



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

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**Chapter:** Personnel Management

**Section:** 308

**Subject:** Uniforms and Equipment/Personal Appearance and Grooming

**Topic:**

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## I. PURPOSE

This uniform policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office ("LCSO") is established to ensure that all employees present themselves in a professional manner, and that uniformed deputies are readily identifiable to the public through the proper use and wearing of agency uniforms. Sworn personnel wear the uniform to be identified as the law enforcement authority in the community. The uniform also serves an equally important purpose to identify the wearer as a source of assistance in an emergency, crisis or other time of need.

## II. POLICY

Respect for law enforcement is of paramount importance and may be predicated upon the appearance and personal grooming of a deputy. Therefore, it is the policy of the LCSO that all personnel will be clean, neat, and well-groomed at all times. In addition, it is the policy of the Sheriff's Office to issue or provide funds to each sworn member of the agency for the purchase of clothing and equipment necessary to perform law enforcement duties. This policy also sets forth the responsibilities of both the agency and the employee for the maintenance and upkeep of issued property and equipment.

## III. REGULATIONS

### A. Issued Uniforms and Personal Items

1. Upon commencing employment, all sworn members of the LCSO shall be issued a prescribed number of complete uniforms, leather gear, service weapon(s), ammunition, and other accessories as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Sheriff to perform the functions and duties of a Deputy Sheriff.
2. Sworn employees shall maintain regulation uniforms in neat/well-fitting order and in good repair. They shall wear uniforms in such a manner as to convey uniformity and in accordance with agency policy. All employees attire shall professional and neat while in uniform.

**B. Authorized Uniforms for Sworn Personnel**

1. Class "A" - This uniform shall be worn during official functions or as directed by a command staff officer.
  - a. Black uniform pants (dress style)
  - b. Long sleeve tan shirt with black tie, name plate, badge, rank insignia (shoulder boards), ribbons, pins
  - c. Black leather duty belt
  - d. Footwear: black leather or high gloss shoes, or boots
  - e. The following uniform may be worn in conjunction with the class "A" when authorized:
    - i. Blouse, name plate, badge, rank insignia (metal), ribbons, pins,
    - ii. Black dress uniform pants with gold stripe
    - iii. Campaign style hat
    - iv. Issued admin style holster
    - v. Authorized agency uniform pins
2. Class "B" - This uniform shall be worn for Circuit Court or Grand Jury appearances and is optional for other court proceedings.
  - a. Black uniform pants (dress style)
  - b. Tan long sleeve uniform shirt with black tie or short sleeve uniform shirt with name plate, badge, rank insignia (shoulder boards)
  - c. Issued duty or admin style holster
  - d. Footwear: black leather or high gloss shoes, or black leather boots
  - e. Black crew neck t-shirt or black turtleneck (or mock)

- f. Optional Items:
  - i. Concealed ballistic vest (exterior vest prohibited) for Circuit Court or Grand Jury appearances
  - ii. Issued admin style holster
  - iii. Authorized agency uniform ribbons, pins
  - iv. Sweater
  - v. Issued hat (campaign or baseball style)
  - vi. Black knit winter hat
  
- 3. Class "C" - This uniform may be worn to General District Court or Juvenile/Domestic Relations District Court.
  - a. Black Uniform pants (BDU style)
  - b. Long or short sleeve tan shirt with name plate, badge, rank insignia
  - c. Black leather duty belt
  - d. Footwear: black leather boots
  - e. Black crew neck t-shirt or black turtleneck (or mock)
  - f. Optional:
    - i. Ballistic vest (concealed)
    - ii. Sweater
    - iii. Authorized agency uniform ribbons and pins
    - iv. Issued hat (campaign or baseball style)
    - v. Black knit winter hat

4. Class "D" - This uniform may be worn to General District Court or Juvenile /Domestic Relations District Court.
  - a. Black Uniform pants (BDU style)
  - b. Black long or short sleeve utility shirt
  - c. Black duty belt or assignment specific equipment
  - d. Footwear: Black boots
  - e. Optional:
    - i. Ballistic vest (concealed or external)
    - ii. Black garrison belt
    - iii. Black baseball style hat
5. Class "E"
  - a. Tan, black or green BDU(5.11 style)
  - b. Polo shirt with embroidered badge
  - c. Black duty belt or admin style holster
  - d. Clip on metal badge
  - e. Optional: Black holster (leather or synthetic) off-duty style
6. Black socks shall be worn with the uniform when the deputy is wearing low quarter shoes or ankle high boots. If the deputy wears boots he/she may wear white socks provided that they are not visible under the pants leg. Deputies in uniform shall wear either shoes (leather or high gloss) or boots (leather or nylon). Black tennis style shoes shall only be worn with the bicycle patrol uniform or when required for training.
7. The deputy has the option to wear business attire in lieu of a uniform for court appearances.

