

DRESS CODE

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) for all employees to present a neat and professional appearance at all times while on duty in order to project an image of professionalism, competence, and pride. It is necessary to restrict certain apparel and grooming practices so as not to endanger the employee's safety or impede their performance of duties. All employees will wear conservative clothing and hairstyles that conform to the OPD Dress Code.

DEFINITIONS:

Business Dress: Professional appearing clothing that will be worn as directed by policy by all employees while on duty to present a professional appearance. Specific fashion, color, and styles are not mandated but should be conservative in nature.

Business Casual Dress: A less formal variation of Business Dress that will be worn as directed by policy by all employees while on duty to present a uniform standard of dress. Specific fashion, color, and styles are not mandated but should be conservative in nature.

Casual Dress: Informal clothing that may be worn by non-sworn employees as determined by policy. Sworn employees may wear casual dress in limited circumstances.

Non-Sworn Uniform: A uniform required to be worn for specific non-sworn assignments within OPD.

PROCEDURE:

I. Clothing, Apparel, and Accessories

- A. Employees are expected to use common sense in determining what is appropriate, keeping in mind that work attire should complement an environment that reflects efficiency, order, and professionalism. Employees will make certain their uniform and/or clothing is in good repair and clean at all times.
 1. Employees will not wear articles of clothing and/or accessory items that are inappropriate or offensive to the public. The following is not allowed:
 - a. Ripped or torn clothing.
 - b. Revealing attire.
 - c. Logos on clothing which are drug and/or alcohol related or are obscene or inappropriate.
 - d. Cut off shorts, shorts, capris, tank/tube tops, halters, baseball caps/hats, or thong sandals.
 2. Employees will wear official OPD uniforms, business dress attire, or business casual dress.
 3. Sworn employees are required to carry their valid driver's license on or have it readily accessible to their person when on duty. Non-sworn employees must have a valid driver's license on their person when operating any City vehicle.

EXCEPTION: This requirement does not apply to undercover officers engaged in undercover operations.

4. Sworn employees have the option of wearing business casual dress unless they are scheduled to appear in court.
5. Non-sworn employees have the option of wearing business casual dress and may wear Casual Dress on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, as well as the day before all announced City of Omaha holidays unless they are scheduled to appear in court.
6. Business casual dress and casual dress attire will not be worn by employees who attend meetings and represent OPD or are assigned to duties where they are required to wear a uniform and exposure to the public is routine and expected.

NOTE: The respective Bureau head will determine the appropriate plain clothes/civilian dress for a given assignment. Specialized dress for specific investigations may be approved by the respective Unit Commander.

B. Court attire.

1. Sworn employees who appear in court to testify will wear business dress attire or an official OPD duty uniform in accordance with the "[Uniforms](#)" policy.
 - a. Authorized optional business dress attire (e.g., polo shirt) is NOT approved for court appearances, including grand juries.
2. Non-sworn employees who appear in court to testify will wear business dress attire or their official non-sworn uniform.

C. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring an employee's appearance for compliance with this Dress Code and may require employees to change their clothing and apparel to conform to this Dress Code.

1. Employees who come to work in clothing and/or apparel that does not comply with this Dress Code may be sent home to change into appropriate clothing.
 - a. Employees should be marked for the appropriate leave for the period they are absent in order to change their clothing, per applicable bargaining unit contracts.

D. Business Dress attire.

1. Business Dress attire for male employees will consist of the following:
 - a. Button front dress shirt with collar buttoned at the neck.
 - b. Conservative business necktie.
 - c. Normal business trousers.
 - d. Polished business or dress shoes.
 - e. Suit or sport coat.
2. Business Dress attire for female employees will consist of a combination of the following:
 - a. Suit.
 - b. Dress.

- c. Blouse with slacks or skirt.
 - d. Pant suits.
 - e. Polished business or dress shoes.
 3. Employees will ensure their Business Dress clothing is in good repair, clean, and neatly pressed at all times.
 4. Optional authorized business dress polo shirts may be worn, except when an employee has a court appearance. (See [Appendix B](#) for authorized personnel and specifications.)
- E. Business casual dress attire will consist of a combination of the following:
1. Button front dress shirt with collar (tie not required).
 2. Blouse (females only).
 3. Mock turtleneck shirt.
 4. Turtleneck shirt.
 5. Dress polo style shirt.
 6. Front button shirt with collar.
 7. Sweater or cardigan.
 8. Dress or casual pants (e.g., Dockers, Khakis).
 - a. Denim, jeans (any color) and cargo pants are prohibited.
EXCEPTION: 5.11 cargo tactical pants are allowed.
 9. Casual skirt at a modest length (females only).
 10. Faux leather or leather shoes (e.g., loafers, Dr. Martens).
 - a. Socks or hosiery is required with all footwear.
 - b. Sandals and open-toe shoes are prohibited.
 11. Blazers, sport coats, jackets, or equivalent.
 - a. Sworn employees will have this item available for the purpose of concealing firearms from public view when appropriate.
 - b. Jackets will not be gathered or banded at the waistband.
- F. Casual Dress attire may consist of any of the following:
1. Crewneck shirts.
 2. Sweatshirts.

