

# VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA 24450-0304

CHIEF OF STAFF

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1 April 2022

Dear Parents and Friends of Graduates:

RE: May Graduation 2022

On behalf of the Superintendent and the Board of Visitors, it gives me great pleasure to invite you to the Virginia Military Institute Final Week events as your Cadet has been designated to graduate in May. Activities begin on 14 May and conclude 16 May. The commencement ceremony is scheduled for 16 May at 11:00 a.m. outside in Foster Stadium, our football stadium. We expect the ceremony to last no more than two hours. Please expect traffic delays in the Lexington area. We appreciate your patience, understanding, and cooperation on this very special day.

## **GRADUATION CEREMONY:**

Foster Stadium will be open to family and guests starting at 9:30 a.m. Family and friends are encouraged to remain in their seats during the ceremony. Since this is an outside facility that can hold a large number of guests, we are not requiring tickets for Commencement this year. All guests will be seated in the stands with the exception of handicap guests with prearranged accommodations through the Chief of Staff office.

For family members that require wheelchair seating coordination through the Chief of Staff office as far in advance as possible is appreciated. Please email the Chief of Staff's Office at [chiefofstaff@vmi.edu](mailto:chiefofstaff@vmi.edu) if you have certain wheelchair/handicap seating needs.

Family members and guests are asked to remember that Foster Stadium is our football stadium and is an outside venue and subject to weather elements. There will be steps that need to be maneuvered in order to get to most of the seats. It is not conducive to some handicap disabilities.

If you have family and friends that will be unable to attend the events in person, they will be able to view the ceremonies of the VMI Commissioning Ceremony and the VMI Commencement ceremony via live streaming. The livestream will begin streaming 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremonies and the links will be available on our website.

If there is inclement weather on 15-16 May, our events will be moved to Cameron Hall, where there are space restrictions. Please be aware that if you invite a large number of guests, not

everyone will be able to be accommodated inside of Cameron Hall, so we'd like to encourage families to keep the number of guests limited to ten (10).

**TICKETS:**

**Tickets will not be needed for the Commissioning and Commencement Ceremony this year. .**

**PARKING:**

Parking on the Parade Ground will be subject to inclement weather. There will be satellite parking out at our Lackey Farm Parking location on Greenhouse Road and shuttles will escort you from that location to VMI Post. Our drivers will not transport you to other destinations.

Parking around post is on a first-come, first serve basis, including handicap parking. There will be handicap parking permitted in our CPTF Parking Garage. Parking will not be permitted outside Cameron Hall area. However, drop off and pick-up is authorized.

Please pay attention to the yellow lines on the curbs near Cameron Hall and do not park in those areas, your vehicle will be towed by area police at your expense.

For the most up-to-date information regarding changes related to parking or May Final Events please visit our website, <https://www.vmi.edu/cadet-life/events-and-traditions/graduation/>.

**WHEELCHAIR RENTAL:**

Navigating around Post during Final events involves a considerable amount of walking and traveling through heavily congested areas. Guests requiring assistance with mobility may wish to rent a wheelchair. Wheelchairs are not available through VMI. However, there is a local company here in Lexington that may be able to further assist you: [Lexington Prescription Center \(540\) 463-9166](#)

**PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS:** To cause minimal disruption to the ceremony, and as a courtesy to others, please confine personal photography to the area of your seats. A professional photographer has been contracted to take pictures of each graduate being presented their diploma. Ten days after the Commencement Ceremony please go to [www.candidcolor.net](http://www.candidcolor.net), click on "graduation day", the school's access code is **VMIG22**. Parents can pre-register to be notified when photos are available. Family members and personally hired photographers are not permitted down near the stage during the ceremony, personal photographs can occur after the ceremony.

**GRADUATION ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Graduation announcements are an ideal way to commemorate this special occasion. Announcements are personalized with the graduate's name and degree to be awarded. VMI is contacted every year by two different companies. If you or your Cadet is interested in purchasing graduation announcements, you can purchase those through the following link for Balfour following this link <https://www.cbgrad.com/order/start> or for Herff Jones

<https://collegegrad.herffjones.com/site/descriptors>. The websites will prompt you accordingly.  
– VMI only offers Bachelor degrees.

There are other companies out there offering graduation announcement, you'll just need to provide them the information individually.

### **SECURITY PROCEDURES:**

To ensure the safety of every guest; all persons, including graduates, may be subject to a soft pat.

In the past few years, VMI has implemented a clear bag policy; so no bags, including purses, camera cases and diaper bags are permitted. Some bags are subject to inspection by security officers or VMI personnel before visitors are permitted to enter Foster Stadium. We strongly urge all attendees not to bring bags to any of the ceremonies unless they are absolutely necessary.

Do not bring any packages that cannot be opened or inspected; **wrapped items will not be permitted inside VMI venues.**

VMI would like to encourage everyone to travel light. In order to expedite the process, please leave any unpermitted items in your vehicle. Guests in possession of prohibited items at our event locations will be asked to leave immediately and escorted by appropriate police personnel.

Examples of prohibited items include, but are not limited to: large bags, backpacks, air horns/noise makers, inflatable balls, balloons, laser pointers or weapons of any kind. Alcohol, bottles, cans and coolers are prohibited. Weapons (knives) and firearms are prohibited on VMI property, regardless of whether you have a concealed weapon permit. Again, VMI reserves the right to inspect and remove any packages, bags and/or containers.

Service dogs with the proper paperwork are the only animals permitted inside VMI venues/facilities. Emotional support animals are not permitted.

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted in any of VMI venues/facilities. Staff will not store or hold items for you. VMI and personnel will not be responsible for items left unattended.

Guests are responsible for their conduct, as well as the conduct of their guests. Unruly, disruptive or illegal behavior will not be permitted at any of our VMI events.

### **FOSTER STADIUM ENTRANCES:**

There will only be two entrances open into Foster Stadium. The main entrance and the bridge entrance; all other entrances to Foster Stadium will be closed and guests will not be permitted entrance.

**BARRACKS CLEARANCE:** The Commandant's office will put out instructions to cadets pertaining to barracks clearance which will take place for some selected cadets on 14-16 May. Final clearances will be after the Commencement ceremony on 16 May.

**REMINDERS:**

- No tickets are required this year for any of our events
- Foster Stadium will open at 9:30 a.m.
- Personal items left on benches do not constitute reserved seating.
- We ask that everyone mute their cell phones during the ceremony.
- Family members will not be permitted down near the stage for graduation.

We look forward to sharing this special time with the graduates and their families and friends. If you need further information about Commencement logistics, please call the Chief of Staff's office at (540) 464-7104.

Sincerely,

John M. Young  
Lieutenant Colonel, Virginia Militia  
Chief of Staff