

# MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Subject: <b>APPEARANCE AND UNIFORM STANDARDS</b>	General Order: 250
Effective Date: September 1, 2000 Revision Date: August 27, 2024	Distribution: All Employees

## **I. PURPOSE**

This general order establishes clothing and appearance standards for all Department personnel.

## **II. POLICY**

Department personnel are expected and required to maintain a neat, clean and professional appearance of their clothing and person while on duty or representing the Meridian Township Police Department. Employees are expected to maintain their appearance, personal grooming and hygiene in a manner that garners public respect and to comply with the regulations established within this general order. Supervisors are expect to maintain the appropriate dress standard of those under their command.

## **III. PROCEDURE**

### **A. Wearing of the Uniform**

1. Officers shall wear the uniform as prescribed by this general order. Uniforms, full or part, shall not be worn off duty unless authorized by the Chief of Police. Only items provided or authorized by the Chief of Police may be worn as part of the uniform.
2. Command or supervisory officers shall ensure that officers under their command are uniformly attired when patrolling together or when assigned to the same detail.
3. Officers on suspension are prohibited from wearing any part of the uniform or any apparel featuring a Meridian Township Police Department insignia or logo.
4. Officers are prohibited from consuming alcohol while wearing any part of the uniform or any apparel featuring a Meridian Township Police Department insignia or logo.
5. Uniform, equipment, or clothing items that are worn out, tattered, faded, or otherwise in poor condition shall be removed from service and replaced within the guidelines established in this general order and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Revised

Revised

- New
- B. Class A and Class B Uniforms
1. Class A uniforms are described as a more formal uniform. They are typically made of dark wool or a wool blend fabric. The shirts feature scalloped pockets and epaulets. Pants are made from the same material with permanent military creases and four pockets. External vest carriers may not be worn with Class A uniforms.
  2. Class B uniforms have a more casual and relaxed fit than the Class A uniform. They are made from lighter-weight fabrics such as polyester or a polyester blend. The shirts may feature breast pockets or they may have a flat front for Class B uniforms designed to be worn underneath an exterior vest carrier. Pants may have four to six pockets and have permanent military creases.
  3. For general patrol purposes, either Class A uniforms or Class B uniforms are acceptable. All officers who wear a Class B uniform for patrol which do not feature breast pockets shall wear an external vest carrier whenever they are outside of the police department or if they could potentially come in contact with the public while inside the police department. Officers may choose to remove their external vest carrier while they are in the police department working on paperwork, in training, or on a break but the vest shall remain readily accessible at all times.
- C. Seasonal and Specialty Uniforms
1. Winter Uniform
    - Revised a. The winter uniform will consist of a long sleeve shirt and a crew neck type black or white t-shirt.
    - Revised b. A watch cap may also be worn during inclement weather. The watch cap must be all black in color with any and all logos muted.
  2. Uniform Sweater
    - a. Uniformed officers may wear a sweater as an outer garment. Officers opting to wear sweaters may purchase one at their own expense. The Department will provide the cleaning of sweaters.
    - b. Sweaters will be worn as part of the winter uniform only.
    - c. Any sweater worn by a uniformed officer must first be approved by the Department. The sweater shall be the black military style, wool constructed, having a V-neck, shoulder and elbow protective patches, and long sleeves.

- Revised d. The Meridian Police sew-on badge and shoulder patches will be sewn on all uniform sweaters.
- Revised 3. Summer Uniform
- The summer uniform will consist of a short sleeve shirt and a crew neck type black or white t-shirt.
4. Bicycle Uniform
- The bicycle uniform will consist of a special uniform shirt selected by the Department, shorts or bicycle pants, and plain black short socks. The shirt will have a sew-on badge and shoulder patches; however, no pins or bars will be attached.
- Revised 5. Fatigue Uniform
- The fatigue uniform will consist of an open collar long sleeve shirt and a black or white crew neck type t-shirt or a short sleeve shirt with an embroidered logo on the left upper breast only. No other pins or bars will be worn except for rank collar insignias with a subdued finish.
6. All uniformed personnel shall dress in accord with the Uniform Division uniform of the day.
- D. Uniform of the Day
- Individual employees will determine whether a summer uniform or a winter uniform is appropriate for them based on the weather each day and will dress accordingly.
- E. Uniform Footwear
- Uniformed officers will wear Department-issued footwear unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.
- Revised F. Uniform Hat
- Officers are not required to wear the garrison hat except in circumstances that require a full Class A uniform. Examples of this would include funerals, parades, ceremonies, formal occasions, or other times as required by the Chief of Police or designee. During those times a tie shall also be worn. A long-sleeve shirt may be worn as designated by the Chief of Police or designee.
- Officers may choose to wear their uniform hats in times of inclement weather as well. In this case, the uniform hat may be worn with the Class A or Class B uniform.

