

South Carolina Department of Public Safety



Office of the Director

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POLICY	200.10
EFFECTIVE DATE	AUGUST 1, 2017
SUBJECT	DRESS CODE
REPLACES POLICY DATED	APRIL 26, 2013
APPLICABLE LEGAL AUTHORITIES	N/A
APPLICABLE STANDARDS	26.1.1, 41.3.4
APPLICABLE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)	N/A
FORMS	N/A
DISTRIBUTION	TO ALL EMPLOYEES

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I. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS or department) employees in regard to dress code and appearance so the department projects a positive image in all interactions with the public. [26.1.1]

II. POLICY

All SCDPS employees shall dress in a neat, professional, businesslike manner during working hours, especially in situations requiring contact with the public. Employees must be groomed in a manner befitting their work assignments. [26.1.1] Some assignments necessitate a more casual style of dress which, when confined to restricted areas, may be deemed appropriate. Some casual style of dress is permitted only with advance approval of the employee's immediate supervisor. Any questions concerning personal attire should be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Body Art - Piercings, intentional and symbolic scarification or branding, etc.

Division Director - The Chief Financial Officer; Bureau of Protective Services Chief; Human Resources Director; Office of Professional Responsibility Chief; Office of Strategic Services, Accreditation, Policy and Inspections Major; General Counsel; Communications Director; Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs Director; Office of Information Technology Director; Legislative Liaison; Immigration Enforcement Unit Lieutenant; Colonel for Highway Patrol and Colonel for State Transport Police.

Tattoo - A method of decorating the skin by inserting colored substances under the surface.

Visible Tattoo/Body Art - Notwithstanding prohibited areas defined in this policy (e.g. neck, face, hands, head), a tattoo/body art located anywhere between the wrist and two (2) inches above the elbow

that is seen by another while wearing the summer uniform shirt or anywhere between the ankle and two (2) inches above the knee that is seen by another while wearing summer uniform shorts (BPS).

IV. UNIFORMED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

A. Uniforms

All uniformed personnel shall be subject to the standards defined by their law enforcement division. [26.1.1] All sworn officers shall wear only such clothing and equipment as issued by the department to exclude the tattoo cover-up sleeve which shall be provided by the trooper/officer at his/her own expense. All request for exceptions to this policy shall be in writing. [41.3.4]

B. Grooming

Unless assigned to the Immigration Enforcement Unit (IEU) or an undercover enforcement assignment with the authorization of the appropriate Division Director, all SCDPS commissioned officers shall adhere to the following grooming guidelines:

1. Male Troopers/Officers

- a. The top of the head shall be neatly groomed. Hair shall present a tapered appearance, not to fall over the ears or eyebrows and is not to touch the collar except for closely cut hair on the neck. Block cuts on the back are not allowed.
- b. Hair shall not be styled as to present a bulky or brushy appearance with or without headgear and is not to interfere with the wearing of issued headgear.
- c. Sideburns are to be neatly trimmed and shall have a clean horizontal line not extending below the lowest portion of the ear opening at the base of the earlobe.
- d. Beards, goatees, and moustaches are not permitted.
- e. Wigs and hairpieces are permitted only if they conform to previously mentioned criteria.

2. Female Troopers/Officers

- a. Hair shall be neatly groomed and shall not hang over the collar. Hair in the front shall be groomed so that it does not fall below the band of headgear. Hair may be worn slightly over the ears as long as it does not interfere with the headgear. Ponytails and plaited hair are not permitted.
- b. Buns and French braids are permitted on top of the head in an attractive manner provided that they do not interfere with issued headgear and do not hang over the uniform collar.
- c. Wigs and hairpieces are permitted provided that they meet previously stated criteria.

C. Tattoos/Body Art

1. Content

- a. The display of any offensive image, phrase, or other expression contained within a Visible Tattoo/Body Art shall be prohibited. Offensive images, phrases, or other expressions shall include but not be limited to:
 1. Depictions of nudity, violence, or criminal activity;
 2. Sexually explicit/vulgar art, words, or profane language;
 3. Symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group; or
 4. Initials, symbolism, or acronyms that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations, gangs, or activities.
- b. Visible Tattoos/Body Art may not contain any unapproved reference to SCDPS or any of its divisions or any political affiliation or message.

- c. If a current SCDPS trooper/officer is unclear regarding content of a Tattoo/Body Art, he/she shall submit a written request prior to receiving the tattoo, through his/her chain of command, to the appropriate Division Director seeking approval of the committee referenced in Section (IV)(C)(3) of this policy.
2. Location
 - a. Tattoos/Body Art are not permitted on the neck, face, head, or the area of the chest that would be visible while an SCDPS officer is wearing official attire or in uniform wearing a properly-fitting crew neck t-shirt.
 - b. Tattoos/Body Art are not permitted on the hands with the exception of a single band tattoo on one finger of either the right or left hand that cannot exceed 3/8 of an inch in width.
 3. Approval
 - a. The director or his/her designee shall appoint a committee to review requests for Tattoos/Body Art made by current SCDPS officers or prospective Law Enforcement Division applicants. The committee shall convene as often as necessary and provide a recommendation to the appropriate Division Director regarding which requests to approve or disapprove.
 - b. This committee shall be chaired by a Highway Patrol Major and consist of, at a minimum:
 1. An officer from the each of the law enforcement divisions (Highway Patrol, State Transport Police, Bureau of Protective Services, and the Immigration Enforcement Unit); and
 2. A member from the Office of Human Resources.
 - c. The Division Director shall have final approval after review of the committee recommendation.
 4. Appearance While in Uniform
 - a. Except as specified in Section (IV)(C)(2)(b), under no circumstances shall a Tattoo/Body Art be seen by another while the officer is in any SCDPS uniform or off duty in a position to be recognized as an SCDPS officer (i.e., working special assignments or off duty assignments while considered to be representing the department in uniform or approved civilian attire). Officers with approved and previously-defined Visible Tattoos have the following options to cover the Tattoo(s)/Body Art:
 1. The Tattoo(s)/Body Art shall be covered by a Tattoo/Body Art cover-up sleeve without any design or logo that most closely matches the skin tone of the officer and completely covers the Tattoo(s)/Body Art. Cover-up sleeves shall be approved by the appropriate Division Director or his/her designee and provided by the officer. The officer shall ensure the cover-up sleeve remains clean, in good working condition, and professionally presentable to the public at all times.
 2. During the optional periods and the period in which summer uniforms are permitted, officers having Visible Tattoos shall be required to cover the Tattoo(s)/Body Art with either the department-approved cover-up sleeve or with the department-approved duty-specific long-sleeved uniform shirt.
 5. Compliance

