

Accessibility Information for Virginia Tech Commencement 2017

This is a comprehensive website designed to address access and accommodation topics for individuals with disabilities and/or impaired mobility attending the Spring Commencement Ceremony (graduate and/or undergraduate).

ARRIVAL TIME

It is important to note that arriving at least one hour before the ceremony will help with your selection of parking and seating. Please make transportation and other arrangements with this in mind.

PARKING (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Two (2) weeks before the date of the Commencement Ceremony, students can pick up an accessible parking pass for family and/or friends who need accommodations due to a disability or impaired mobility. **(Location: Services for Students with Disabilities Office, 310 Lavery Hall, Blacksburg, VA)**

For the Spring 2017 Commencement Ceremony, accessible parking passes will be available starting Friday, April 28, 2017 and continue weekdays through Friday, May 12, 2017 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

**** NOTE**:** Individuals do not need a accessible parking pass if they already have an official DMV handicap license plate or hang tag. Only those vehicles with DMV tags are eligible to park in designated handicap parking spaces. For individuals with impaired mobility (without a DMV tag) additional parking spaces have been allocated at the university ceremony. These vehicles must display the "accessible parking pass" on the dashboard of the car. Parking passes are good for Friday and Saturday only.

Accessible parking is available at the south end of the stadium. It is recommended that wheelchair users park at the south end of the stadium that is accessible from Southgate Drive and Spring Road. A section of the lot nearest Cassell Coliseum (lot on Spring Road) will be reserved for accessible and accessible parking. Overflow parking, if needed, will be in the Litton Reeves lot (see <http://www.maps.vt.edu/> for details).

Main University Ceremony (Lane Stadium)

- **Ambulatory Seating** (Accessible seating for non-wheelchair users)

Individuals who can transfer from their wheelchairs or who have limited mobility have several choices for seating:

1. Park in the ***south end zone lot or be dropped off at the south end zone gate 2 or use BT Access (Para transit) vans.*** Enter gate 2, proceed to the elevator, go to level 2, and enter the stands between sections 203-204. Three rows of seating are roped off for ambulatory seating. People who wish to remain in their wheelchairs can sit closer to the stage by using the east or west side stands' wheelchair seating areas; please see the third paragraph below (under *Non-Ambulatory Seating*) for directions.

2. Park in the Coliseum lot accessible area and cross Spring Road to enter the West Stands at gates 4 or 5 (see map link below). Ambulatory seating is available from portals 6 – 20.

**A note on ambulatory seating – please have one family member sit with you on the accessible seats. We request additional family members sit on the rows in front or behind the access seats to allow space for all patrons needing the accessible seats.

- **Non-Ambulatory Seating** (Wheelchair users)

Wheelchair accessible seating is located in the south end zone area and in the east and west side of the stadium. Individuals who cannot, or prefer not to transfer out of their wheelchairs, can use any of these areas. Parking for both south and east areas is best in the south stadium lot. Parking for the west sides is best in the Coliseum lot.

For seating in the south end of the stadium, enter the elevator located near the parking area in the south end zone stand. Exit on the fourth floor; enter portals 401 – 409 for wheelchair seating which has companion-seating in-between the wheelchair areas. Limited wheelchair seating without interspersed companion seating is located in the corners of the second level of the south end zone stand.

For seating on the east side of the stadium, enter through Gate 1 in the south east corner of the stadium then enter the odd-numbered portals (1,3,5,7,9,11,13) from under the east stands. Companion seating is on the benches located behind or in front of the wheelchair seating.

For seating on the west side, enter at the north towers through the glass doors leading into the Athletics Office lobby; these doors are about 50 feet to the right of gate five (Athletic Office entry). Take the elevator to level four. Proceed down the corridor to the double doors to enter the covered deck where wheelchairs can be placed with a companion alongside in a folding chair. Wheelchair seating is also available in the south tower; enter at the Ticket Office door, proceed to elevator and level four. Follow the signs to the south tower platform seating for wheelchair users.

USHERS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO HELP DIRECT YOU TO SEATING IN ALL AREAS.

- **Restrooms**

Accessible restrooms are available in the west or south stands and on the north east side between section 1 and 3. Standard restrooms are located along the portals on the south, west and east sides.

Graduate School Ceremony (Cassell Coliseum)

- **Ambulatory Seating** (Accessible seating for non-wheelchair users)

Individuals who **can transfer from wheelchairs** or who are **ambulatory** can enter through the main lobby from the **Washington Street entrance** (front of the Coliseum) and proceed to any aisle. Accessible seating will be reserved in the first two rows as you enter the portals. Ushers are available to direct you to these areas. Wheelchairs and walkers must be folded and stored along the walkways to the portals. **Individuals MAY NOT remain in their wheelchairs in the portal areas.**

***** Bus service to the south end zone will stop running 30 minutes prior to the ceremony in order to permit procession of the candidates into the stadium. Parking may also be restricted at this time. *****

WHEELCHAIR PROVISIONS / RENTAL

Individuals needing wheelchair assistance will be required to bring their own personal chairs. Wheelchairs may be obtained from the following sources: (1) bring your own personal chair; (2) obtain a rental wheelchair from your local hometown area; (3) contact the wheelchair rental agencies listed below. **Please make your arrangements for a wheelchair rental EARLY.**

Local Wheelchair Rental Agencies

New River Valley Rent-All
(540) 639-1619 / 1530 West Main St., Radford, VA

Medi Home Health
(540) 951-1786 / 3607 South Main St., Blacksburg, VA
Toll Free: 888-317-6334

Advanced Home Health
(540) 633-2223 / 48 W. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA

Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- **Main Ceremony** (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing: American Sign Language interpreters will be provided for both Graduate and Undergraduate ceremonies. Should a person who is deaf or hard of hearing prefer a different mode of communication or the use of an assistive listening device, Services for Students with Disabilities should be contacted (540-231-3788 or jabell@vt.edu) for this request at least **2 weeks prior** to graduation. Every effort will be made to arrange for these services. Accessible seating in **Lane Stadium** for persons who use sign language interpreting services will be located in the vicinity of an entry ramp on the east side of the stadium. Look for signage to indicate the exact location. In **Cassell Coliseum**, seating will be located in Section 8 near the floor of the coliseum. Due to limited seating, an early arrival time would be advised. For individual college ceremonies, see section below.

- **Individual College Ceremonies**

Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing: Sign language interpreters and/or assistive listening devices are provided for the individual college ceremonies **only upon request**. This request should be made by contacting the specific college for the ceremony you wish to attend at least **2 weeks prior** to graduation. Every effort will be made to arrange for these services. Seating for access to the interpreter will be determined by the individual venue.

Who to Contact for Additional Questions

- **Main Ceremony**

Office for Equity and Accessibility at 540-231-2010 or **Services for Students with Disabilities** at 540-231-3788, e-mail: ssd@vt.edu.

<http://oea.vt.edu/ada-accessibility-services/commencement-accessibility.html>

<http://www.vt.edu/commencement>

- **Individual College Ceremonies**

Visitors can drive near college ceremony locations, let out members in your party, then park in appropriate spaces. Blacksburg Transit can provide Paratransit services (BT Access) with advance notice by calling 540-961-1803. (Please see the VT Parking Services Map pdf (http://www.parking.vt.edu/documents/parking_map.pdf) and/or the VT Universal Access Campus Map (www.maps.vt.edu) for building locations, access routes, and parking information.)

For additional questions about accessibility to individual college ceremonies, please contact the individual college for specific information.