



UNIFORMS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE		
new: ✓ rescinds: ✓ amends: All previous		cross-reference: accreditation standards: NYSLEAP Standard(s): 25,26,27,72
effective date: July, 2011	amend date: January 2025	

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policies and procedures for issuance, return and wearing of the office’s official uniform and related equipment, dress codes for sworn, non-sworn and non-uniform personnel and personal appearance standards for all office personnel.

II. POLICY

A. It is the policy of the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office to:

1. Issue uniforms and equipment to sworn and other designated personnel to facilitate ready identification of personnel by the public.
2. Require all office personnel to dress in a manner appropriate to their current assignment and present a professional, business-like appearance when they are working; and
3. Require all office personnel to adhere to the personal appearance standards as set forth in this Order.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. All personnel shall adhere to the uniform, equipment and dress code standards set forth in this order. The only uniform and equipment items authorized for purchase with a member’s clothing allowance are those items listed in the *Uniform Order Form*.
- B. All members of the office shall maintain, in good order, regulation, well-fitted uniforms. Members shall be neat appearing and well-groomed while in uniform. All articles of clothing shall conform to office specifications and office uniform regulations. Members shall not wear the uniform when off duty, except to and from work, or when authorized by the Sheriff.
- C. All uniforms and equipment, except the office issued sidearm, are issued through the office’s Quartermaster system. Newly hired personnel will meet with the Quartermaster to receive their basic uniform and equipment issue. All officers will initial the issue form for each piece

of equipment received. Firearms instructors will issue the officer a service weapon, magazines and ammunition.

- D. All uniforms and equipment shall be kept in the best condition at all times. Uniforms shall be kept clean, pressed and shall not be noticeably patched, torn or worn. Maintenance of uniforms shall be dry clean or laundered and will be the responsibility of each officer. Leather and metal equipment shall be well polished. All equipment must be clean, in good working order and conform to office specifications. Equipment shall be worn/stored in accordance with office regulations and orders.
- E. While wearing the uniform, members shall maintain a positive bearing avoiding mannerisms such as slouching, shuffling and keeping hands in pockets or other lackadaisical behavior.
- F. Members are required to sign for equipment received and are thereafter responsible for its maintenance and/or loss. All equipment issued by the office must be returned at time of retirement, resignation, suspension, termination or leave without pay.
- G. Normally, members will wear the duty uniform on a tour of duty; however, the Sheriff or designee may prescribe other clothing as prescribed by the nature of the duty to which a particular member is assigned.
 - 1. Uniformed members have the option of wearing either the approved long or short-sleeve shirt. All members will wear a black-colored crew neck style undershirt with no advertising insignia. While wearing the long-sleeve shirt, members have the option of wearing a black-colored mock-style turtleneck undershirt. The turtleneck will be absent any advertising insignia. The tie and tie-bar may only be worn with the long-sleeve shirt only.
 - a. The Office patch (with black edging) is to be placed on the left sleeve, $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the shoulder seam.
 - b. The American Flag is to be placed on the right sleeve, 1" from the shoulder seam. The Flag is to be a "reversed flag."
 - c. Sergeant stripes are to be placed $\frac{1}{2}$ " below the office patch on the left sleeve, and equal distance on the right sleeve. Sergeant stripes are to have gold-colored hash marks with a black border.
 - 2. Non-uniformed members shall wear suitable business attire to include a long-sleeve shirt and tie or comparable business attire. These members may wear civilian attire when authorized by the Sheriff.
 - 3. Civilian personnel shall wear suitable business casual attire at minimum to include a polo-shirt or comparable business casual attire.
 - 4. Members assigned to specialized units (i.e. Marine Patrol, Snowmobile Patrol, SWAT, CINT etc.) shall wear the appropriate uniform in accordance with their unit/team's standard operating procedures.