## G. Wearing of Badges, Pins and Individual Awards

Revised

1. When wearing the Class A uniform, the following shall occur:
  - a. A metal police badge will be worn on the left breast in the designated location on the shirt.
  - b. A Meridian police sew-on badge will be sewn onto jackets, sweaters, patrol jackets and fatigue shirts.
  - c. Collar brass will be worn on the shirt collar as instructed. Field training officers may substitute the FTO designator for the right side collar brass.
  - d. Name bar will be worn on the upper seam of the right breast pocket.
  - e. A flag pin will be worn centered above the name bar.
  - f. Departmental awards will be worn aligned on the seam on the left pocket flap. Specialist designations, other than FTO pins, will be worn above the name bar and approved by the Chief of Police.
  - g. Officers may elect to wear their department issued pins such as motorcycle, SRT, military, and DARE pins on the right breast above the name tag.
  - h. Whistle chain will be attached to the right epaulet extending to a stored position inside the right breast pocket.
  - i. Tie bar or tie tack will be at the bottom of the shirt pocket flaps.

Revised

2. When wearing the Class B uniform, the following shall occur:
  - a. A police badge will be worn on the left breast of the outer vest carrier. The badge will be PVC. Should a PVC badge be unavailable, the officer will wear a metal badge in accordance with this general order.
  - b. A name bar will be worn on the right breast of the outer vest carrier. The name bar will be cloth. Should a cloth name bar be unavailable, the officer will wear a metal name bar in accordance with this general order.
  - c. Officers may elect to wear their department issued pins such as motorcycle, SRT, military, and DARE pins on the right breast

above the name tag.

- d. No other pins, badges, collar brass or bars shall be worn with the Class B uniform

3. Mourning badges are authorized to mourn the on-duty death of any Michigan officer. The badges shall be worn throughout the day of the funeral or as directed by the Chief of Police.

Revised

4. Any and all pins, badges, and awards shall be issued by the police department. Pins, badges, and awards that are not issued are prohibited. The Chief of Police or his/her designee may also issue additional pins to be worn during certain times throughout the year.

#### H. Care of Uniform

Uniforms requiring repair should be given immediate attention to prevent further damage and restore them to serviceable condition. It is the officer's duty to see that seasonable equipment is constantly maintained in proper condition for use. Any piece of issued equipment in need of repair or replacement shall be immediately brought to the attention of the Property Technician or Quartermaster. At such time a piece of equipment is replaced, the used article shall be given to the Property Technician or Quartermaster.

1. The appearance of all leather or web gear equipment shall be maintained by cleaning with a damp cloth and/or mild soap as needed.

Revised

2. All other issued clothing, such as uniform jackets, trousers, shirts, external vest carriers, etc. will be cleaned by the Department contracted cleaning service on a regular basis. Officers may elect to wash their uniforms at home.

New

3. External vest carriers shall be spot cleaned with a damp cloth frequently to keep them free from dirt/debris buildup. They will be deep cleaned by the Department contracted cleaning service or at home by the officer on a regular basis. The ballistic panels shall be removed before the carrier is either sent to the clearers or submerged in water.

New

4. Ballistic vest panels will be cleaned according to manufacture recommendations. They are not to be submerged in water.

#### I. Non-Uniformed Sworn Personnel and Court Apparel.

1. Investigators and officers assigned to plain clothes duty at a minimum shall wear business casual dress. Exception will be granted when a particular assignment dictates the need for other attire. A full sized badge shall be displayed adjacent to their exposed weapon. A neck

chain with an exposed full-size badge centered on the chest may be used as an alternative.

3. Sworn officers temporally assigned to special operations may wear clothing approved by the unit commander.

J. Clothing Standards

1. Business casual means dress pants, polo shirts, button shirts and dress shoes. Only emblems of moderation may be on the clothing. Emblems shall only include manufacturer designs, or emblems representing MSU, or other alma mater, Haslett, Okemos, East Lansing or Williamston, Meridian or Williamstown Township apparel. No tie is necessary.
2. Business attire includes dress slacks, dress shoes, long sleeve button up shirt, and a tie. Sports coats and suit coats are optional. Blouses, pantsuits, or skirts are also acceptable.

Revised

K. Court Appearance

1. On-duty patrol personnel attending court, the prosecutor's office, state civil hearing or depositions shall wear the uniform of the day. Officers assigned to the investigations unit or patrol officers not on duty shall abide by the following:
  - a. Informal Hearings – Uniform of the day or business casual.
  - b. District Court – Uniform of the day or business attire.
  - c. State Administrative Hearings and Civil Depositions – Uniform of the day or business attire.
  - d. Circuit Court – Uniform of the day or business attire.

