

Parking Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 4/24/2015

Are employees required to display VA parking stickers when parking at the offsite lot?

Yes. VA employees are required to display their VA parking sticker in their vehicle when parking in any VA lot. This includes the offsite lot located at 41 Folly Rd., President Street lot, on campus at the VAMC, CBOCs, and all offsite VA locations. All employees of the VAMC including the CBOCs, Annexes and CLC are required to register their vehicle(s) with VA Police Service and obtain a parking decal. Registration forms may be obtained in the PIV Office, room B251A. Employees must provide a valid state issued motor vehicle drivers license, current motor vehicle registration(s) and proof of insurance or financial responsibility to complete the registration process. Employees who drive more than one vehicle to work are required to provide registration and insurance information for each vehicle to obtain a parking decal. Decals will be placed on the inside of the back window (drivers side) or the left rear (drivers side) side window when there is no back window or it is not accessible.

Are children allowed to ride the shuttle from the offsite lot?

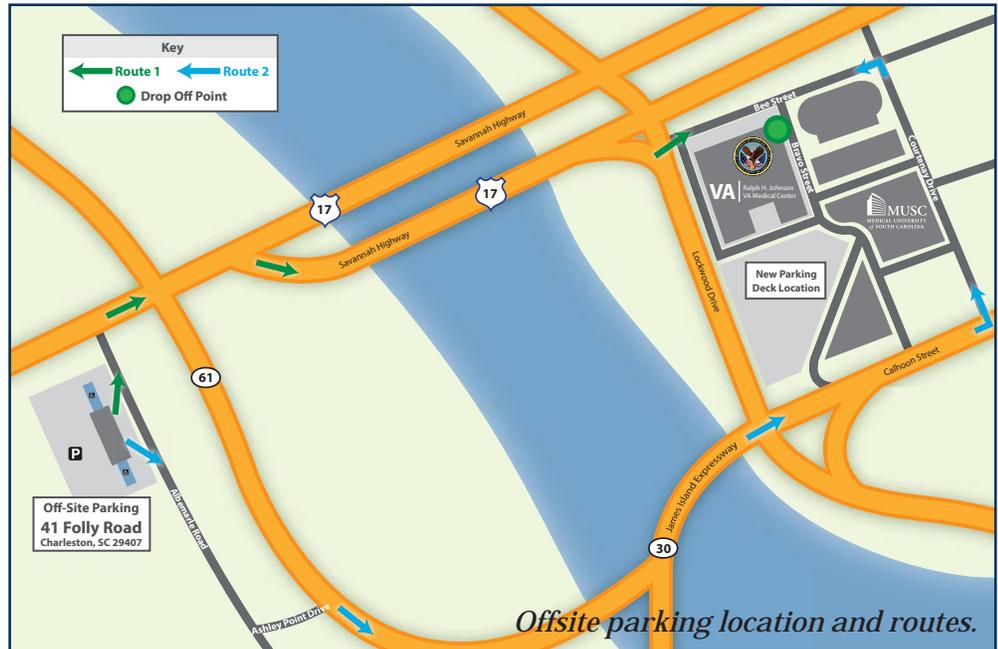
Yes, as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

Are there any future plans to make the exit wider at the offsite lot to provide a left and right turning lane?

There are no plans to wide the exit at the offsite lot.

Concrete Parking Block Warning

Some vehicles that are low to the ground have been getting caught on the parking blocks in the offsite parking lot. In certain circumstances, this will cause the rebar that keeps the parking block in place to be pulled from the ground. This can be potentially



damaging to the front of the driver's vehicle. Please take extra precaution if your vehicle rides low to the ground to ensure that you do not pull over the parking block when parking your car.

Why can't employees who ride motorcycles park at the VAMC when there are multiple motorcycle spots available?

Once construction on the parking deck begins, there will be approximately 15 motorcycle parking spaces at the VAMC. Parking assignments were negotiated with all three employee unions with each union having a percentage of parking spaces at the VAMC for their employee members. If you have questions regarding parking assignments please contact your Union president.

