



Policy 312

Subject PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE STANDARDS	
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By Order of the Police Commissioner

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POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to encourage public confidence and respect, to instill a degree of personal discipline among Professional Staff and Sworn Members, to facilitate easy recognition of officers in the field, and to promote officer safety and performance.

The following guidelines establish for the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) a gender-neutral professional appearance standard for Professional Staff and Sworn Members. This policy will apply to all members of the department, unless otherwise specified, to include uniformed overtime and uniformed secondary employment.

Unless otherwise authorized, all on-duty members shall appear neat and professional in appearance and shall project an image of authority, safety, and professionalism to the public at all times.

For the purposes of this policy, “Member” shall refer to all BPD members, including both sworn and Professional Staff. If a particular policy directive pertains to only sworn or Professional Staff members, then the policy will state “Sworn Member” or “Professional Staff.”

DEFINITIONS

Professional Appearance – the way an individual presents themselves while on duty and/or representing the department. It involves grooming, attire, and overall demeanor that align with the standards and expectations of a given professional environment.

GENERAL

1. While on duty, a member's appearance shall not compromise the safety of the member, nor impair the member's ability to effectively perform their job functions.
2. If there is a requirement that references a unit's SOP AND the unit either does not have an official SOP or the SOP requires revisions, then the unit's Deputy Commissioner or highest-ranking Commander may submit a Form 95 to the Police Commissioner's office for approval outlining the unit's approved professional appearance standards.
3. All members, regardless of their assignment, shall adhere to the standards set forth in this policy and [Policy 1504, Departmental Uniforms and Equipment](#).
4. Accommodations to these standards shall be considered on a case-by-case basis where a member demonstrates a credible medical, religious, cultural, or gender identity-related concern (e.g.- non-binary or gender- transitioning members). In such instances, the member shall submit a request for an accommodation to the Human Resources Section (HRS) via email at HumanResourcesSection@BaltimorePolice.org using an Administrative Report (Form 95).
5. HRS shall process the request for the accommodations from these standards and shall not provide a response to the member without first conferring with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Section (EODS) concerning the decision to be made on the request.
6. Members are prohibited from displaying tattoos, body art, clothing or adornments/accessories that are obscene, sexually explicit, and/or advocate discrimination based on sex, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or national origin. In addition, displaying tattoos, body art, clothing or adornments/accessories that symbolize affiliation with gangs, supremacist, or extremist groups, and/or advocate illegal drug use are prohibited.
7. Members who have a tattoo, other body art, or body modification at the inception of this policy that would be a violation of this policy are permitted to photograph the tattoo and draft a Form 95 to the Police Commissioner for a waiver. If approved, that waiver shall be placed in the personnel file.
8. Sworn Members permanently assigned to undercover or taskforce assignments may request a waiver of any section (i.e. hairstyle, makeup, facial hair, etc.) or restriction of this policy by writing an Administrative Report (Form 95) to the Police Commissioner. If approved, the waiver shall be placed in their personnel jacket in HRS.
 - 8.1. A BPD taskforce supervisor may request a waiver on behalf of all BPD members assigned to that taskforce in lieu of an individual request. If approved, the waiver shall be placed in each taskforce member's personnel jacket in HRS.
9. Professional Appearance for Professional Staff shall not interfere with the performance of their job function, shall be professional in nature, and adhere to their unit's SOP.

10. Footwear for uniformed Sworn Members shall adhere to [Policy 1504, Departmental Uniforms and Equipment](#). Footwear for non-uniformed Sworn Members and Professional shall adhere to their unit's SOP.
11. While at work, members shall not wear jeans unless deemed appropriate in their unit's SOP or approved by their supervisor for a particular assignment, event, or special occasion. If jeans are approved by a supervisor, then they shall be professional in nature (no rips, tears, holes, etc.).
12. Unless working out or participating in an athletic activity, members shall not wear yoga pants, sweatpants, athletic shorts, or "athleisure."

NOTE: These prohibitions do not include wearing jeans or athleisure when arriving for work with the intention to change into approved professional attire or departing from the work.

DIRECTIVES

Hairstyle Requirements

13. While on duty, hairstyles, including wigs, hair units/pieces and extensions, of all members shall be neat and professional in appearance. A member's hair length or hairstyle shall not interfere with or compromise the member's ability to perform their duty or put them in a possible safety risk. Hair for Professional Staff shall adhere to their unit's SOP, if applicable. In the absence of an SOP, hair for Professional Staff shall be neat and professional in appearance and shall not interfere with the member's ability to perform their duty. Hair for Sworn Members shall adhere to the additional requirements listed below:
 - 13.1. Be of a natural hair color (e.g. blonde, brown, black, red, grey). Dyed extreme hues, tones, shades, or tints that are not natural human hair colors are prohibited – whether in full or partial appearance.
 - 13.2. Frontal hair shall not fall below the eyebrows.
 - 13.3. While on duty, members with hair below their collar, shall have their hair gathered and secured at the back of the head in a bun as a safety precaution.
 - 13.4. Members in an administrative position and not in uniform may wear their hair loose if their commanding officer (Captain/Deputy Director and above) verifies that the length does not interfere with the performance of the member's job function.
14. A Sworn Member's hair or hairstyle shall not interfere with or compromise any uniform headgear or specialized equipment. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 14.1. Preventing the eight-point hat from being placed squarely on the head, with the center of the hat's visor directly in line with the nose.
 - 14.2. Interfering with proper wearing of any issued hat/cap/helmet.
15. Sworn Members wearing objects in their hair, including, but not limited to, pins, barrettes, bands, and clips, shall wear objects that:
 - 15.1. Are singular in color and shall be either Navy Blue, Gray, Red, Gold, Clear, Brown and

Black; and

- 15.2. Will not interfere with proper wearing of issued headgear, hats, or specialized equipment.