8. If the deputy chooses to wear a sweater, it may be worn over a uniform shirt with a tie, black crew neck t-shirt, or black turtleneck (or mock).
  - a. The items to be worn on the sweater:
    - i. Badge (cloth or metal)
    - ii. Nametag (cloth or metal)
    - iii. Rank insignia (shoulder boards or metal)
    - iv. Unit insignia (Optional)
9. The only two holsters that are authorized for wear with the department uniform is the issued duty and admin style holster. If there is a need because of operational demands of a particular unit, a variance may be authorized with the approval of the division commander and the range supervisor.
10. Deputies are encouraged to wear their ballistic vests while performing law enforcement functions. The agency provides two options for the wearing of the ballistic vest concealed or external. If the deputy decides to wear the ballistic vest in the external carrier, only the following items are authorized to be attached thereto:
  - a. Cloth badge upper left portion of the ballistic vest
  - b. Cloth name tag upper right portion of the ballistic vest
  - c. Black nylon pistol magazine pouches
  - d. Black nylon handcuff case
  - e. Black nylon OC spray pouch
  - f. Black ASP holder
  - g. Black Taser holster (worn support side)
  - h. Black nylon radio pouch

- i. Sheriff ID tag worn on front and back of the ballistic vest
  - j. Optional:
    - i. American flag worn above nametag (colored/subdued)
    - ii. Cell phone pouch or holder
    - iii. Black nylon flashlight pouch
    - iv. Black key holder
    - v. Trauma kit
    - vi. Black nylon pouch (small)
    - vii. Black nylon glove pouch
    - viii. Folding Knives
      - a. Fixed blade knives are prohibited
      - b. Blade length shall not exceed 3"
      - c. Folding knives must be carried closed, and in a manner that is not visible to the public
    - ix. Writing instruments
11. Deputies choosing to wear the external vest carrier shall wear one of the following belts with the issued duty holster:
- a. Black leather/nylon garrison style belt
  - b. Black leather duty belt
12. While wearing the external vest carrier, the rank insignia (metal) shall be worn on the collar of the black vest shirt. There shall be no medals or awards worn on the external vest cover.

13. The issued duty belt shall consist of the following equipment:

- a. Black leather 2 ¾ inch belt
- b. Black leather pistol magazine pouch (worn support side)
- c. Black leather handcuff case
- d. Black leather OC pouch
- e. Black ASP holder
- f. Black belt keepers with brass or silver snaps, rank appropriate
- g. Optional:
  - i. Cell phone holder/pouch
  - ii. Black flashlight holder/pouch
  - iii. Black leather handcuff case (additional single or double case)
  - iv. Black key holder
  - v. Black folding knife pouch
  - vi. Black glove pouch
  - vii. Black radio holder/pouch
  - viii. Black nylon equipment pouch

14. Deputies working the following assignments may vary their operational uniform needs to ensure that they can complete the mission safely. The Division Commander shall approve any uniform variances in writing:

- a. ADC personnel
- b. Courthouse personnel

- c. SOS/SOT
  - d. Search and Rescue
  - e. CID/CSU
  - f. K-9
  - g. Traffic Section
  - h. Training Staff
15. While attending training, the deputy shall wear the appropriate clothing to convey a professional image. The deputy may wear any of the above described uniforms. If the deputy elects to wear civilian attire and his/her firearm is visible, he/she must display a metal Sheriff's badge or the shirt must have the embroidered or silk screened badge. When the training involves physical skills, driving, or firearms, the deputy shall wear the appropriate clothing to safely perform the skills.
16. Black T-shirts and black sweatshirts with the Sheriff's badge and name displayed on them may be worn by deputies for training and specific operations if authorized by the supervisor. These items are the responsibility of the deputy to purchase.
17. During extreme weather events the supervisor may authorize the wearing of additional weather appropriate clothing, provided that it does not cover the uniform patch or badge and it is black in color.

C. Display of Medals, Pins and Ribbons

1. Only medals, ribbons and/or pins authorized by the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office may be displayed on Sheriff's Office uniforms. Authorization may be given via memorandum or as an addendum to this General Order.
2. Display of such decorations shall be in accordance with this directive and in compliance with other agency directives, as appropriate.
3. Medals shall only be worn on full dress uniforms for ceremonial functions or as directed by the Sheriff.
4. Medals shall be worn above the nametag on the right side of the wearer's uniform



blouse or shirt.