How can employees get access to park at the President Street lot?

The President Street lot is currently full and no employee stickers will be issued for parking at that location.

Could shuttles take the James Island Connector in the afternoon to

expedite getting to the offsite lot?

Yes. This suggestion was provided to the shuttle contractor and shuttles began taking that route in the afternoon on March 25.

Can a bench or seating area be added at the VAMC shuttle drop-off area?

Two benches have been added at the VAMC shuttle drop-off area.

Are there plans for any type of restroom or port-a-potty at the offsite lot?

There are no plans for restroom facilities or port-a-potties at the offsite lot at this time.

When will employees, Veterans and visitors start using the offsite parking lot and shuttle service?

March 23 is the first day for offsite parking and shuttle service. Employees should plan now to arrive earlier at the offsite lot to ensure sufficient time to catch the shuttle and arrive at your duty station on time.

Where is the offsite lot located?

41 Folly Road close to Porter Gaud School.

Questions? Leave a message with the Helpline at extension 7310.



Veterans Health Administration
Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center

Who should employees call if the shuttle is late or there are service problems?

The shuttle service is provided by Owl Inc. Transportation. Their customer service representative can be reached at (843) 226-1234.

Where will staff assigned to park offsite Monday - Friday park when they work weekends?

On weekends, staff assigned to the offsite lot should park at the VAMC on the Lockwood side of the building.

Will motorcycle parking be affected? If so, will proper safety features be in place at off-site parking and allow kick stands not to sink into the ground?

Once construction on the parking deck begins, there will be approximately 15 motorcycle parking spaces at the VAMC. There will be approximately 10 motorcycle spaces at the offsite lot. Motorcycle riders are encouraged to provide their own kickstand plates to prevent sinking. Kick plates for motorcycle riders are currently available at the PIV office.

In the event a Veteran spouse with an appointment rides to VAMC with employee scheduled to work, will the employee be allowed to park at the VAMC?

If the employee is scheduled to work they must park at their assigned parking location.

If there is an emergency to leave work, is there a policy in place to take shuttle back to vehicle without any delay?

Free emergency rides are available for carpoolers, bus riders, walkers and bicyclists in the tri-county area. For information go to <http://goodfootprint.com/charleston/emergency-ride-home/#.VOTzRjYCTct>.

Can van-pool users use the off-site lot on days where they have appointments and need to drive their own vehicle?

Yes. When Van Pool riders drive their own vehicles they should park at the offsite lot.

Where will government vehicles be parked? Where will personal vehicles be left while using GOV?

There are 10 spaces at the VAMC

designated for government motor pool vehicles (GOV) only. All other GOVs will be parked where authorized to include federal parking lot at the user's worksite such as CBOCs, James Island, Warehouse, etc. GOVs may be parked at the President Street lot if authorized to do so, or at the offsite lot. Personal vehicles will be parked in authorized areas according to employee parking assignments.

If shuttle stops at 11 pm, how do people who work after 11 pm get back to their car?

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they make their return shuttle within the established schedule and to make arrangements to return to their vehicle if they miss the shuttle because of failure to properly plan. In the rare instance that an employee's supervisor requires them to stay after 11 pm for direct patient care and the employee is unable to return to the offsite lot to retrieve their car earlier in the workday, the employee's supervisor should call ext. 7251 and arrangements will be made to return the employee to the offsite lot. Records will be kept to ensure that this privilege is not being abused.

How many spots are available now? How many spots at the offsite lot? Does the offsite lot account for growth? What do employees do if off-site lot is full? Is parking available at the President St. lot?

There are 736 spaces including 30 motorcycle spaces. There are approximately 600 spaces at the offsite lot. The offsite lot is one strategy of the parking plan. The President St. lot is not an overflow lot; employees must be assigned and registered for that lot to park there. In any situation where a lot is full, employees must find legal parking elsewhere.

Is it possible to get a reduced rate for parking at MUSC's garage for VA employees?

Discounts at MUSC's garage are not available.