5. Uniformed members shall wear their duty uniform for all court appearances. Non-uniformed members shall wear business attire for all court appearances. Professional conduct is always expected from all members when attending court or any other hearing. *See G.O. 310 Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.*
 6. Members attending training, in-house or outside of the agency, will dress in the manner dictated on their training memorandum. An Office polo-shirt with khaki colored BDU style pant will be the equivalent of business casual attire.
- H. All members shall have readily available an office-approved identification card while on duty. An office issued metallic nameplate shall be worn on the uniformed officer's outermost garment and uniform shirt, centered horizontally on the right breast pocket with the bottom edge touching the top of the pocket seam. The name plate will include initial of first name followed by last name. Sworn members wearing business attire, training attire and/or plain clothes with a sidearm shall wear their "police badge" on their belt in front of the holster or on a hanging badge holder in a manner that makes it easily visible. Civilian employees shall have their office-approved identification card readily available.
- I. Office issued metallic collar brass insignia shall be worn on the uniformed officer's outermost uniform. For those not holding rank; "T.C" on the left and "S.O." on the right. The Sheriff will have four (4) brass stars, the Undersheriff will have three (3) brass stars, the Captain will have two (2) bars, the Lieutenants will have one (1) bar, and the Sergeants will have chevrons.
- J. Awards & Commendations are optional. If worn, they shall be centered horizontally above the right breast pocket and placed ½" above the nameplate. If more than one bar is worn, they will be placed in a bar holder with not more than three in a single row. Additional bars will be placed above the row of three, centered horizontally and touching the row beneath. No other adornments are to be worn upon any uniform garment other than those outlined in *G.O. 309 Awards & Commendation Procedures.*
- K. The Accredited Agency pin shall be worn directly above and centered on the nameplate of the uniform shirt or outer carrier. If optional award and commendation pins are worn, the Accredited Agency pin shall be worn centered above them. *Update 01/2025*
- L. Ceremonial Attire: Uniformed members assigned to ceremonial details including funerals, parades, press conferences or other similar events may be directed to wear the uniform blouse and polished plain-toed shoes or boots. Every member wearing ceremonial attire will ensure that all uniform parts are cleaned and neatly pressed.
- M. All members, on duty and assigned to uniform law enforcement patrol functions, will wear the following equipment unless specifically exempted by the Sheriff or designee. Weapons/equipment that are not issued or approved by the office will not be carried on duty without permission of the Sheriff.
1. Issued identification card (readily available.)
 2. Badge.
 3. Issued black leather gun belt or approved nylon gun belt with a minimum of four (4) belt keepers. The gun belt and all items attached to it will be of similar material. The

gun belt will be worn so that the trouser belt is not exposed. New hires as of 2019 will be issued a black leather gun belt and are only authorized to wear such.

4. Issued handgun properly loaded with issued ammunition.
 5. Issued Safariland ALS holster (light required/authorized for Law Enforcement Division only) for the duty firearm to be located on the “strong side” and firmly secured to the duty belt in line with the outside trouser leg seam.
 6. A minimum of two extra magazines, fully loaded, carried in an issued or approved belt magazine holder to be located in front of the duty firearm on the strong side or on the support side. Vertical open top magazine pouches are approved after proper training has been received.
 7. Issued or approved flashlight with holder.
 8. Issued Taser with issued holster.
 9. Issued baton with issued holster (optional).
 10. Issued O.C. spray with issued or approved holder.
 11. Issued portable radio with issued or approved holder.
 12. Issued or approved handcuffs and key. Members are authorized to carry and use handcuffs produced by Smith & Wesson, Peerless or ASP only. Handcuffs must be all metal in construction and will be plain metal or black in color. Handcuffs can be either linked or hinged. *Updated 01/2025*
 13. Approved footwear. Black colored socks will be worn.
 14. Issued soft body armor. *See G.O. 704 Body Armor*. Soft body armor will be issued with an internal carrier and a black-colored external carrier to be determined by the Sheriff. Law Enforcement division external carrier will have “SHERIFF” on the back.
 15. Disposable gloves (may carry in pocket or in approved holster).
 16. Other equipment as may be issued/directed by the Sheriff or designee.
- N. All members, on duty and assigned to uniform correction patrol functions, will wear the following equipment unless specifically exempted by the Sheriff or designee and/or have not received the mandated training to where such equipment. Weapons/equipment that are not issued or approved by the office will not be carried on duty without permission of the Sheriff.
1. Badge.
 2. Issued black leather trouser belt or approved nylon trouser belt. The trouser belt and all items attached to it will be of similar material.
 3. Issued O.C. spray with issued or approved holder.
 4. Issued or approved handcuffs and key. Members are authorized to carry and use handcuffs produced by Smith & Wesson and Peerless only. Handcuffs must be all metal in construction and will be plain metal or black in color. Handcuffs can be either linked or hinged.
 5. Issued or approved key ring holder.
 6. Issued or approved flashlight with holder.
 7. Approved footwear. Black colored socks will be worn.
 8. Disposable gloves (may carry in pocket or approved holder).
 9. Other equipment as may be issued/directed by the Sheriff or designee.
- O. All members, on duty and assigned to uniform correction patrol functions outside of the jail facility, will wear the following equipment in addition to that specified above.

1. Issued identification card (readily available).

2. Issued black leather gun belt or approved nylon gun belt with a minimum of four (4) belt keepers. The gun belt and all items attached to it will be of similar material. The gun belt will be worn so that the trouser belt is not exposed. New hires as of 2019 will be issued a black leather gun belt and are only authorized to wear such.
 3. Issued handgun properly loaded with issued ammunition.
 4. Issued Safariland ALS holster for the duty firearm to be located on the “strong side” and firmly secured to the duty belt in line with the outside trouser leg seam.
 5. A minimum of two extra magazines, fully loaded, carried in an issued or approved belt magazine holder to be located in front of the duty firearm on the strong side or on the support side. Vertical open top magazine pouches are approved after proper training has been received.
 6. Issued or approved flashlight with holder.
 7. Issued portable radio with issued or approved holder.
 8. Issued soft body armor. Soft body armor will be issued with an internal carrier and a black-colored external carrier to be determined by the Sheriff. Corrections division external carrier will have “CORRECTIONS” on the back.
 9. Other equipment as may be issued/directed by the Sheriff or designee.
- P. Weapons and equipment holsters/holders are to be arranged in such a fashion to avoid having any item directly behind the duty firearm holster where it may inhibit the draw of the firearm or function of the holster.