5. Medals shall be arranged in order of prominence, from right to left, if multiple medals are authorized.
6. Ribbons shall be arranged in order of prominence, from top to bottom, if multiple ribbons are displayed. Ribbon order of prominence is as follows:
  - a. Gold Medal of Valor
  - b. Silver Medal of Valor
  - c. Bronze Medal of Valor
  - d. Lifesaving Award
  - e. Certificate of Valor
  - f. Meritorious Action Award
  - g. Unit Citation
  - h. Meritorious Service Award
  - i. Sheriff's Excellence Award
  - j. Commendation
  - k. Distinguished Training Officer
  - l. Master Deputy Sheriff Achievement Award
  - m. Agency Issued Awards (e.g., Derecho 2012, Auxiliary of the Year, etc.)
  - n. Approved External Awards (e.g., Smooth Operator, VFW Officer of the Year, etc.)
7. Medals shall only be worn by civilian recipients at an awards ceremony or at special ceremonial functions as directed by the Sheriff.

8. Deputies or Auxiliary members authorized to do so shall wear valor ribbons on dress uniforms (mandatory) or on duty uniforms (optional). (See attachment)
9. Ribbons shall be worn centered, one-quarter inch ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) above the wearer's nametag. Multiple ribbons shall be arranged in a vertical row above the nametag spaced one-quarter inch ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) apart.
10. Deputies and Auxiliary members authorized to do so will wear only one ribbon for each level of award. Subsequent ribbons awarded for the same level or recognition will be re-issued as follows (applies to all ribbons):
  - a. One gold star will designate two awards of the same level
  - b. Two gold stars will designate three awards of the same level
  - c. Three gold stars will designate four awards of the same level
  - d. While only one valor ribbon may be displayed for each level of recognition, a separate medal will be issued for each such award.
11. Lapel pins shall be awarded to civilian employees in lieu of valor ribbons and in accordance with the provisions of this order. Award pins may be worn on civilian clothing at the discretion of the employee, provided pins are worn in a tasteful manner.
12. Nametags shall be displayed at all times on LCSO uniforms and jackets/coats and shall be worn centered  $\frac{1}{4}$ " above the right breast pocket.
13. Agency Firearms Proficiency Pins shall be worn centered on the pocket underneath the Sheriff's Office badge.
14. Agency Safe Driving Pins, instructor pins, and recruiter pins shall be worn centered on the pocket underneath the Sheriff's Office badge and one quarter inch ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " ) beneath a firearms proficiency pin.
15. Miscellaneous Ribbons:
  - a. Motorcycle Operator, Canine Unit, SOS or SOT Member, Bomb Squad, Honor Guard, Firearms Instructor, Dive Team, CDU, etc.
  - b. Those deputies assigned to a specialized unit or participating in a specialized squad will be awarded a pin that recognizes the deputy for his/her



## 20. Military Branch of Service Pin

- a. Eligible employees, both sworn and civilian, who have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Reserves, or National Guard, will be issued a pin that designates their branch of service.
- b. Sworn employees will be presented with the appropriate pin by the Sheriff or his designee upon his/her graduation from a basic training academy.
- c. Civilian employees, or previously certified Virginia law enforcement officers who would not attend an additional academy graduation, will be presented with the appropriate pin by their Division Commander or his/her designee.
- d. The pin shall only be issued as specified above and will not be available from the Property Room.
- e. The pin shall be worn on the right side of the uniform shirt, below the nametag and above the pocket button, in the same manner as specialty unit pins. Up to three pins may be worn in this manner, at the employee's discretion (Specialty Pin, American Flag Pin, Military Service Pin).
- f. The pin may be worn on civilian clothing at the discretion of the employee, provided pins are worn in approximately the same location and in the same manner as a deputy uniform.

## 21. Hash Marks

- a. Hash marks may be sewn on to the left sleeve of winter jackets or long sleeve uniform shirts of Second Lieutenants and below.
- b. One hash mark may be applied for each three years of law enforcement service.

## D. Grooming Standards for LCSO employees

Grooming standards are to promote professionalism and demonstrate neutral government authority.