Officers having Visible Tattoos prior to the effective date of this policy are subject to all provisions outlined in this policy and have sixty (60) days from the effective date of this policy to be in compliance.

D. Jewelry and Piercings

1. Jewelry and body piercings which are visible at any time while on duty, in uniform, or off duty in a position to be recognized as an SCDPS officer (i.e., working special assignments or off duty assignments while considered to be representing the department in uniform or approved civilian attire) are prohibited with the exception of female officers as outlined below.
2. Earrings shall only be permitted for wear by female officers, and if worn, shall:
 - a. be worn in only one (1) hole in each lower lobe,
 - b. be small, professional, and conservative, and
 - c. not distract from the appearance of the uniform.
3. Necklace chains shall not be visible.

E. Body Modifications

Notwithstanding medically necessary or approved procedures, abnormal body modifications to any area of the body visible while in any authorized uniform or attire are prohibited.

V. NON-LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL [26.1.1]

A. Business Casual Attire

1. The department allows business casual attire at the Blythewood and Broad River facilities for all non-uniformed personnel. However, each Division Director shall approve business casual dress for his/her area's function. If approved, employees may wear business casual clothing unless his/her assigned duties and responsibilities dictate continued wear of normal business or uniformed attire that day.
2. Business casual dress for men includes shirts with collars and/or buttons, slacks or "Dockers" style pants and casual shoes.
3. Business casual dress for women includes dresses, blouses, skirts, slacks, and casual shoes. The appropriate length for skirts should be no shorter than 5 inches above the knee.
4. Nice looking athletic shoes are appropriate for both men and women.
5. Unacceptable clothing for employees includes spandex, tank tops, halters, spaghetti strap or strapless tops and dresses, midriff tops, "flip-flops", sweat or wind suits/pants, leggings, stretch pants, leotards, baseball caps of any kind, skorts and shorts (whether dressy or casual), jeans, clothes identified as construction type or mechanic type, athletic T-shirts, both plain and those sporting team logos, brand names, or pictures are not appropriate in business attire.
6. Employees with assignments such as warehouse, mail room, and building maintenance should discuss their dress needs with their supervisor to arrive at an acceptable dress code suitable for their duties.

B. Casual Fridays

1. Fridays are designated a "casual day." However, each Division Director shall approve "casual Fridays" for his/her area's function. Denim pants, skirts, or dresses are acceptable attire. The denim clothing cannot be torn, faded, tattered, or frayed and shall be appropriate for an office environment. Shorts, halter tops, jogging suits, sweat shirts or sweat pants, T-shirts, and other similar informal wear are not appropriate types of clothing. Clothes identified as constructions type or mechanic type, athletic T-shirts, both plain and those sporting team logos, brand names, or pictures, are not appropriate in a business environment.
2. When attending meetings on Fridays at other government agencies or private entities, employees should dress in accordance with normal business attire.

C. Tattoos/Body Art

1. The display of any offensive image, phrase, or other expression shall be prohibited. Offensive images, phrases, or other expressions shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Depictions of nudity, violence, or criminal activity;
 - b. Sexually explicit/vulgar art, words, or profane language;
 - c. Symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group; or
 - d. Initials, symbolism, or acronyms that represent criminal or historically oppressive organizations, gangs, or activities.

D. Jewelry and Piercings

Jewelry and body piercings which are visible at any time while in the workplace shall not distract from the appearance of the business casual dress code.

E. Body Modifications

Notwithstanding medically necessary or approved procedures, abnormal body modifications to any area of the body which are visible are prohibited.

VI. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors shall be responsible for the consistent adherence to dress standards by employees under their supervision. Factors such as the degree of public contact, the potential for disruption within the workplace and maintaining an overall professional appearance shall be considered in determining suitability of certain types of clothing for the working environment. Supervisors shall apply dress standards consistently for all employees under their supervision. Failure of employees to comply with supervisory directives concerning appropriate dress and grooming may be grounds for disciplinary action in accordance with SCDPS Policy 400.08 (Disciplinary Action) and 400.08G (Guidelines for Progressive Disciplinary Action). [26.1.1]

By Order of the Director Date: August 1, 2017
<i>Leroy Smith</i>
Director S C Department of Public Safety
The Original Signed Copy of this Policy is on File in the Office of Stragic Services, Accreditation, Policy, and Inspections