

# Asheville Police Department Policy Manual

**Chapter:** 3 - Code of Conduct

**Original Issue:** 6/1/1996

**Policy:** 302 - Uniform Standards

**Last Revision:** 10/24/2025

**Previously:** 1120 - Uniforms and Equipment



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## Associated Directives

[City of Asheville Ethics Policy](#)

[Policy 303 - Grooming and Appearance](#)

[Policy 2000 - Awards](#)

[Standard Issue Uniform & Equipment Items](#)

## Introduction

The purpose of this directive is to establish rules and regulations governing the wearing of police uniforms and related equipment. The Asheville Police Department recognizes that the personal appearance of its employees directly impacts public confidence and, thereby, the ability of personnel to perform their official duties.

## Policy Statement

All employees are representatives of the Asheville Police Department (APD) and, in that capacity, must present a professional image to the public. Therefore, it is the department's policy that only authorized equipment and apparel will be used and/or worn, and such issued apparel will be maintained in a neat and clean fashion at all times.

## Rules and Procedures

### 302.1 Department Uniforms

- A. All employees (sworn or non-sworn) will appear for duty neat, clean, and orderly.
- B. All employees, except as noted, must wear the regulation uniform while on duty or wherever representing the department. [22.1.6] [1.23]
- C. Department uniform and equipment items will be maintained in good condition and a neat and clean fashion at all times. Employees are not to wear uniforms with tears, signs of repair, or needing repair.
- D. All sworn personnel will maintain at least one complete patrol uniform as issued by the department and all assigned equipment in operational order, even when assigned to a specialized unit or a non-uniformed position.
- E. The department uniform will not be worn off duty except as follows:
  - 1. Acting as a representative of the department in an official capacity.
  - 2. Performing authorized extra-duty employment. [22.2.5 b]
  - 3. Reporting to or returning home from duty.
- F. When worn off duty, items that openly display department logos must be worn with discretion and not conflict with the [City of Asheville Ethics Policy](#) or uniform standards.
- G. While performing extra-duty employment assignments, only Class A or Class B uniform protocols are permitted unless otherwise authorized.
- H. Uniformed employees will only use or wear non-issued or approved equipment or clothing with authorization from the chief of police or designee, or if otherwise permitted by department policy. [41.3.4]
- I. Employees attending district court may wear the uniform of the day or business attire.
- J. Upon separation from employment, all department-issued uniforms and equipment must be returned to the department.
- K. Approved polo shirts issued to officers as part of a patrol uniform must have a cloth badge clearly displayed.

- L. The chief of police or designee must approve changes to assignment-based uniforms and/or equipment **and may authorize alternative uniforms, non-uniform clothing (e.g., plainclothes), or alternative appearance standards.** [1.23]

### 302.2 Standard Equipment

- A. Unless otherwise specified, officers will wear the following issued equipment with uniform varieties unless alternate wear items are otherwise permitted by policy:
  - 1. Issued firearm and authorized holster
  - 2. Handgun magazines and closed magazine holder
  - 3. Department-issued handcuffs with pouch
  - 4. Taser (if assigned)
  - 5. Radio/holder
  - 6. Glove pouch (optional)
  - 7. Flashlight/holder
  - 8. O/C spray
  - 9. ASP baton/holder
  - 10. Department-issued cell phone
- B. The issued tourniquet and holder are recommended to be carried on the person and may be worn in a manner chosen by the officer to maintain a professional appearance.
  - 1. On-body tourniquet wear is optional; however, they must always be available in patrol vehicles.
  - 2. The on-body wear of a tourniquet is mandatory for high-risk incidents, such as the execution of search warrants or Emergency Response Team operations.
- C. Officers may wear or carry the following items with uniform varieties:
  - 1. A department-issued multi-tool.
  - 2. A personally owned secondary handcuff set (approved model) with a pouch or single snap leather handcuff strap. Officers may carry a maximum of two (2) sets of handcuffs on the Sam Browne belt. [41.3.4]
  - 3. A magazine and handcuff combination pouch instead of the department-issued magazine holders and handcuff pouch, **or open magazine holders instead of the department-issued closed magazine holders.** The item must be the model approved by the Finance and