### 1. Standards for Deputies:

- a. Hairstyles must be neat, clean, and well groomed. Hairstyles for deputies shall not extend below the midpoint of the shirt collar in the rear, or side growth beyond or covering any part of the ears. The style shall not be bulky at any point or prevent the hat from resting on the head. Unless otherwise approved by the Sheriff, eccentric, unconventional, or other uncommon hairstyles are prohibited. If parted, only one cut, clipped, or shaved natural, narrow, front-to-back part (i.e. shaved part) is authorized. Deputies shall not dye, color or streak their hair in any unnatural shade, or style their hair in any way to detract from the uniform, as determined by the Sheriff or his/her designee. Wigs or hairpieces are permitted only if they conform to the standards set forth herein for natural hair.
- b. The hair of non-uniformed female deputies shall be styled so as to permit compliance with the above paragraph in the event a deputy may be required to perform uniformed duties.
- c. Sideburns with limitations are permitted. The length may extend down to a point straight and level with the lowest point of the ear lobe. The width of the sideburns shall be no more than one and one-half (1-1/2) inches, with the edges parallel to prevent being flared. Sideburns are to be kept neatly trimmed at all times and shall not be bushy or shaggy in appearance.
- d. Mustaches must be neatly trimmed, with the growth limited to one-quarter (1/4) inch beyond the corner of the mouth. The ends of the mustache shall not be waxed or twisted.
- e. Male deputies shall be clean-shaven when reporting for duty. In cases where deputies have a documented medical condition, they may request a medical waiver.
  - i. Medical waivers shall be requested by submitting a memorandum to the Sheriff through the deputy's chain of command which describes the medical condition. The Sheriff or his designee will have final approval. Such memo shall include documentation from a licensed physician describing the medical condition, any proposed treatment or job-related restrictions, and the expected period of time that the deputy will be unable to shave.
  - ii. This documentation will be provided to INOVA Occupational Health for review and consultation during employment.

- f. Deputies who are approved by the Sheriff or his designee for a medical waiver of the requirement that deputies be clean-shaven when on duty shall comply with the following requirements:
- i. Deputies shall keep facial hair neatly groomed, as short as possible, and exceeding no more than one-quarter inch. This will allow deputies to successfully complete fit testing for gas masks.
  - ii. A full beard must be worn. Other styles of facial hair are not permitted (e.g., goatees, chinstraps, etc.)  
  
In an effort to ensure a professional image is maintained, deputies wearing a beard shall only be permitted to wear a "Class A," "Class B," or "Class C" uniform, as defined in this General Order.
  - iii. Upon approval of a medical waiver, the deputy shall notify the fit testing coordinator and schedule a fit test to ensure his currently issued mask will continue to function properly.
- g. Male deputies may not wear earrings of any style or design while on duty. No other visible jewelry piercings may be worn while on duty.
- h. Female deputies may wear one pair (one earring in each earlobe) of small, plain, button or post-type earrings of gold, silver, or pearl. Loop, ring or other dangle-type earrings shall not be worn while on duty. No other visible jewelry piercings may be worn while on duty.

## 2. Appearance Standards for Civilian Personnel

- a. Civilian employees are expected to report to work in appropriate business clothing such as pants, suits, skirts, or dresses.
- b. Inappropriate attire shall not be worn to work. Inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to, provocative clothing such as plunging necklines, short shirts that reveal the stomach and/or navel area, short skirts or dresses, skirts or dresses with slits; or blue jeans, tank tops, etc. Civilian employees should use good judgment when selecting clothing to wear to work as they reflect the standards of a paramilitary organization.
- c. Civilian staff shall wear their hair styles in a professional manner. Civilian staff shall not dye, color or streak their hair in any unnatural shade, e.g. orange, blue,

green, etc., or style their hair in any way to detract from the office setting, as determined by the Sheriff or his/her designee.

- d. Civilian employees who are issued a uniform are expected to wear all parts of their uniform on a daily basis and maintain the clothing in an appropriate manner.

#### E. Body Art

1. Body Art is defined as any tattoo, implant, branding, mutilation, skin coloring, piercing, or other like skin alteration. This definition does not include practices that are considered medical procedures by a medical board of the Commonwealth of Virginia and conducted by licensed medical personnel, to correct medical conditions.
2. Purpose – the rational basis for prohibiting visible body art is to maintain public confidence, respect, and trust in law enforcement, and to demonstrate neutral government authority.
3. All employment applicants are required to successfully complete a body art screening during the employment application process. Using the Body Art Waiver Form (LCSO Form 6.65), applicants shall provide visual documentation of all body art that may be visible while in uniform. Employment applicants who bear inappropriate, offensive, or excessive body art, as determined by the Sheriff or designee, may be disqualified.
  - a. The Sheriff's Office will not accept employment applications from individuals with body art on the head, face, neck (above the collarbone in the front; above the first cervical vertebrae in the back), ears, scalp, or hands; however, a wedding ring tattoo on one finger no wider than 1/3 inch is acceptable.
4. Any employee who has visible body art deemed inappropriate, offensive, or excessive by the Sheriff will be required to conceal it while the employee is on duty or representing the Sheriff's Office in an official capacity. All unapproved body art documented on LCSO Form 6.65 will be included in the employee's offer letter, electronic personnel folder in Orion and in his/her personnel folder maintained in the Administrative Technical Services Division.
  - a. Sworn personnel shall conceal visible body art with a standard issue uniform (e.g., long sleeve uniform shirt). Civilian personnel shall conceal visible body art with appropriate business attire.
  - b. For the purpose of concealment requirements, visible body art shall be

defined as any body art below the mid-line of the elbow on the arm or on the legs.