Revised

L. Training

1. In-service training: Department-issued training fatigues, business casual, or duty uniform unless directed otherwise.
2. External training attendance: Business casual, department issued training fatigues or a regular duty uniform, unless directed otherwise.

M. Other Appearances

Division Commanders may authorize other attire if the activity or assignment so dictates.

N. Non-Sworn Personnel

All non-sworn personnel shall wear clothing that is conservative and the overall appearance shall be business appropriate.

O. Cadets

1. Uniforms will consist of a light blue uniform shirt with “cadet” rockers over the shoulder patch and dark blue uniform pants. No badge will be worn.
2. Cadets shall comply with the uniform of the day as directed by the Uniform Division Commander.

P. Hair

1. General Regulations for Personal Grooming

- a. The wearing of a wig or hairpiece by uniformed personnel, while on duty, is prohibited except to cover baldness or physical disfiguration caused by accident or medical procedure. When worn, it will conform to the standard haircut criteria described in this general order.
- b. Hair coloring (dyed hair) shall appear natural.
- c. Hair will not be worn in a Mohawk cut, cornrows, or dreadlocks and will not have designs cut into it.
- d. In all cases, hair shall be cut so as not to interfere with the wearing of uniform or emergency protective headgear.

2. Males

- a. Hair shall be groomed so it does not fall below the eyebrows.
- b. Hair on the back of the head will not extend over the shirt collar when the officer is standing with the head in a normal posture. Hair must be neatly tapered or squared at the base.
- c. Sideburns, or any hair worn in front of the ear, shall be neatly trimmed and tapered, not extending below the lowest part of the exterior opening of the ear, not flared, of even width and ending with a clean shaven horizontal line.
- d. Hair shall not fall over the ears but may extend to the top edge of same if worn in a well-groomed manner. Nor shall the hair extend outward from the skull to a depth greater than measured by the outward protrusion of the ears.

- e. A length of no more than two inches is permitted on a properly groomed Afro style haircut.

3. Females

- a. Hair may not be worn longer than the bottom of the shoulder blades on the back of the head and to the bottom of the earlobe on the sides. The total length will not interfere with the wearing of the uniform or emergency protective headgear.
- b. A bun, twist, or braid will be permitted on the top or back of the head. This is provided it is worn in a neat manner and does not interfere with the wearing of departmental headgear.
- c. Females shall be allowed to wear their hair down or in a ponytail if they choose to do so. Hair worn down may not interfere with the wearing of the uniform or cover the officer's patches, name tag, or badge. Hair worn down must also remain neat and shall not interfere with any departmental headgear. Any items worn in the hair to keep the hair tidy shall be professional in appearance. Females choosing to wear their hair down should remain aware that hair worn in this manner can easily be grabbed or pulled by a suspect while performing their duties.

Q. Facial Hair

- 1. Employees shall be permitted to maintain a beard, goatee or mustache, provided the facial hair is neatly trimmed, full (not patchy) and not more than an inch in length. A natural, full beard shall not extend on to the neck area. The Chief of Police has the ultimate authority to determine the appropriateness of facial hair worn by any employee.
- 2. An adjoining mustache must accompany all beards and goatees. All facial hair shall be uniformly trimmed with groomed edges along the top and bottom edges of the facial hair, not to extend above the cheekbone or below the onset of the upper neckline. All facial hair shall appear natural in color.
- 3. Under no circumstances will facial hair be sculpted or otherwise trimmed to show a design. The following facial hairstyles are not allowed, including but not limited to: French Fork, Ducktail, Monkey Tail, Verdi, Garibaldi, Bandholz, Soul Patch, Chin Curtain, Anchor, Hulihee, Horseshoe, Zappa, Toothbrush, Villain, Fu Manchu, English, Mutton Chops, or Dali.

4. Whiskers and stubble are not acceptable. Employees should initiate growing facial hair several days before reporting for duty. Otherwise, employees must be cleanly shaven when they report for duty.
5. Per OSHA Respiratory Standard, respirators shall not be worn when facial hair comes between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face, or that interferes with valve function. Employees electing to maintain facial hair shall shave the portion of their face that comes in contact with the respirator seal when mobilized or any time the use of a respirator is required. This includes deployment, emergency standby, activation, fit testing, or training. This necessitates the need for employees to be prepared to shave at a moment's notice.
6. Specialized units/assignments such as Honor Guard, SRO, and SRT, will have their grooming standards ultimately approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
7. The growth of a mustache must not extend below the horizontal corners of the mouth (over ½ inch beyond the corners of the mouth). No "handlebar" style mustaches will be permitted.
8. Employees assigned to an undercover unit may deviate from the standards listed in this general order with approval from the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

R. Fingernail Polish

1. Sworn female members may wear a single color fingernail polish.
2. The color of the fingernail polish shall not contrast or detract from the uniform appearance.
3. Nail art is prohibited while on duty.
4. Nails shall be conservative in length and not interfere with duties.