Who has jurisdiction over the offsite lot in the event there are problems at the lot such as theft or vandalism - VA Police or Charleston Police Department?

There is concurrent jurisdiction between the City of Charleston and the VA. The

Charleston Police Department has primary responsibility for responding to and investigating incident All incidents must be reported to VA Police who will work with Charleston Police.

How will President Street's lot be affected?

The President Street lot will continue to operate under normal conditions.

Is the offsite shuttle for contracted employees too?

The offsite lot and shuttle service are for employees, patients and visitors. Contract employees such as contract nurses and locum tenans should park in the offsite lot, but not construction and other contract workers.

Where will employees riding the shuttle enter/exit the VAMC building?

Employees riding the shuttle will use the front entrance of the building. The Veterans Enrichment Center (VEC) building and the entrance into 1A on Bravo Street will be locked; employees are not to use these entrances/exits to ensure patient care is not disrupted. Veteran patient care taking place in these areas should not be disrupted. Therefore, these entrances should not be used by shuttle riders.

Are we keeping the offsite parking lot after the deck is built?

Yes.

Is the offsite lot fenced?

Yes.

Since the offsite lot will not be secured, how will people who should not park there be prevented from doing so?

VA Police will regularly patrol the lot and shuttle drivers are trained to look for VA ID. Employees are required to display their VA parking sticker. Employees should report any concerns of unauthorized motorists parking in the lot to VA Police.

What transportation options does CARTA provide?

CARTA offers several options including express routes. For more information go to <http://www.ridecarta.com>. VA offers a robust transit benefit program for employees who utilize public transportation. Employees must sign up prior to utilizing mass transit. For information on transit benefits go to

http://vaww.va.gov/ofcadmin/transben_page.asp

Are there lights at the offsite lot?

Yes, the parking lot will have lighting.

Is use of the offsite parking being promoted to Veterans?

Yes. VA cannot lease parking solely for employee use.

How far is the walk from the shuttle stop to the front door of the VAMC?

It is approximately 300 feet from the corner of Bravo and Alpha streets where the shuttle will drop off and pick up riders to the front door entrance of the VAMC. Riders should use the front door entrance. The walk from the back of the employee parking lot to the back door entrance is approximately 580 feet.

Will there be a bike rack at the offsite lot?

Yes.

Is the offsite parking accessible for part time (3/8 and below) employees or is the offsite parking only for full time employees?

Part-time employees (3/8 and below) with dual appointment such as MUSC or Roper will not be authorized to park at the VAMC unless authorized by the Chief of Police or designee due to special circumstances. Part-time employees (1/2 and above) may be authorized to park in the employee parking.

How were employees selected to park at the offsite lot vs. at the VAMC?

Parking assignments were negotiated with all three employee unions with each union having a percentage of parking spaces at the VAMC for their employee members. If you have questions regarding parking assignments please contact your Union president.

How and when will employees be notified of their parking assignments?

Employees who are assigned to the VAMC for parking were notified via email during the last week of February. Employees who did not receive a notification will be assigned to park at the offsite lot.

Where will employees working evening and overnight tours park?

Employees whose tour of duty begins at or after 2:00 p.m. may park on the Lockwood side of the VAMC. Please be aware that if you choose to use the offsite lot for parking, shuttle service ends at 11:00 p.m.

What hours will the shuttle run?

Shuttle services will operate from 4:30 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. During peak hours 6:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 - 5:30 p.m., shuttles will run every 5 minutes. At other times, shuttles will run every 15 minutes.

Where will the shuttle drop employees off at the VAMC?

The shuttle drop-off and pick-up location will be at the corner of Bravo and Charlie streets by the Veterans Enrichment Center.

Do I still need an employee sticker to park at the offsite lot?

Yes. In the event you drive an alternate vehicle, please notify VA Police as soon as you arrive at the VAMC.

Do I need to show my VA ID to ride the shuttle?

While showing ID is not required, shuttle drivers are trained to look for VA ID and may ask for it to ensure appropriate riders are using the shuttle service.