Support Division and purchased with the officer's equipment stipend.  
[41.3.4]

4. A small utility knife attached to the under belt or pants, provided that the knife is concealed so that the visible portion of the handle does not rise higher than the top of the spare magazine carrier.
- D. Officers in special assignments may wear uniform and equipment items in an alternate manner as appropriate to their assignment and approved by the chief of police or designee.
- E. Due to safety concerns, employees requiring suspenders may purchase a covert harness for uniformed duty. The covert harness is to be worn under the shirt, lessening the chance of being used in an assault.
1. Workers' compensation required issuance of a covert harness must be processed through the City of Asheville Health Services and Risk Management. Employees may contact the Logistics Unit to coordinate uniform alterations to accommodate a harness.
  2. Medically required issuance of a covert harness (non-workers' compensation) may be filed with personal insurance and is to be purchased by the employee.
  3. Employees requesting a covert harness for convenience or comfort will be responsible for the cost of the harness and uniform alterations.

### **302.3 Standard Uniform Protocol**

- A. Reference [Section 302.6](#) for guidance on insignia placement for all uniform protocols.
- B. Executive staff dress uniforms are worn for special events, ceremonies, or as designated by the chief of police. The executive staff dress uniform consists of:
1. Dress jacket
  2. White long-sleeved dress shirt
  3. Blue tie with APD badge tie-tac
  4. Dress trousers with an accent stripe
  5. Uniform shoes
  6. Dress cap

- C. The Class A uniform is considered to be the dress uniform worn for special events, ceremonies, funerals, superior court, or as otherwise designated by the chief of police. The Class A uniform consists of:
1. Standard issue long-sleeve uniform shirt
  2. Uniform trousers
  3. Uniform shoes or boots
  4. Tie with APD badge tie tac or tie bar
  5. Leather duty gear/equipment
  6. Dress cap (as directed)
- D. Although the Class A uniform may be worn for patrol functions, the Class B uniform is considered the standard-issued uniform worn for routine daily duties by designated officers. The Class B uniform may be worn in one of the following varieties:
1. Standard issue short sleeve uniform shirt, with an open collar and no tie, with only the top button unbuttoned, standard uniform trousers, shoes or boots, and leather duty gear/equipment. Long-sleeve shirts will not be worn underneath the short-sleeved uniform shirt. The issued ball cap is optional.
  2. Standard issue long sleeve uniform shirt with open collar, wearing a mock turtleneck/turtleneck (navy or black) or t-shirt (white, black, or navy) underneath the uniform shirt, uniform trousers, shoes or boots, and leather duty gear/equipment. The approved sweater, with or without a tie, is optional.
- E. The Class C uniform is considered standard wear for training and may be worn for other assigned duties as directed. The Class C uniform consists of:
1. Department-issued khaki or green duty pants.
  2. Navy short-sleeved or long-sleeve polo shirt.
  3. Duty gear/equipment as required by assignment/training.
- F. Uniformed non-sworn employees are to wear a variant of the Class C uniform, which clearly distinguishes them from sworn officers as follows:
1. Property & Evidence and Forensic Services: the department-designated gray short or long-sleeve uniform shirt and black uniform pants.

- G. Officers may be authorized for assignment-based uniforms. The Finance and Support Division will maintain [a listing of authorized uniforms and equipment items](#) for assignment-based uniforms.
- H. Specialized uniforms or equipment items for tactical team members will be worn per respective policies or as approved by the chief of police or designee.

