



**Title: Grooming and Appearance Standards**

Controller: Administration  
Origination Date: 03/2013

Revision Date: 12/2022

Approved by: Mark W. K. Effective Date: 1/15/2023

**Purpose**

Defines the accepted personal grooming and appearance standards required of all fire department personnel to ensure a professional image is displayed at all times.

**History**

Seminole County Fire Department personnel are regarded as trusted emergency services professionals by the public and community. It is imperative that all personnel present a clean, neutral, professional and uniform image to the citizens we serve.

**Procedure**

**2003.01 Authority and Responsibility**

1. The Fire Chief and/or designated Chief Fire Officer have final interpretation authority on any article or part of this Operations Bulletin.
2. Immediate supervisors have the responsibility for the continued compliance of this policy by their subordinate personnel. It is incumbent upon immediate supervisors to notify an individual of an infraction as soon as it is identified and to follow up with said individual to ensure compliance.
3. All personnel are responsible to strictly abide by the articles in this policy. Deviation from or violation of this grooming standard is not authorized. Personnel not in compliance will be notified of such violation and given the opportunity to correct the violation. Failure to correct the violation after notification will be grounds for disciplinary action.

**2003.02 Grooming**

1. Facial hair standards:
  - a. Males will be clean shaven, except that a mustache may be worn according to this policy. Beards, goatee, soul patch or any other type of facial hair arrangement below the lower lip other than a mustache are specifically forbidden.
  - b. Mustaches are permitted so long as they are well groomed and worn in such a fashion as to give a neat and professional appearance.
  - i. Mustaches shall be trimmed at all times so that no part of the mustache extends more than 1½ inch below and ½ inch laterally and outward from the corner of the mouth (for the purpose of this policy defined as the corner/crease

where the upper and lower lips join) or less if required to ensure adequate and proper fit of safety and protective equipment.

- ii. There shall be no facial hair below the lower lip except as described above.
- iii. Handlebar moustaches and all beards are hereby prohibited.
- iv. The use of specific gels or products to shape, alter or otherwise arrange the mustache in an unnatural style is prohibited.
  - (a) Sideburns – Shall be trimmed not to extend in a downward fashion below the bottom of the earlobe and shall end in a clean shaven horizontal line without any curvature, bushing, flare or widening at the end of the sideburn.
  - (b) Any hair that comes in contact to or interferes with the proper safety of the outer seal of protective breathing equipment or respirator is not authorized. Personnel's facial and hair grooming must comply with Operations Bulletin 4015 "Respiratory Protection Standard" Mask Fit Testing and the Occupational Safety Heath Administration (OSHA) Std. 1910.134 "Fit Testing Procedures".

**2. Hair Standards For Uniformed Personnel:**

- a. Hair must be neat, well-trimmed and appropriately groomed (combed) at all times.
- b. Operational Personnel - Hair extending more than (1) inch past uniform collar (Class A, B, C or D) must be "pinned up" and arranged in a way that it does not interfere with the proper safety of job duties. Hair on top of the head and extending into the forehead area will be groomed so that it does not fall naturally below the eyebrows. At no time shall the hair bulk or grooming style interfere with the proper wear of any authorized headgear, SCBA mask ensemble, safety equipment or protective apparel. Hair ornaments such as ribbons shall not be worn. Pins, combs, barrettes or hair ties may be worn as long as they are of a black, dark brown, dark blue color, or material that matches the current hair color.
- c. Administrative Uniformed Personnel: Hair must be neat and appropriately groomed at all times. When wearing hair loose, hair must not extend (6) inches past the bottom of the uniform collar. During field operations hair must be compliant with subsection b. in the preceding.
- d. Extreme or eccentric hairstyles are not authorized. If personnel use dyes, tints or bleaches, they must choose those that result in natural hair colors. Colors that detract from displaying a professional appearance are prohibited.
  - i. Members shall avoid using colors that result in an extreme appearance.
  - ii. Applied hair colors that are prohibited include, but are not limited to purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright red, and any type of fluorescent or neon colors.
- iii. It is the responsibility of supervisors to use good judgment in determining if the hairstyle or the applied hair colors are unacceptable, based upon the overall effect of the person's appearance.

**2003.03 Jewelry**

1. Personal jewelry
  - a. Neck chains and charms may be worn, but must remain concealed from view beneath the uniform shirt at all times. Neck chains that may pose an entanglement hazard are not permitted at any time.
  - b. Bracelets, watches, and rings must have a tasteful design and must fit snugly in a way that these items do not interfere with the safe performance of the individual's assigned duties.
    - i. Personnel are discouraged from wearing rings while on duty and assigned to operational response positions. Rings can easily be tangled in equipment and have the potential to cause severe injury to the finger/hand up to and including loss of the finger.
    - c. Any jewelry that due to the size, style or type poses a safety hazard in the performance of emergency operations is hereby prohibited from use while on duty.
2. Earrings for Combat Personnel
  - a. Personnel assigned to operational response positions are not allowed to wear any type of earrings or ear ornamentation while on duty for safety precautions.
3. Earrings for Administrative Personnel
  - a. Earrings worn by female Administrative staff should not interfere with performing assigned duties. Dangle or long type earrings should not extend below the neckline. Piercing holes larger than those necessary to accommodate a small post earring are prohibited.
  4. Extreme earrings or devices that create a large opening on the earlobe causing a dilation and/or deformity of the natural curvature of the earlobe are specifically prohibited at all times.

