

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 30)

20 May 2024

VMI Catering Policy

- 1) Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish standard procedures and guidelines for the use of Catering and Dining Services at VMI. These procedures apply to all Virginia Military Institute organizations, faculty, staff, Cadets, and any entity or individual who intends to provide food and/or beverages to VMI faculty and staff, Cadets, and/or guests on all VMI properties. As a Commonwealth of Virginia public institution of higher education, VMI personnel must ensure that expenditures of VMI funds are essential to operations and support the Institute's mission.
 - a) These procedures were created to provide guidance when using VMI funds to purchase food and beverages for official Institute business, regardless of fund source. Specifically, purchases sourced from state and local accounts (i.e. state appropriations and funds provided by private sources, respectively) are subject to these guidelines. Purchases for food and beverages include, but are not limited to, business meals, catered events, finger foods, party platters, and refreshment breaks.
 - b) Institute funds may not be used for employee events or functions that are intended merely to promote goodwill or boost morale or are considered primarily social in nature. This restriction is based on current IRS Tax Regulations and is intended to avoid the necessity of including the value of such meals in an employee's taxable income. This restriction, however, does not prohibit the Institute from infrequently providing employees food and beverages of minimal value at official business functions (e.g. annual recognition breakfast or training and staff development sessions).
 - c) Cadets are encouraged to consume the majority of meals in Crozet Hall and every effort should be made to support this, however Institute funds may be used for food and beverages at Cadet functions that contribute to the mission of VMI or Cadet engagement. Cadet meal replacements may be requested for official events (e.g. Cadet officer meetings, leadership conferences, guest speakers, and Cadet club functions). These meals are at the discretion of Parkhurst Dining and are considered non-billable to the host of the catered event. Any other meal option for Cadets at official events is considered catering and will be billed appropriately.
 - d) Food and beverages may be provided at Alumni events. These events will be billed directly to the VMI Alumni Agencies.

- 2) Catering and Dining Services: Departments and agencies must utilize VMI's Catering and Dining Services unless permission to use an outside vendor is obtained in advance of the event from VMI Auxiliary Services, the dining services contract manager. VMI Catering must be given the right of first refusal for any VMI event where food service will be utilized. Departments and agencies will submit a memorandum to Auxiliary Services requesting a waiver to use other catering services and must maintain documentation of the authorization from Auxiliary Services. An email to the Director of Auxiliary Services requesting a waiver is acceptable; a copy of the email must be maintained by the requestor for one calendar year.
- 3) Requirements and Limitations: This General Order establishes the following requirements and limitations regarding appropriate expenditures for food and beverages.
 - a) Food and beverages may be provided only at functions that meet the criteria listed above. Prior to requesting food and beverages through VMI's Catering and Dining Services, the requestor should consider the following:
 - Are the meals essential to the Institute's mission and a business necessity?
 - Is it essential that a meeting be conducted over a normal meal hour?
 - b) All food and beverage requests must be submitted through CaterTrax, the official platform for requesting food service and billing. All VMI departments and Alumni Agencies are required to have staff who are the primary catering requesting officials for the respective department. The requestor must ensure the event name and the event purpose are clearly stated on the CaterTrax request.
 - VMI departments and Alumni Agencies should make every effort to finalize catering plans no later than one business week before the event.
 - No catering requests will be accepted within 72 hours of the event unless approval is given by VMI Auxiliary Services.
 - Requests made within the 72-hour limit are not considered emergencies and agencies must request a purchasing waiver from VMI Procurement if use of state funds are utilized to purchase food from vendors other than Parkhurst catering.
 - c) When using State funds to purchase food and beverages, the actual cost per person for food and beverages, including any related services and fees, may not exceed the GSA per diem amount allowed for business meals as mandated by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Meal expenditures may be authorized up to 150% of the applicable per diem rate if requested with sufficient justification to the approving authority (Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Support, Dean of Faculty, or Chief of Staff) in advance of the event.
 - e) Consumption of alcohol must be pre-approved in accordance with General Order 2, VMI Alcohol and Controlled Substances Policy, and is ordinarily not authorized.
- 4) Limited Catering Availability: There are critical times to the Institute throughout the academic year where catering and dining services are required for multiple large and competing events. During these periods, catering and dining services will be limited to

priority events to allow the Catering and Dining Services to provide a high-quality service while conserving resources, personnel, and time. These limited availability times include:

- Matriculation
- Home football weekends that include Class Reunions, Parents Weekends, and Founder's Day events
- Conferences and Symposiums at the Center for Leadership and Excellence
- Board of Visitors Meetings
- Memorial Parade Day, Commissioning and Commencement Week activities

Priority for Catering and Dining Services during these times will be given to:

- Superintendent
- Dean of Faculty, Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Support, Commandant
- Alumni Agencies
- Center for Leadership and Excellence
- Athletic Department
- Admissions Office
- ROTC Departments (during FTX and commissioning events only)
- Outside groups

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

John M. Young
Colonel, Virginia Militia
Chief of Staff

Dist: E,
OPR: Auxiliary Services