### 302.4 Uniform Accessories

- A. Headgear:
  - 1. The issued 5-star dress hat will be worn outdoors with Class A uniforms during formal events as directed by the chief of police.
  - 2. A simple, solid black knit hat (beanie style) may be worn during inclement or cold weather.
  - 3. Department-approved ball caps may be worn at the discretion of employees.
- B. Sunglasses: Officers will not wear sunglasses that are colored or designed in such a manner as to detract from the uniform. Brightly colored frames and mirrored lenses are prohibited. Sunglasses accessories, such as headbands, are to be black in color and conservative in nature.
- C. Jackets and sweaters: Uniformed employees may wear department-approved jackets and sweaters during cold or inclement weather.
- D. Rain gear: Department-issued rain gear may be worn as needed during inclement weather.
- E. Uniform tie: The APD badge tie-tac or tie bar will be worn in the center of the tie between the third and fourth buttons.
- F. Badge:
  - 1. Uniformed officers will wear their department-issued badge, indicating appropriate rank.
  - 2. Officers in staff or administrative positions must wear a badge on a belt or neck chain.
- G. Shoulder patch: The authorized department patch will be worn on both sides of all issued uniform shirts, except for training polos. Depending on the assignment,

department-approved specialty unit patches may be worn with approval from the chief of police or designee.

H. Gloves:

1. Search gloves must conform to the following guidelines:
  - a. Gloves must be black. Any branding or logos will not be reflective or brightly colored.
  - b. Gloves cannot be leaded, have hardened knuckles, or any other type of armor.
2. Officers working uniformed patrol may wear non-department-issued gloves, subject to approval, that meet all department requirements. [41.3.4]
3. Latex or nitrile gloves should be worn when necessary to protect employees from health hazards.
4. Reflective gloves may be worn when directing traffic.
5. At any time during the year, officers assigned to motorcycle or bicycle duty may wear gloves while operating a department motorcycle or bicycle, writing citations, or performing other motorcycle or bicycle operations duties. These gloves may be fingerless at the officer's discretion.

I. Footwear:

1. Shoes or boots worn by uniformed officers will be black, without steel toe or ornamentation. Sharp or pointed-toe, western-style boots or riding heels are not permitted. Trouser legs will not be tucked into footwear.
2. All employees wearing a department uniform will wear black or navy blue socks.
3. Employees wearing shorts as part of their uniform will wear short black or navy blue athletic socks.

J. Duty gear:

1. Department-authorized duty gear for officers will be black and consist of a Sam Browne-style equipment belt, a safety firearm holster for all handguns, a handcuff case, ammunition carriers, and an ASP baton holder.

2. Executive staff wearing the dress uniform blazer will wear black leather or Garrison belts that will substitute for the standard Sam Browne-style equipment belt.
3. Administrative staff may wear the Garrison belt instead of the Sam Browne belt with the duty handgun and holster.

### 302.5 Stipends

- A. All sworn officers and uniformed non-sworn employees, except the chief of police and bureau commanders, will receive an annual stipend to purchase replacement uniforms and equipment items.
- B. Uniformed employees will be provided with all necessary initial equipment upon hire. Annual stipends will be used to purchase authorized items specified by the Finance and Support Division.
- C. The Finance and Support Division will provide [a listing of authorized equipment and uniform items](#) that will be purchased using the stipend. The stipend will also be used to cover any necessary uniform dry cleaning or alterations.
- D. Officers in plainclothes assignments will be provided an additional clothing stipend.
  1. Officers assigned to the Criminal Investigations Section and the Professional Standards Section will be provided a clothing stipend twice yearly in January and July. The stipend will be prorated according to the time in the assignment. [22.1.6]
  2. Sworn administrative staff with the option of plainclothes assignments will be provided a clothing stipend annually in January. The stipend will be prorated according to the time in the assignment. [22.1.6]

### 302.6 Insignia

- A. The badge will be worn above the left breast pocket. It will be kept clean and untarnished. The "serving since" ribbon plate showing the officer's sworn date, based on uninterrupted law enforcement service, will be attached to the name tag with the attached accreditation emblem and will be worn centered above the right breast pocket.
- B. Department and technical award ribbons will be worn according to [Policy 2000 – Awards](#).