**2003.04 Dentition and Dental Decorations**

1. Artificial dental ornamentation
  - a. The use of gold, platinum or other style or type of metal or composite veneers or caps for the purposes of dental ornamentation is prohibited unless prescribed by a dentist as a necessary and indispensable part of dental work.
  - b. Teeth whether natural, capped, veneer, implants or other accessories shall not be decorated with any designs, jewels, initials or any other markings.

**2003.04 Body Art**

1. Definition – body art includes, but is not limited to, tattoos, branding, scarification, mutilation (examples include but are not limited to: splitting of the tongue, surgically implanted modifications, holes/gauges in the ears that cause an exaggerated opening in the ear lobe causing a dilation and/or deformity of the natural curvature of the earlobe).
2. Piercing body art **SHALL NOT** be visible while on duty. Piercings that are visible or noticeable under the uniform cannot be worn while on duty.
3. Visible tattoos are discouraged but will be deemed acceptable and allowed to be visible while on duty as long as it does not meet any of the outlined prohibited tattoos and prohibited tattoo areas.
  - a. At the posting of policy revision dated 02/16/2015, existing tattoos of the head, neck, face, and mouth **WILL BE COVERED AT ALL TIMES**, by whatever adequate means is needed, while on shift. Employees that have a copy of the "Grooming and Appearance Standards Affidavit" on file currently will remain in effect for tattoos of this nature that are not able to be covered by department issued uniform. Any new tattoos of the head, neck, face and mouth are strictly prohibited.
  - b. A written notice of declaration of existing employees with prohibited tattoos, to include description and location will be filed and added to the employee's personnel file.
  - c. Tattoos that depict, describe, or otherwise refer to sexual conduct, acts, organs, or preferences and/or depict, describe or otherwise refer to intolerance of, or discrimination against, any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation, or refer to or are commonly associated with any organization or groups which advocate such: intolerance such as hate, terror, or discrimination and those that are detrimental to good order, discipline, and incompatible are hereby prohibited. Existing tattoos meeting the preceding criteria are not permitted to be visible at any time while on duty and must be covered at all times.
  - d. Any visible tattoo that is deemed potentially offensive by a company officer or Battalion Chief, and disputed by employee, will have to be inspected by an Assistant Chief to confirm if tattoo is offensive and needs to be covered while on duty. The Assistant Chief (or higher ranking Chief Officers) determination will stand.
  - e. Any tattoo that meets criteria of stated terms above **SHALL NOT BE VISIBLE AT ANY TIME** while on duty and will be covered with a department-approved garment as outlined in Operations Bulletin 2007 "Proper Wear of Uniforms and Insignia". There will be no exceptions to this rule, and extra cost may be incurred by violating party "Not County or SCFD" by having to get items to cover tattoos not limited to makeup, turtle neck shirts, gloves, band aids or removal.

### **2003.05 Hygiene**

1. General Hygiene is an important aspect of a professional appearance.
  - a. The Department supplies ample accommodations for personnel to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.
  - b. Each member is expected to maintain excellent personal hygiene standards to eliminate or reduce the potential for offensive body odor.
2. Nails and Nail Polish:
  - a. Personnel must have nails neatly trimmed. Excessively long nails are not authorized.
  - b. Personnel are authorized to use a single tone clear or light natural nail polish that is in good taste without patterns, stones or other nail accessories. Multiple nail polish colors are not authorized. The use of artificial nails while on duty if interferes with the safe performance of response duties is not authorized.
3. Use of cosmetics, colognes and perfumes while on duty:
  - a. Personnel should be aware that strong perfumes and colognes can trigger allergic reactions, or other illnesses, and should be avoided.
  - b. Antiperspirant and deodorants are permitted as long as they are not heavily perfumed.
  - c. Personnel may use cosmetics “to include previously approved (by Assistant Chief) permanent makeup and/or cosmetics to the eyes, face, and or lips”, as long as these products are conservative in nature with light or natural colors that are not overtly bright or distracting.

### **2003.06 Affirmation Agreement**

1. All new hires will be required to complete a “Grooming and Appearance Standards Affidavit” (see appendix A for New Hire personnel) documenting any visible tattoos present as of the date of hire for initial employment and affirming to abide by all the policies set forth in this document.
2. Any incumbents that have tattoos not coverable by department approved uniforms will be required to sign an affidavit documenting any existing visible tattoos present as of the effective date of this policy (see appendix B for Incumbent Personnel).

## Appendix A:

**Seminole County Fire Department**  
**New Hire**  
**Grooming and Appearance Standards Affidavit**

Before me the undersigned, an EMS/ Fire/ Rescue employee, on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, swears and/or affirms that:

1. I have received and have read a copy of the Seminole County Fire Department Grooming and Appearance Standards.
2. I agree to not add any visible tattoos, body art, scarifications, brandings or any other form of body markings or alterations to my head, face, neck area or mouth that are visible or exposed while wearing department approved uniforms.
3. I certify that I have the following visible body art that is not coverable by department approved uniforms:

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## Affiant Signature

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Printed Name

Witnessed by

## Appendix B:

**Seminole County Fire Department**  
**Incumbent with Visible / Non-Coverable Tattoos**  
**Grooming and Appearance Standards Affidavit**

Before me the undersigned, a Seminole County Fire Department employee, on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, swears and/or affirms that:

1. I have received and have read a copy of the Seminole County Fire Department Grooming and Appearance Standards.
2. I agree to not add to, any visible tattoos, body art, scarifications, brandings or any other form of body markings or alterations to my head, face, neck area or mouth, that are visible or exposed while wearing department approved uniforms.
3. I certify that I have the following visible body art that is not coverable by department approved uniforms:

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## Affiant Signature

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Printed Name

Witnessed by