

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose: The professional image of our workforce is critical to foster public confidence while providing exemplary customer service in our administrative sites or in the field. This instruction establishes Departmental Policy on professional appearance in the workplace.
- B. Scope: All employees of the Los Angeles County Fire Department (Department) are responsible for knowledge of and compliance with this policy as it relates to maintaining a neat and professional appearance in the performance of their duties.
- C. Author: Deputy Chief, Administrative Services Bureau through the Human Resources Division, shall be responsible for the content, revision, and annual review of this instruction.
- D. Authority: County Code, Title 5 Personnel, Section 5.72.010 – Suitable clothing to be worn, County of Los Angeles Employee Handbook, Section C, Performance Expectations, and Department of Human Resources PPG 512 Professional Appearance in the Workplace.
- E. Enforcement: This policy supersedes V2-C4-S16, Grooming Standards. This policy provides guidelines on dress and appearance and is not meant to address all situations. Therefore, depending on the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the public, or other circumstances, there may be some differences in dress guidelines. Department employees who report to work and are not in compliance with this policy may be sent home to change and return to work, unless some other remedy can be arranged.
- F. Definitions:
  - 1. On-Duty is defined as the time an employee is being compensated for services rendered.
  - 2. Professional staff describes all Department employees that are not required to wear a uniform.

## II. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All Department employees are responsible for knowledge of and compliance with this policy.
- B. All supervisors shall ensure the content of this policy is enforced.

## III. POLICY

- A. The Department provides a wide variety of services and the professional image of our workplace is critical to fostering public confidence and providing “effective and caring service.” Therefore, these guidelines on professional appearance are intended to:
  - 1. Foster respect and earn the confidence of our customers, the public, vendors and fellow employees.
  - 2. Promote a positive work environment and limit distractions.
  - 3. Ensure safety and security while working.
- B. The Department respects the diversity of its residents and its workforce. This policy provides guidelines on dress and appearance appropriate to the nature of the work environment, nature of work performed, involvement with the service provided to the public, and/or other circumstances or business needs as defined by the Fire Chief.

Department employees are expected to abide by the following standards:

- 1. Employees shall present a neat, clean, and professional appearance in their performance of duties at all times based on the employee’s assignment and/or work location.
- 2. Employees must dress in a manner that will not hinder their ability to effectively complete their work assignments, including consideration of the communities served, customer expectations, business needs or standards of the Department and the employee’s safety.
- 3. Employees are expected to practice personal hygiene that does not interfere with the public and/or co-workers in their work environment.
- 4. Employees should be mindful of, and dress appropriately for, special events, meetings and appointments with customers.

5. Department photo ID cards and/or badges, and uniforms (where applicable) shall be worn in the performance of County business and in all County facilities in order to identify employees as legitimate County representatives.
  6. Employees shall abide by specific dress requirements intended to ensure job-related safety such as when operating equipment or machinery, working with potentially dangerous chemicals, or for public health consideration.
- C. Except as noted or approved by the Fire Chief, employees may not wear the following:
1. T-shirts or clothing articles that may create a hostile or abusive work environment, such as sexually suggestive cartoons, pictures, or words.
  2. Denim pants or jean-style pants of any color (some exceptions may include assignments in the field).
  3. Pants below the waistline or low-rise pants showing undergarments.
  4. Low-front tops, halter tops, bare midriffs.
  5. Flip-flop styled sandals.
  6. Athletic wear (e.g., gym or sweat pants, leggings, jogging outfits, shorts, or spandex) during work hours. Exception: for break time when walking, running, etc.
  7. Torn, frayed, or ripped clothing.
  8. Excessively tight fitting or oversized (baggy) garments.
  9. No nose, eyebrow, lips, tongue rings and/or studs.
  10. Tattoos shall be covered at all times when there is a reasonable expectation that a Department member will be seen by the public. If there is not a reasonable expectation that a Department member will be seen by the public, covering of the tattoos is not required.
- D. Grooming Standards
1. Uniformed personnel:

- a. Male: Hair shall not extend below the top of the collar while the employee is standing in the upright position.
- b. Female: Hair may be styled and/or restrained so that it does not extend below the bottom of the collar standing in the upright position.
- c. Hair shall not extend below the middle of the ear or more than 2 inches in front of the ear.
- d. Hair shall not exceed 1 ½” inches in height from the scalp.
- e. Hair that is styled or combed forward shall not extend below the eyebrows.
- f. Hair shall be managed in such a manner so as not to interfere with the seal of a face mask, or the proper fit of a helmet or uniform cap. A wig or hairpiece may be worn while on duty provided it conforms to the above standards.
- g. Facial Sideburns:
  - 1) Sideburns may extend to the bottom of the ear and shall be squarely cut. The bottom flare shall not exceed the width of the main portion of the sideburns by more than ¼ inch of the unflared width, and shall not extend beyond the inner seal of a face mask.
  - 2) Sideburns shall be neat in appearance and not bushy.
- h. Facial Hair:
  - 1) Employees shall be clean-shaven when reporting for duty.
  - 2) Facial hair shall not in any way restrict the positive seal of a breathing apparatus.
  - 3) A mustache may be worn provided it is neat in appearance, trimmed so that at least half of the upper lip is visible and is no more than ½ inch below the corner of the mouth, and does not extend beyond the natural facial smile creases.

2. Professional Staff:

- a. Male: Hair shall not extend past the top of the shoulder nor below the eyebrow line on the face. Beards and mustaches are permitted, but must be neatly trimmed and well-groomed. Wigs or hairpieces are permitted if they conform to these standards.
- b. Female: Hair shall be neatly styled, trimmed and well groomed. It shall be of a style, length or artificial color which is not offensive to the general public. Wigs or hairpieces are permitted if they conform to these standards.

E. Jewelry

1. Uniformed Personnel:

a. Earrings:

- 1) Male: Shall not wear any earrings while on-duty.
- 2) Female: May wear stud or post-type earrings while on duty provided the earrings do not hang below the bottom of the earlobes and do not exceed ¼ inch in diameter. Earrings must be identical and only one may be worn in each earlobe.

2. Professional Staff:

- a. Jewelry may be worn but shall present a professional image and not be distracting or interfere with duties.
- b. Jewelry that may be considered a safety hazard in various field assignments can be prohibited by the jurisdictional deputy chief.

F. Employees may request exceptions to this policy, through their chain of command, and as authorized by the Fire Chief, in circumstances such as County or Fire Department sponsored events, special occasions, seasonal weather changes, and business casual days. Exceptions may also be made based on requests for reasonable accommodation (e.g., religious, cultural, disability, safety of personnel, etc.).

G. Additional guidelines may apply to all personnel, please refer to V2-C11-S1.