

VCU POLICE DEPARTMENT



ACCESS CONTROL FAQ

WHAT CARD DO I USE?

Your building is currently equipped with a magnetic stripe card reader. Any VCUCard can be used to access buildings with access control magnetic stripe card readers.

HOW DO I PRESENT MY CARD?

The card needs to be placed through the reader's swipe slot with the magnetic stripe furthest from you and facing right. The photo should be facing the larger side of the reader. The card must be held flush to the back of the slot while swiping completely through. The lights will change on the reader once the swipe has been properly completed.

WHAT DO THE LIGHTS MEAN?

When the door is locked the reader will show an amber light. This means you need to present your card for access. The reader will flash green when your access has been confirmed. This means you are granted access. The reader will flash red (or orange and amber) when you are not currently on the access list. This means 'access denied'. If the reader doesn't flash any color, the reader is not reading your card.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN A READER DENIES ME ACCESS WHEN I SHOULD BE GRANTED ACCESS?

After normal business hours, contact the Campus Police at 8-1196. The Emergency Communications Center Officer can check the system to determine if you are on the access list. If you are on the access list, the operator can activate a command for the door to unlock. If you are not on the list, an officer may be sent to your location to assist in determining your need for access. Contact your building manager the next business day if you were not on the authorization list.

HOW DO I GET OUT OF THE BUILDING WITHOUT SETTING OFF AN ALARM?

The main access doors of most buildings are unlocked during normal operation hours. When they are locked, the motion detector above the door will unlock it or you can push the EXIT button beside the door to release the lock. Some buildings are equipped with "touch sense" crash bars, which unlock upon touching them. Doors that do not have EXIT buttons motion detector releases or touch sense bars are not to be used when the building is locked. Use of one of these doors will trigger an intrusion alarm at the Campus Police. Use of these exits shall be limited to emergency purposes only. Any other usage (unauthorized) of these doors may be considered a criminal offense.

WHAT TIMES DO I USE THE CARD READERS?

The building coordinator determines the times for the security system to lock the building (with influence from the users). Buildings are usually locked during the evening and early morning hours and weekends. The readers control access during these closed hours.

CAN I BE TRAPPED IN THE BUILDING DURING A POWER OUTAGE OR FIRE?

During a power failure, your new electronic security system will operate from a backup battery. If there is a communication loss between the doors and the security panel, the doors will automatically unlock. All doors will unlock when a fire alarm system is activated. Each building's security panel ensure that all locking functions will operate normally when the phone line between the VCU Police server and an alarm system is interrupted.

HOW DO I EXIT THROUGH EMERGENCY EXIT DOORS?

Emergency exit doors are marked. They shall be used only in case of an emergency. When used, a signal is sent to the Campus Police, causing an officer to be dispatched. Any other use of these doors must be authorized through your department head or building manager and the VCU Police.

WHAT COMMON PROBLEMS CAN BE ENCOUNTERED WITH THIS SYSTEM?

The new electronic security system may develop some of the same problems as the mechanical locking system. The difference is the new system alerts the Campus Police of most of the problems.

- Damaged doors and poor closure devices are common causes for doors not closing. Please make sure all doors close completely behind you. If a door has a problem closing, contact the building mgr./coordinator immediately or the Campus Police during non business hours.
- Doors are not permitted to be held open for longer than 30 seconds when the doors are locked. Please do not hold open or prop open any electronically controlled door. VCU Police must be notified in advance whenever a door will be held open.
- Some doors may appear closed, but are not closed enough for the magnetic lock to catch. This means the door is unlocked. The Police will receive a 'Forced Open' alarm when the next person enters without authorization. Police will be dispatched, however, you will have an unknown person in your building until then. Please report this problem immediately.
- The electronic access system can not prevent an unauthorized person from entering with an authorized person. Please make sure anyone entering with you is authorized. Please observe all common safety procedures when in the building.