S. Body Art

Body Art: Any tattoo, intentional scarification or mutilation, or non-medically required body modification on any portion of an employee's body.

1. Body art that is visible when an employee is on duty shall be subject to prior approval by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. If the Chief of Police or his/her deems body art to be offensive, the body art shall be covered at all times when the employee is on duty.

2. Examples of offensive body art include but are not limited to those that visibly display in words or graphics anything that depicts violence, nudity, sexually explicit images, vulgarity, profanity, symbols likely to incite a strong negative reaction in any group or would shock the moral sense, sexism, racism, intolerance, political affiliation, gang affiliation, union or labor related content, or is distasteful.
3. Body art is prohibited on an employee's head, face, and fingers. Wedding band tattoos on the ring finger are an exception.
4. Should an employee wish to wear any body art uncovered, he/she must submit a Body Art Approval Request Form and a photograph or rendering of the body art to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police or his/her designee will have the final authority on any decision regarding the appropriateness of any tattoos. Body art that is covered when in uniform is excluded from this process.

T. Body Piercings

Other than described in this general order, visible body piercings are prohibited.

U. Jewelry

1. Earrings will be limited to stud/post type without any type of dangling attachment. Women shall be limited to two stud/post type earrings in one or both ears. Earrings will not be worn by male personnel while on duty.
2. Necklaces and chains will be worn in such a way as to not be readily visible at the neck.
3. Moderate size rings may be worn and must be limited to one ring per hand.
4. Body piercings, with the exception of the ears, shall not be visible to the public.

V. Care of Badges

Proper maintenance of the badge requires that the badge be washed periodically with mild soap and water. Avoid scrubbing it with a brush or an abrasive polish because it will remove the protective coating of lacquer.

W. Personal Property/Department Liability

1. Employees should avoid wearing personal items of a high monetary or sentimental value, such as watches or rings, since such items may be

lost or damaged from on-the-job activities.

2. Any claim of loss or damage to an employee's personal property must show that the loss or damage was a direct result of an employee's performance of job duties.
3. Any claim for reimbursement for loss or damage to personal property will be treated on a case-by-case basis and payment of any such claim will be at the sole discretion of the Chief of Police.
4. Claims for loss or damage to personal property may also be directed to the court, upon approval of the Chief of Police, for order of reimbursement in the sentencing of the responsible party or may be the object of civil litigation initiated by the officer toward the responsible party.

X. Inspections, Repair and/or Alteration of Equipment

Revised

1. Supervisors will conduct regular inspections of officers to ensure compliance with uniform standards. Annual inventories and inspections of all assigned uniforms and equipment shall be conducted by each officer's supervisor.
2. Equipment in need of repair shall promptly be brought to the attention of the Property Technician or Quartermaster.
3. Equipment shall not be altered in any way without first obtaining written permission of the Chief of Police.
4. Shoes and boots will be inspected by the Property Technician or Quartermaster before being replaced. If, in his/her opinion, it will be cost effective to put new soles on the shoes or boots, the shoes or boots shall be re-soled at a location as directed by the Property Technician or Quartermaster.
5. Any equipment being replaced shall be returned to the Property Technician or Quartermaster for proper disposal.

Y. Religious Accommodation

1. The religious beliefs and needs of department members will be reasonably accommodated. Requests for religious accommodation will generally be granted unless there is a compelling security or safety reason and denying the request is the least restrictive means available to ensure security or safety. Employees who wish to have a religious accommodation must submit their request in writing to the Chief of Police.

2. Those who request to wear headscarves, simple head coverings, certain hairstyles or facial hair for religious reasons will generally be accommodated absent unusual circumstances.

#### IV. CANCELLATIONS

None

Authorized by:



Rick Grillo, Chief of Police

Index as:

Apparel

Appearance Standards

Clothing

Uniform Standards

Standard 1.6.1

Standard 1.6.3

*Application: This directive constitutes department policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employees civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employees legal duty as imposed by law.*

## APPENDIX A

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT  
TATTOO REQUEST FORM

Name of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ New Tattoo
- ☐ Existing Tattoo
- ☐ Drawing Attached
- ☐ Photograph Attached

Location of tattoo on body: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of tattoo: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is the tattoo considered lewd, derogatory toward any group, or offensive to a reasonable person?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved:    Yes       No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chief's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_