3. Utility trousers, including jeans and cargo pants.
4. Work shoes or boots.
 - a. Socks or hosiery is required with all footwear.
 - b. Sandals and open-toe shoes are prohibited.

G. Non-Sworn Uniforms.

1. Certain non-sworn positions in the Department, such as the Front Desk Squad and Forensic Investigations Unit, require official uniforms.
 - a. Non-sworn uniform positions are determined by the Chief of Police or their designee.
 - b. The Chief of Police or their designee will determine the specifications for all Non-sworn uniforms. The Police Supply Unit will maintain a list of authorized Non-sworn uniforms.
2. Non-sworn employees assigned to uniformed positions shall wear only clothing, apparel, and accessories authorized for wear with their official non-sworn uniform.
3. Non-sworn employees will be issued non-sworn uniforms according to the applicable bargaining unit contract.
 - a. Additional non-sworn uniforms may be purchased by Non-sworn employees but must be identical to the issued Non-sworn uniform.

H. Jewelry.

1. Earrings.
 - a. Earrings will not be allowed for male sworn officers.
 - b. Female sworn employees and non-sworn employees wearing a non-sworn uniform will be allowed one earring of post or stud type in each ear lobe. No wire or dangling-type earring will be allowed.
 - (1) Earrings worn with official uniforms will be silver, gold, or pearl.
 - c. Non-sworn employees who do not wear official uniforms may wear one earring, of a conservative type, in each ear lobe.
 - d. Ear gauges and/or decorative ear plugs (that go into the holes like gauges) will not be allowed.
 - e. No jewelry or ornamentation of any kind may be worn on the face (i.e., nothing on or in the nose, lip, tongue, eyebrow, etc.) while on duty or while wearing an OPD uniform.
2. Watches may be worn by all employees.
3. Rings may be worn by all employees.
 - a. No more than two rings may be worn at any time.

- (1) A wedding band set is considered one ring.
 - b. Employees should consider their duty assignment and safety when considering the type of ring worn.
4. Bracelets will not be worn with official uniforms but may be worn with any other attire.
EXCEPTION: Bracelets for medical identification are authorized.
5. Necklaces may be worn but will not be visible when wearing official uniforms.
6. Body piercing jewelry, piercing rings, and/or piercing studs (other than earrings) may be worn but will not be visible.
 - a. Tongue piercing studs and tongue piercing rings are considered visible and will be prohibited while on-duty.

EXCEPTION: Officers working in an undercover assignment will be allowed to wear the above-mentioned piercing items with command approval.

NOTE: Rings, necklaces, bracelets, and earrings will not be replaced by the City of Omaha if damaged or lost.

II. Hair

- A. Universal hair standards for all employees.
 1. Hair shall be of a natural hair color.
 2. Hair shall not have a symbol, letter, number, or artistic design cut, woven, or otherwise styled into it nor shall hair be cut to reveal a tattoo on the head.
 3. Hair must be clean and neatly groomed. Hair must be styled and worn in a prudent manner that does not cover the eyes or interfere with vision.
 4. Male employees' hair shall be symmetric or of the same length on the sides and back.
 5. A wig may be worn as long as it conforms to the specifications in this policy for natural hair.
- B. Additional Requirements for Sworn Employees.
 1. For safety reasons, sworn employees in uniform shall either have their hair cut above the ears or pulled back behind the ears.
 2. Hair shall not fall beyond the high point of the eyebrow. The intent of this requirement is to prevent a potential obstruction or restriction of vision.
 3. The issued OPD uniform hat, when worn, must be in close proximity to both the ears and the eyebrows of the person wearing the hat.
NOTE: Hairstyles cannot interfere with the proper wearing of uniform headgear or emergency equipment.
 4. Hair accessories may be worn, but only to hold hair in place.

- a. Accessories will not be decorative in nature and will not be made of material that could increase the risk of injury.
- b. Accessories should be of a natural hair color or neutral color or colors consistent with the uniform (dark blue or black).

NOTE: This standard also applies to non-sworn employees who are required to wear a uniform.