Facial Hair

16. Sworn Members' facial hair (beard, mustache, goatee, etc.) shall look professional and shall be properly groomed. The facial hair shall not exceed ONE inch in length. Except for the following:
- 16.1. Sworn Members shall be ready to don a respirator (either issued Avon C50 or N95 or other) at any time to carry out their duties. If a member is unable to pass a fit test with their gas mask, the member is prohibited from wearing facial hair to adhere to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. If a member is activated for an incident which most likely would require PPE listed above, the member must be clean shaven when they are activated.
17. Members' facial hair (beard, mustache, goatee, etc.) shall be trimmed and neat.
- 17.1. Designs, letters, and unnatural coloring of facial hair are prohibited.
18. A Sworn Member's mustache shall not extend below the upper lip or below the corners of the mouth. Lengthy mustaches (e.g. handlebar and walrus mustaches) are prohibited.
19. Except under religious or medical accommodations which have been approved through the process outlined in [GENERAL](#) of this policy, Sworn Members shall maintain facial hair (beard, mustache, goatee, etc.) in accordance with this policy.

Makeup

20. If wearing makeup, members shall wear makeup that blends naturally to enhance a natural appearance. Bright colors and exaggerated cosmetic styles are prohibited.
21. Members wearing artificial eyelashes or eyelash extensions shall wear eyelashes that are natural in length and appearance. A member's artificial eyelashes or eyelash extensions shall not exceed 10mm and shall not obstruct vision to any extent.

Fingernails

22. Members' nails shall be kept clean.
23. Sworn Members' nails shall be round, almond/oval, or square in shape.
- 23.1. Professional Staffs' nails shall adhere to their unit SOP, if applicable.
24. Sworn Members' fingernails shall not extend more than ¼ inch from the tip of the finger and shall not interfere with any police equipment or the execution of police duties.
- 24.1. Professional Staff's fingernails shall not exceed a length from the tip of the finger that will interfere with any of their equipment or the execution of their duties.

25. If wearing nail polish, members shall keep their nails well-manicured and may use regular nail polish on natural nails or have acrylic or gel nails.
26. If wearing nail decals, stickers, or nail art, members shall not wear any that are offensive or detract from the overall uniform and Professional Appearance of the member. Nail ornaments are prohibited.

Jewelry

27. Sworn Members, including those in administrative and/or non-uniform assignments, shall comply with the specifications listed regarding jewelry authorization.
28. If wearing earrings, Sworn Members shall only wear clip-on or post-type earrings that:
 - 28.1. Do not exceed 6 mm or ¼ inch in diameter,
 - 28.2. Are unadorned and spherical,
 - 28.3. Fit closely and securely against the ear, and
 - 28.4. **DO NOT dangle or hang.**
29. If a Sworn Member is wearing a necklace on duty, that Sworn Member shall keep the necklace(s) concealed.
30. Sworn Members wearing watches (wristwatch/smartwatch or fitness tracker) or bracelets shall not wear watches or bracelets that interfere with police equipment or the execution of police duties.
31. If wearing rings, Sworn Members are limited to two rings per hand with none on the thumbs.

Body Art (Tattoos, Body Modifications and Body Adornments)

32. Members, while on duty, shall not have visible intentional body modifications and/or other body adornments, to include:
 - 32.1. Split or forked tongue.
 - 32.2. Foreign objects inserted in the tongue or mouth.
 - 32.3. Enlarged or stretched earlobes.
 - 32.4. Intentional scarring
33. Nose rings, eye rings, eyebrow rings, and/or other visible body piercings are not permitted to be worn by Sworn Members while on duty.
 - 33.1. If a Sworn Member has a prohibited piercing, they may opt to wear a clear and discrete “invisible piercing retainer” designed to preserve the piercing while on duty.
34. The following criteria will be used to determine whether tattoos/body art/brands are permitted for

members: content, location, size and cosmetic.

- 34.1. Members shall not have tattoos, body art, and/or brands on the face (to include ear) or scalp.
 - 34.2. Permissible tattoos, body art, and/or brands on the torso area of the body shall not be visible through clothing while on duty.
 - 34.3. Tattoos, body art, and/or brands on the neck will not exceed one inch in measurement in any dimension (height/width). Leg and arm tattoos, body art and/or brands can be of any size.
 - 34.4. Cosmetic tattoos that are to correct or cover medical conditions that are administered by licensed, qualified medical personnel are permitted with proper documentation and submitted thru the Police Commissioner's Office by way of an Administrative Form (95). Once approved, it shall be placed in the personal jacket in HRS.
35. The Recruitment Section shall verify whether tattoos, body art, and/or brands for Sworn Members comply with the criteria above during the hiring phase.

Dental Ornamentation

36. Members are prohibited from gold, platinum, or other unnatural veneer or caps which may or may not be temporary for the purpose of ornamentation. Teeth, whether natural, capped, or veneer shall not be ornamented with designs, jewels, initials, etc, unless medically necessary.

Supervisor/Shift Commander

37. Supervisor/Shift Commander shall inspect members daily to ensure compliance with this policy. Commanders of Professional Staff shall be observant of their staff's appearance to ensure adherence to policy and relevant SOPs.
38. Supervisor/Shift Commander shall take corrective action, when needed. Violators of this policy are to receive discipline with the first step being a verbal warning.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Policy [1504, Departmental Uniforms and Equipment](#)

RESCISSION

Rescind Policy 312, *Professional Appearance Standards*, dated 26 August 2017.

COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

This policy is effective on the date listed herein. Each employee is responsible for complying with the contents of this policy.