How will employees assigned to park at the VAMC access the employee lot?

Charleston VAMC is currently updating the Physical Access Control Systems (PACS) or card readers that control building, parking, and sensitive areas entrance. The new PACS system, which will be operational at the VAMC lot prior to the parking changes, requires swipe by the assigned employee PIV card. All employees should ensure PIV cards and those assigned to park at the VAMC must enroll in the PACS system. Contact VA Police for assistance at ext. 5521 or 5810.

How many shuttles will run during peak hours?

The contractor is providing 6 brand new buses (seating capacity of 25) and 5 vans (seating capacity of 12) for shuttle service during peak hours of 6:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. Each bus holds 25 passengers and features bucket seats. Vans hold 12 passengers. There will be

cameras inside the buses to help ensure driver and passenger safety, at the request of the contractor.

How often will shuttles run?

Shuttles will run every 5 minutes during peak hours, 6:00 - 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 - 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Shuttles will run every 15 minutes during non-peak hours. The offsite lot is closed on weekends.

Can employees walk from the offsite lot to the VAMC?

Due to the lack of sidewalks between the VAMC and the offsite lot, it is unsafe to walk between these locations. The shuttle service is provided for safe transport of employees and Veterans parking at the offsite lot.

How many spaces will there be at the offsite lot?

Approximately 600 spaces will be provided.

Where will handicap employees park?

There are 13 employee handicap spaces at the VAMC, and there will be 11 handicap spaces at the leased lot. Staff and patients parking at the offsite lot should be able to board the shuttles independently. Employees driving wheelchair vans will park at the VAMC. VAMC handicap parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis. In the event employees with handicap parking decals park at the VAMC in other than handicap spaces, VA Police will investigate.

What happens if an employee parks in an area they are not assigned to?

Parking in areas other than those assigned could result in a ticket, disciplinary action and revocation of parking privileges for the employee.

Will there be a shelter?

Yes, there will be an open-air shelter with benches that will accommodate approximately 60 people at a time.

Will there be Security at the offsite lot?

While there will not be security staff stationed at the lot, there will be a phone that rings directly to VA Police. That phone is located in the shelter.

Will Van Pools still park at the VAMC? Are there designated spaces for Van Pools?

Yes, Van Pools will park at the VAMC in their designated spaces. We encourage employees to join Van Pools and establish new Van Pools. As new Van Pools are established we will work with the employees to designate a parking space. Employees who carpool, i.e. not part of a VA-sponsored Van Pool, will park at the offsite lot.

When will construction begin on the parking deck?

The contractor will take possession of the construction area on April 6. The Groundbreaking Ceremony will be held on March 27.

How long will construction take?

Construction will take approximately 16-20 months.

Will construction on Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the parking deck be concurrent, or will the deck be open for a short time and then close for another construction period to complete Phase 2?

The VAMC is awaiting approval of the Phase 2 portion of the parking deck. Therefore, construction is not expected to be concurrent.

How many parking spaces will the VA gain from building the parking deck?

The parking deck is a two-phase project with Phase 1 building 2 stories and setting the foundation for Phase 2 future expansion. Phase 2 is requested in the FY 2017 construction cycle with VA. Phase 2 will add 4 more levels for a total deck capacity of 900 parking spaces. At the same time, we will maintain the offsite parking lease even after the deck is built adding 600 more spaces for employees and Veterans.

Can I park overnight at the offsite lot?

No. The offsite lot will be closed from 11:30 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. on weekdays and closed on weekends.

Am I guaranteed a space at the offsite lot?

Parking will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Please ensure you arrive early to get a space and allow time for

riding the shuttle in order to arrive at your duty station on time. The lot may be full at times and parking rules will be enforced.

Will the buses be air conditioned and heated?

Yes, they are new climate controlled buses.

Do we need to tip the drivers?

No tipping is allowed.

Is there a hotline employees can call to ask questions?

Yes. Employees may call the Operations Helpline at ext. 7310 to leave their questions. Messages will be checked daily and responses provided to all questions on a weekly basis.