- c. Accessories should not be shiny or extreme in color so as to jeopardize the safety of the officer. Bows and ribbons will not be worn.
5. The actual hair length for male sworn employees shall not extend past the top of the shirt collar.
6. Female sworn employees who are in uniform shall conform to the following additional hair standards:
- a. Hair must be worn outside the uniform shirt and must not extend below the “yoke line.”
 - (1) For safety reasons, hair that extends below the yoke line shall be pulled back in the form of a “ponytail”, in the style of a “braid”, or a bun.
 - (2) Pulling hair back into multiple braids is allowed (see the next section for more information on braids).
 - (3) All ponytails, buns, or braids will be grouped to the back of the head and centered as best as possible.

NOTE: The yoke line refers to the line on the uniform shirt that crosses the back of the shirt below the neck and across the shoulders.

C. Dreadlocks, Twists, and Braids.

1. Both male and female employees, including sworn employees wearing an official OPD uniform or in an assignment that does not require an official OPD uniform, are allowed to wear dreadlocks, twists, and braids. Dreadlocks, twists, and braids shall:
- a. Be of a natural color.
 - b. Be tightly woven or upkept.
 - c. Not be worn with beads or other decorative items. Only items necessary to pull dreadlocks, twists, or braids back may be worn.
 - (1) These items will not be made of material that could increase the risk of injury to an officer.
 - (2) Items shall be of a natural hair color or neutral color or colors consistent with the uniform (dark blue or black).
 - (3) Items shall not be shiny or extreme in color so as to jeopardize the safety of an officer.

2. Additional guidelines for dreadlocks, twists, and braids are as follows:
 - a. Dreadlocks shall be no more than one-half (1/2) of an inch in diameter.
 - b. Braids may be worn close to the scalp or loose from the scalp.
 - c. Braids shall not be shaped into a symbol, letter, or number.
 - d. For sworn male employees, the actual length of dreadlocks, twists, and braids shall not extend past the top of the shirt collar.

EXCEPTIONS: Sworn male employees who want the actual length of dreadlocks, twists, or braids to extend past this length for religious purposes or other reasons shall submit an exception request to the Chief of Police (or designee) via email through the employee's chain of command.
 - e. Female sworn employees who are in uniform shall ensure their dreadlocks, twists, or braids do not extend below the yoke line and are worn outside the uniform shirt.
 - (1) For safety reasons, dreadlocks, twists, and braids that extend below the yoke line shall be pulled back in the form of a ponytail, bun, or another braid. All ponytails, buns, or braids will be grouped to the back of the head and centered as best as possible.
- D. Employees are prohibited from wearing hairstyles not expressly permitted in this policy unless an exception is granted by the Chief of Police (or designee). Requests for exceptions shall be submitted to the Chief of Police via email through the employee's chain of command.

III. Grooming Standards

- A. A good impression for the public involves more than neat-appearing uniforms and/or attire and is dependent upon all of the following standards which will be followed:
 1. Teeth clean.
 2. Fingernails clean and trimmed.
 - a. Sworn employees' fingernails will not extend more than one-fourth of an inch from the fingertip and will not interfere with the efficient operation of police equipment.
 - (1) Fingernail polish, if worn, can be clear or a conservative color that presents a professional image, without decals or ornamentation. Fluorescent or neon-colored polish is prohibited.
 - b. Non-sworn employees' fingernails will be clean and trimmed.
 - (1) Nail polish, if worn, will be appropriate and present a professional appearance.
 3. Hands will be clean.
 4. Body and breath will be free from offensive odors.

NOTE: Deputy Chiefs will have the authority to waive these standards to meet the individual needs of special assignments.

- B. Facial hair for non-sworn employees should be neatly trimmed and present a professional appearance.
- C. Facial hair for sworn employees.
 - 1. Sideburns, when worn, will have a length no lower than the bottom level of the ear lobe. Sideburns must be evenly tapered, cut parallel to the ground, and can be no wider than one (1") inch. Flair or 'mutton chops' are not authorized.
 - 2. Mustaches, when worn, must be neatly trimmed and tapered. Mustaches will not extend in width beyond the outside corners of the mouth, nor extend in length below the upper lip. Handlebar or 'Fu Manchu' types of mustaches are not allowed.
 - 3. Beards and goatees are allowed.
 - a. Beards shall:
 - (1) Be of a natural color.
 - (2) Be worn with an adjoining mustache.
 - (3) Not exceed more than one-half (1/2) of an inch in length/bulk and be neatly trimmed. Bushy or unkempt beards are prohibited.
 - (4) Cover the complete jawline. Full beards from ear to ear are preferred.
 - (5) Not exceed more than one (1) inch below the jawline at the neck of the beard and shall not protrude down the neck or extend past the "Adam's apple."
 - (6) Not have designs, custom trims, or other styles cut into it. "Chin strap," patchy, and stubble beards are prohibited.
 - (7) Not extend above the cheekbones. Cheekbones shall be clean shaven, both on and above the cheekbone.
 - b. Goatees shall conform to points (1), (2), (3), (5), and (6) as described above.
 - 4. To wear a beard or goatee, sworn employees shall submit a request via email to their sergeant or direct supervisor.
 - 5. Sworn employees shall have 30 days to grow a beard or goatee. If after 30 days the employee's beard or goatee growth does not comply with the standards listed in this policy, then their sergeant or direct supervisor may order them to shave.
 - a. If an employee disagrees with their supervisor's order to shave and they have a medical condition which necessitates having facial hair, then the employee shall submit an "Application for Temporary Facial Hair Exception" ([OPD Form 1A](#)) to the Office of the Chief of Police (or designee), through their chain of command.
 - b. The employee shall also submit appropriate medical documents, such as a letter from a licensed dermatologist that details the employee's diagnosis and other pertinent information related to the diagnosis.