5. Any Sheriff's Office employee (civilian or sworn) seeking new body art must secure an approved body art waiver (LCSO Form 6.65) before obtaining any new visible body art.
6. If the Sheriff or designee approves a body art waiver, the employee shall comply with the waiver requirements and maintain compliance. This policy applies while the employee is on duty or representing the Sheriff's Office.
7. Current employees are encouraged to evaluate the necessity of body art and the effect such may have on the public's perception of the employee and the agency. Deputies shall refrain from tattooing Sheriff's Office logos or insignias on their bodies. Deputies with law enforcement logo tattoos may not participate in undercover operations due to the risk of exposure.

#### F. Patrol Vehicles

1. All agency marked vehicles used for general patrol must:
  - a. Be conspicuously marked
  - b. Be equipped with a siren, in operational order
  - c. Be equipped with emergency lights, in operational order
  - d. Be equipped with a communication device (radio and/or MDC)
2. All agency unmarked vehicles used for general patrol must:
  - a. Be equipped with a siren, in operational order
  - b. Be equipped with emergency lights, in operational order
  - c. Be equipped with a communication device (radio and/or MDC)

#### G. Title to Uniforms and Equipment

1. The Property Section shall arrange for ordering equipment and uniforms as needed, with written approval of the deputy's appropriate Division Commander. Deputies will be responsible for providing accurate measurements and notifying the Property Section directly when replacement or additional items are required and approved.



2. Title to all uniforms and equipment purchased for and/or issued to employees of the Sheriff's Office shall be vested in the County of Loudoun. Uniforms and equipment shall only be worn and/or used in accordance with this directive and policies of the Sheriff.
3. Each deputy shall be held strictly accountable for the proper care, security, use, maintenance and operational readiness of all uniforms, equipment and accessories issued to him/her by the agency.
  - a. Any defective, damaged, lost and/or stolen property shall be immediately reported to the deputy's immediate supervisor and the Property Section. If property is lost through negligence or intentionally damaged, the employee responsible may be subject to disciplinary action and/or required to reimburse the agency and the County for the cost of the property.
  - b. Upon notification and investigation of the surrounding circumstances, the responsible supervisor, via a memo through the chain-of-command, shall notify the Sheriff of the defective, damaged, lost and/or stolen property, as appropriate.
    - i. Any lost, stolen or misplaced weapon, to include a handgun, shotgun, rifle, etc., whether issued by the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office or personally owned, shall be immediately reported to the deputy's immediate supervisor via memorandum through the chain-of-command. An IBR will be written and the missing/lost weapon will be entered into CAD and NCIC. If located, notification will be made through another memorandum and a supplemental IBR so the weapon can be removed from the databases.

#### H. Uniform Exemptions for Religious Purposes

Deputies who practice a religion that requires the head/hair be covered shall be permitted to do so, except where it impedes their ability to perform their assigned duties (e.g., when wearing a riot helmet, gas mask, etc.).

1. Deputies who wish to exercise this exemption shall comply with the following procedures:
  - a. Submit a request for an exemption through the deputy's chain of command, along with a stated reason for the exemption, a description of the head/hair covering to be worn, and acknowledgement that the covering will comply with this order and not impede the deputy's assigned duties.

- b. Final approval rests with the Sheriff or designee. Head/hair coverings shall be solid black in color. Requests to wear head/hair coverings other than black in color shall be submitted to the Sheriff or his/her designee.
2. Deputies approved for an exemption under this section shall adhere to the following guidelines:
  - a. Head/hair coverings shall be solid black in color unless another color is expressly requested in writing by the deputy and approved by the Sheriff or designee.
  - b. Head/hair coverings shall be of a design that fits as closely to the head as is practical. The design shall also be similar in manner to other individuals using the same form of head/hair coverings.
  - c. Head/hair coverings shall be worn in a manner as to limit the visibility of any brand name, logo, emblem, or similar manufacturer marking. Such markings, if visible, shall be subdued.
  - d. Head/hair coverings shall be worn in such a way as to ensure that no part of the deputy's facial features, except the ears, are obstructed.

Attachment A