Q. Uniform Hats

A Stetson is to be worn at times where Law Enforcement and Corrections could have contact with the media, special details, major crime scenes, transports to and from court, or when directed by the Sheriff or designee. Stetsons will not be worn inside of a building or during inclement weather.

A baseball style hat, color black, with an office reduced sized shoulder patch embroidered on the front is authorized for patrol functions and special details as authorized by the Sheriff or designee.

During inclement weather, and during long-sleeve shirt season, members have the option of wearing a black-colored approved knit cap or black-colored approved winter head band with an office reduced sized shoulder patch embroidered on the front. *Updated 12/2022*

R. Uniform Jackets

Uniform jackets will be worn with the metallic badge and brass nameplate displayed at all times.

Members have the option of wearing a black-colored jacket with appropriate patches and insignia, styles and manufacturers as approved by the Sheriff.

S. Mourning Bands *Updated 07/2022*

Mourning Bands should not exceed 1/2" and will be solid black in color. The Mourning Band will be worn from the 11 to 5 position, as if looking at the face of a clock. Mourning bands shall be worn on your badge only in the following circumstances:

1. Upon the line of duty death of an active law enforcement or corrections officer in our agency. The mourning band should be worn for a period of thirty days from the date of death.
2. By all law enforcement/corrections in uniform or civilian clothing while displaying a badge when attending the funeral of an active law enforcement/corrections officer. Upon completion of the funeral, the mourning band shall be removed.
3. Upon the line of duty death of a law enforcement officer from a neighboring jurisdiction. The mourning band will be worn from the date of death and removed at the conclusion of the day of burial.
4. National Peace Officers Memorial Day (May 15th).
5. The day any memorial service our agency has honoring one of our members who have died in the line of duty.
6. At the direction of the Sheriff or his/her designee, when special circumstances dictate that a department of display of official mourning is appropriate.

T. Grooming

Hair will be neatly groomed and clean. Hair may not exceed below the top of the shirt, except closely cut hair at the back of one's neck. Hair should be tapered, so it does not fall over the eyebrows, ears or touch the shirt collar. The bulk or length of the hair must not interfere with the wearing of the uniform and emergency headgear. Hair shall not be dyed or cut as to appear outlandish from the general population or to present a non-professional image. Hair pins or barrettes similar to the color of the officer's hair are permitted provided they are unobtrusive and concealed as much as possible.

Members must be clean-shaven, but may wear a mustache, goatee or beard. A mustache must be kept trimmed and may not exceed beyond the corners of the mouth or below the centerline of the lip. A goatee must be closely and uniformly trimmed so that the entire goatee is of the same length. The goatee will be confined to the mustache, corners of the mouth and chin area, and will not extend up the face taking on the appearance of a beard. In addition, goatees consisting of hair on the chin, with no mustache are not permitted.

A beard must be neatly trimmed, not to exceed ¾ of an inch in length. The entire beard must be the same length. Members are strictly prohibited from designer beards, or "chin-strap" beards, or to display words, images, patterns, logos or designs in their facial hair. A beard may not extend more than one (1) inch below the jaw line.

Note: Members must recognize that facial hair could potentially impact the effective use of the department issued Respirator or other masks such as the P100 or N95. The Sheriff or his/her designee may order a member to be clean-shaven before they are required to use a

respirator or other mask. At any time, the Sheriff reserves the right to discontinue beards or any facial hair defined in this policy. *Updated 08/2022*

Three (3) stud earrings per ear are permitted. No other earrings/piercings, large rings and cumbersome jewelry are permitted. *Updated 12/2022*

Visible tattoos, brandings, or intentional scarring are prohibited from being distasteful, obscene, indicative of membership in a hate, racist, subversive organization, criminal gang, or any symbol that can be commonly associated with such a group. In addition, any visible tattoo, branding, intentional scarring that can be deemed reasonably offensive or morally objectionable, including but not limited to racially oriented, drug related, or sexually explicit words, pictures or symbols are strictly prohibited. Visible tattoos, brandings, intentional scarring, or other body art or modification are prohibited on the face, head and neck.

Members may wear conservative makeup of a natural appearance, applied in moderation. Fingernails shall be maintained and shall not exceed more than ¼ of an inch in length beyond the fingertip. Uniformed and non-uniformed members may wear shades of nail polish that are not extreme in color as to appear outlandish from the general public. *Updated 12/2022*

Attachments:

A. *Uniform Order Form*

By Order Of

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Osborne".

Derek Osborne
Sheriff