NOTE: Handwritten notes on a prescription pad will not be accepted.

- c. The Chief of Police (or designee) reserves the right to order an independent evaluation for any employee who requests a medical exception.
 - d. The Backgrounds/Inspections Unit is responsible for reviewing and maintaining medical documents of the employee's need to wear facial hair.
 - e. If an exception is granted, the employee will be expected to comply with the beard or goatee standards outlined in this policy as best as possible. The employee's dermatologist's recommendations will also be taken into consideration.
 - f. Employees may request a medical exception at any time and the exception shall be in place for one (1) year. If the employee still needs the medical exception after their current one expires, then the employee shall submit another [OPD Form 1A](#) along with the appropriate medical documents.
6. Sworn employees may request a religious exemption to these standards.
 - a. Requests shall be submitted to the Office of the Chief of Police (or designee) via email through the employee's chain of command.
 - b. The employee shall explain the religious belief that necessitates the exemption. Employees may be asked to submit supporting documentation.
 7. Honor Guard and SWAT Team command staff shall have discretion regarding facial hair standards for sworn employees under their supervision. They may allow employees under their supervision to have facial hair that conforms to the standards in this policy or they may require them to be clean shaven for certain events, such as funerals.
 8. New recruits shall be clean shaven and shall only be allowed to wear facial hair after their one (1) year anniversary with the Department.
 9. The Chief of Police (or designee) may order sworn employees to be clean shaven for certain events.

NOTE: Anytime an employee is ordered to be clean shaven and the employee has a medical condition or religious belief that necessitates facial hair, the employee shall follow the steps outlined above for medical exception and/or religious exception requests.

10. Temporary exceptions to these rules may be allowed for sworn employees in the Narcotics Unit who are working in special assignments.
 - a. Exceptions shall be obtained by submitting a request to the employee's chain of command via email.
 - b. Once the employee's special assignment ends, they are required to immediately comply with the regular beard standards outlined in this policy.
11. As a safety issue, it is critical that facial hair does not interfere with the ability of officers to effectively use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as a gas mask.
 - a. Officers shall carry or have reasonable access to shaving equipment at their precinct, unit, in their locker, or in their vehicle at all times during their shift should

a duty assignment or emergency situation require proper donning of a gas mask, N95 mask, or respirator.

NOTE: Officers are not required to be clean shaven when wearing PPE (unless otherwise directed), but may be required to shave some facial hair if it prevents them from properly wearing PPE.

IV. Body Art – Tattoos and Body Ink

- A. Body art on the hands, neck, face or any part of the head not covered by hair is prohibited.
EXCEPTIONS: An exception will be made for a single tattoo around a finger that is meant to replace a wedding ring or wedding band. Other exceptions shall be approved by the Chief of Police or designee.
- B. Body art that is sexist, racist, gang-related, extremist group-related, or may bring discredit upon OPD is prohibited, regardless of visibility.
- C. Body art that is deemed offensive, immoral, or presenting an unprofessional appearance, as deemed by a supervisor, will not be visible to the public.
 - 1. Employees disagreeing with a supervisor's determination may complete an Inter-Office Memo to the Office of the Chief of Police, through the Chain of Command, that includes a photo of the body art.
- D. Body art that does not deter from the professional and neutral image of OPD may be visible.
- E. Failure to adhere to any portion of the body art policy may result in disciplinary action.
- F. The Chief of Police has final authority in determining whether tattoos are in violation of this policy.

REFERENCES:

I. Previous OPD Orders

- A. Previous General Orders: #81-89, 82-90, 84-94, 35-97, 62-97, 26-02, 12-04, 16-08, 41-13, 8-17, 106-18, 40-19, 58-21, 32-22, and 32-22 Supplements #1, 2, and 3.

II. Other References

- A. City of [Omaha HR Policies](#) applicable to this policy include "Dress Code."
- B. Omaha Mayor Memorandum applicable to this policy includes the "Dress Down Days" memo dated January 5, 1996.
- C. PPM Monthly Updates: #06-2018.