone

Communicating with a rat can be quite difficult. Rats are not allowed to have cell phones in their rooms. Most rats will be able to keep their phone in their dyke's room. However, cadets can still be reached by calling the Visitors Center. Messages left at the Visitors Center will be

delivered by the cadet on duty within 20 minutes. Nonetheless, with the rigors and demands of VMI life, there is no guarantee that the cadet will be present to receive the message. Cadets, especially rats, are severely limited in the times they are permitted to use telephones.

Visiting Your Cadet

It is always nice to have visitors at school. Especially at VMI, providing support and visiting are important. There are several opportunities to visit your new rat throughout his or her early cadetship. Times will come within the first weeks when training is not scheduled. You can visit your new cadet at Lejeune Hall. Other times are during home football and basketball games, after a morning parade while tailgating on the Parade Ground, and on Sunday.

Sundays

Sundays are relaxed days for rats and cadets alike, as there is no formation in the morning, no classes, and no scheduled training. Many rats choose to get involved in local churches and faith groups and leave post to participate.

Permits/Furloughs

Permits are "permission slips" approved by the commandant, and sometimes the dean, required to take part in events that are not routine or to miss regular activities (such as a formation or military duty). Permits are listed in the Blue Book, which contains all of VMI's rules and regulations. Cadets receive the Blue Book at the beginning of each year. Cadets will know if they are eligible to use one permit or another by reading the Blue Book. Every rat will be made familiar with all of the permits that he/she can or cannot use, as well as how to use them. It is very important that you talk with your rat before making any plans for a visit or travel plans for returning home on furlough, because rats are very busy and are not usually let out early for furlough to accommodate travel plans.

Details for My Cadet _____

With all of the new things happening and things to remember, use this sheet to keep all the pesky bits of info straight!

» Company _____

» Room Number _____

» Roommates

> _____

> _____

> _____

> _____

> _____

> _____

» Academic Advisor _____

» Mailbox Number _____

» Dyke _____

» My Rat's Email _____

Important Dates

Family Weekend: _____

Football vs _____

Football vs _____

Football vs _____

Football vs _____

Football vs _____

Football vs _____

Thanksgiving Furlough: _____

Winter Furlough: _____

Spring Furlough: _____