

Feb. 4: A message from President Tim Sands

To the Virginia Tech community,

Yesterday, a Virginia Tech student shared on social media her painful story about intimate partner violence. Law enforcement is connecting with the survivor in order to assist her, and the university is fully engaged at all levels. Please know that we remain committed to doing everything in our power to keep campus safe.

Part of keeping campus safe is to encourage individuals to speak out about gender-based violence and to seek help, support, and protection. A list of resources available at Virginia Tech and in our community is included below. Ultimately, it is the absolute refusal from each of us to accept sexual assault and relationship violence as part of any person's life experience that will create change in our culture and climate. Report what you hear and see, intervene when you can, and support survivors.

I also want to assure you that Virginia Tech's leaders, including those who represent faculty, staff, and students, share the frustration and concern in our community about gender-based violence. In November, we formed a 21-member working group for exactly this reason.

Virginia Tech is fully committed to action and change through a university-wide response. I encourage you to engage in the efforts of the Sexual Violence Culture and Climate Work Group. Together, we can change the culture. Together, we can end gender-based violence in our community.

Tim Sands,
President

If you experience intimate partner violence, there are several resources in our community and on our campus to support you. Please see related information at stopabuse.vt.edu. The website has guidance for filing anonymous or formal reports. In addition, assistance is available through the following offices and organizations:

- Women's Center at Virginia Tech: 540-231-7806
- Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley: 540-639-1123
- Katie Polidoro: Title IX Coordinator: 540-231-1824
- Cook Counseling Center: 540-231-6557
- Dean of Students Office: 540-231-3787
- Virginia Tech Police Department: 540-382-4343

New discount website, PerkSpot, offers savings for Virginia Tech employees

Virginia Tech has launched a new discount shopping website, available to anyone with a current Virginia Tech email address, including current employees, students, retirees, and alumni.

The online shop, managed by industry leader PerkSpot, features thousands of discounts in more than 25 categories, and the site is updated daily. It's completely free and optimized for use on desktop computers, tablets, and phones.

Discounts average 25 percent, with more than 10,000 available brands. You can filter the offerings by selecting your interest areas, such as electronics, home and garden, travel, pets, apparel, entertainment, outdoors and recreation, and much more.

To reach PerkSpot, go to the Hokie Discounts page at <https://hokiewellness.vt.edu/discounts.html>. You'll be asked to create an account with your vt.edu email address.

You can opt into PerkSpot's weekly email to receive a curated selection of discounts. Each week's email features both new and popular deals, as well as seasonal and thematic groupings of offers. Special gift guides are tailored to the season.

Virginia Tech continues pay supplement for eligible full-time staff employees

In March 2019 (<https://vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2019/03/staff-pay-increase-article032019.html>), Virginia Tech announced the implementation of a \$500 pay supplement (<https://www.hr.vt.edu/compensation-performance-management/compensation/staff-pay-increase.html>) to be issued to eligible university and classified staff employees with an annual salary of \$35,500 or less.

Based on input from the university's Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and other campus groups, and with continued executive support, the supplement will be issued again for 2022 on Feb. 16 to almost 600 staff members making \$35,500 or less.

The Virginia Tech 2022 pay supplement is intended to help defray employment costs such as parking or child care, and is part of the university's ongoing efforts create a culture of excellence throughout the organization.

This taxable supplement, which was announced in conjunction with a pay increase that took effect in July 2019, was first paid out in January 2020.

COVID-19 leave options

Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL) (<https://www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/leave/public-health-emergency-leave.html>) is available to employees for many COVID-19 related leave incidents including:

- To attend to an employee's own illness due to a confirmed positive test for COVID-19. The employee's return to the workplace must comport with the CDC's recommendations.
- To attend to an immediate family member who has contracted COVID-19 through a confirmed positive test.
- To quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19 if unable to continue your job duties remotely.
- Up to 8 hours of PHEL may be used to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine/booster and/or recover from side effects resulting from obtaining the vaccine.

For 2022, PHEL was reset effective Jan. 10. Employees can receive up to 40 hours (prorated based on FTE), depending on their job classification, to use during the 2022 leave year, which runs from Jan. 10, 2022 to Jan. 9, 2023. Any PHEL balances remaining from the 2021 leave year will not be added to the 2022 balance.

Once the allotment of PHEL is used, employees may use appropriate and available leave balances (Traditional or VSDP Sick Leave, Family-Personal Leave, Annual Leave, Compensatory Leave, Overtime Leave, Recognition Leave) or Leave without Pay for COVID-related leave needs.

Please note PHEL could be subject to expiration as the year progresses. Any additional information will be communicated as it becomes available. For questions regarding leave, please contact the Human Resources Leave Team at hrleave@vt.edu.

Need a KN95 mask? Pickup points established around Blacksburg, Roanoke campuses

KN95 masks for individuals will soon be available at six pickup points across the Blacksburg campus. Beginning Friday, Jan. 28, all members of the university community can retrieve one at these Blacksburg campus locations:

- Squires Student Center, at the information desk.
- McComas Hall, at the university recreation check-in desk.
- North End Center, in the main entrance lobby.
- Newman Library, lobby of the Alumni Mall entrance.
- Virginia Tech Police Department, at the first-floor security center desk through the double doors.
- Student Services Building, in the Hokie Passport Services lobby.
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- Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine, in the café, Dock C, and VMIA entrance.

And in Roanoke:

- Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, in the lobbies at 2 Riverside Circle and 4 Riverside Circle, Roanoke

Masks will also be distributed by Hokie Wellness at planned events.

These masks are free to the campus community. Individuals should continue to use these resources in a responsible manner.

If you have any questions, please email procurement@vt.edu or call 540-231-6221.

Hokie Wellness Walking Wednesday program underway

Hokie Wellness invites employees to participate in the Walking Wednesday program beginning Jan. 19.

Employees are encouraged to walk for 30 minutes each Wednesday throughout the semester, and track their involvement by either downloading the printable tracking card (<https://hokiewellness.vt.edu/Employees/programs.html>) or by documenting their involvement virtually using this form at <https://forms.gle/uw88HkXheLPqEc2r5>.

Each Wednesday from 12:15 - 1 p.m., a member of the Hokie Wellness team will be inside of Cassell Coliseum (at the entrance on Beamer Way) to stamp cards. Participants have the option to walk inside of Cassell if a covered, indoor option is preferred.

Our extended campus and Extension participants may either assign a designated stamper, or use the honor system and mark off each Wednesday walked. Employees working remotely may also use the honor system and mark off each Wednesday walked.

Those who walk at least 75 percent of the Wednesdays between Jan. 19 and May 4 will be entered into a drawing for a Yeti Roadie 24 Hard Cooler (\$200 value). (Please note that the winner will be taxed for the value of the prize.) Congratulations to our Fall 2021 drawing winner, Mellissa Been.

For more information or for questions, contact Hokie Wellness at hokiewellness@vt.edu.

Virginia Tech News is published weekly during fall and spring semester and bimonthly during the summer sessions, by the Division of Human Resources and the Office of University Relations as a service to university employees who do not have computer access on campus. For more information, or to discuss submission of items call 540-231-3852.

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