- C. Sergeant chevrons will be worn centered on the crease of the sleeve, ¼ inch below the department patch.
- D. Executive staff dress jackets will be worn with gold stripes denoting rank on each sleeve and include five (5) stripes for the chief of police, four (4) stripes for deputy chiefs, and three (3) stripes for captains.
- E. Collar pins respective to rank will be worn on the collar 1/4 inch above the seam as follows:
  - 1. Sworn officer: APD collar pins, silver in color
  - 2. Sergeant: APD collar pins, gold in color
  - 3. Lieutenant: single bar, gold in color
  - 4. Captain: double bar, gold in color
  - 5. Deputy chief: chief's choice
  - 6. Chief: chief's choice

### **302.7 Business Attire**

- A. Civilian employees who are not required to wear uniforms will conform to standards normally worn by office personnel (non-casual) unless otherwise directed. The employee's immediate supervisor will determine if their attire is appropriate and professional.
- B. Denim/jeans of any color will not be worn unless approved by the chief of police.
- C. Shoes must be professional in nature.
- D. Business attire for non-uniformed male officers is a business suit or sport coat, dress shirt and tie, dress slacks and dress shoes, or polo shirt and dress slacks.
  - 1. Collarless shirts of any kind/type will not be worn.
  - 2. Ties must have a conservative and contemporary length, width, design, and color.
- E. Business attire for non-uniformed female officers is a dress suit/pantsuit, dress pants and blouse, dress shoes or dress boots, a knee-length skirt and blouse, or a polo shirt and dress slacks.
- F. Officers in a plainclothes assignment will carry their approved duty firearm and badge while on duty and will do so in a manner that will not bring undue attention to such equipment. Officers may also carry O/C spray, handcuff case, and/or an ASP baton.

- G. Officers in plainclothes assignment will maintain their appearance, apparel, equipment, accessories, and leather goods to the same standards as required of uniformed officers.
- H. When officers who normally work in plainclothes assignments work in uniform, they must meet the same uniform and equipment standards as uniformed officers.
- I. During the execution of search warrants or other police emergencies, officers in plainclothes assignments will wear soft body armor and tourniquets, with their badges or police identification in full view. [41.3.6]

### **302.8 Ballistic Vests**

- A. The department provides ballistic vests to all officers. [41.3.5] [6.23]
- B. At their discretion, officers are authorized to purchase and use small, lightweight, protective armor enhancements ("speed plates") designed to be inserted into the chest pocket of their issued soft body armor. [41.3.4]
- C. All uniformed officers are required to wear ballistic vests during their tour of duty while engaged in field operations. This requirement includes uniformed officers engaged in extra-duty secondary employment. [41.3.5] [6.23]
- D. Ballistic vests will be worn by officers engaged in pre-planned, high-risk, and/or tactical situations. Examples include, but are not limited to, planned search warrant execution, drug raids, and serving arrest warrants. [41.3.6]
- E. Officers will be instructed in caring for and cleaning ballistic vests and are held responsible for maintaining them properly [and in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and recommendations.](#) [6.23]
- F. Officers may wear exterior ballistic vest carriers based on assignments approved by the chief of police or designee.
- G. Any damage to the ballistic vests or other unsafe conditions will be reported to the officer's immediate supervisor for appropriate action. Officers must report any condition where the ballistic vest no longer fits properly. [6.23]
- H. Officers exempted from the routine wearing of ballistic vests must carefully weigh the risks of not wearing them and ensure their issued ballistic vest is readily accessible while on duty (normally in the officer's assigned vehicle). [41.3.5]

### **302.9 Uniform and Equipment Replacement**

- A. Any department-issued uniform and/or equipment items will need to be repaired or replaced if:
  - 1. The item is no longer functional due to normal wear and tear.
  - 2. The item is damaged in the course of the employee's duties.
- B. Requests for replacing items not listed on the stipend list will be submitted via standard procedures through the Support Section.

By order of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ML 24".

Michael Lamb  
Chief of Police