



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
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DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVE
NO. 230.20

5 August 2011

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
DRESS CODE POLICY

1. PURPOSE: This Directive prescribes the policy for the appropriate dress and clothing for the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA or the "Department"). As a State department that consistently interacts with the public, elected officials, and military and veteran organizations, it is imperative that DMAVA maintain the most professional workplace possible. Although personal attire is a highly individual choice, it is important that all employees have the same guiding information on the definition of business-appropriate attire. This Dress Code Policy seeks to delineate what shall be the acceptable and appropriate standard of dress and personal appearance of employees and others who serve the DMAVA.

2. POLICY STATEMENT: DMAVA requires that each Division and Veterans Memorial Home establish a uniform dress code for its employees that is appropriate to their job function. This dress code provides for the safe, proper and efficient discharge of their duties, and that the individual's personal appearance upholds the respect, trust and confidence of our State's citizens.

3. APPLICABILITY: This Policy applies to all state employees of DMAVA. The term employee includes state-contracted individuals and temporary hires of the Department.

4. OBJECTIVES.

a. The intent of this policy is to set forth guidelines that will allow employees flexibility and comfort in their manner of dress without compromising the DMAVA's need to maintain a high level of professionalism in the workplace. **There are no requirements in this Policy for the purchase or maintenance of standard uniforms.**

b. Employees are expected to wear proper attire which is neat and clean, not faded or torn, and is professional in appearance. This policy identifies appropriate and inappropriate attire; however employees should remember that good judgment must prevail when determining appropriate attire on any given workday.

c. Employees are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to their job function, and that promotes professionalism, consideration, and respect for the public and co-worker. Clothing must be neat, clean and appropriately fitting. Employees should dress in a manner that reflects appropriately on their position, the organization and the State which they represent.

5. STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES.

a. Inappropriate Attire.

(1) In order to maintain a professional workplace, certain clothing will be considered inappropriate to conduct business at the Veteran Memorial Homes (VMHs).

(2) Examples of inappropriate attire and clothing within a professional workplace environment:

(a) T-shirts/clothing with foul, offensive and/or crude language, expressions and/or images (Shirts distributed by DMAVA, the VMHs, Youth Challenge, Veterans Haven, etc. are acceptable.)

(b) Tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, or bare mid-drifts

(c) Shorts of any type (*except as authorized by supervisors for individuals that perform manual labor outdoors during adverse hot weather conditions*).

(d) Micro-mini skirts or micro-mini dresses

(e) High top sneakers; house slippers or bedroom slippers

(f) Open-toed shoes, "Flip-flops," beach or pool shoes

(g) Sweat suits or sweatshirts/sweatpants, or other exercise/athletic attire

(h) Non-religious or non-medically necessary head coverings such as hats, caps, scarves, etc.

(i) Clothing that is ragged, torn, cut, frayed, or otherwise having holes, or that is in poor repair or dirty

(j) Shirts worn unbuttoned

(k) Garments which are excessively tight or revealing

(l) Undergarments worn as outerwear including undershirts

(m) Excessive jewelry, beads, wristbands, etc.

(n) For all employees, other than those who routinely perform manual labor as part of their daily duties, inappropriate attire includes jeans of any type or color and/or sneakers of any kind.

(3) If an employee is unsure whether a particular piece of attire is appropriate, he or she should not wear that particular article of clothing.

(4) A Division Director may, on a distinct occasion when an employee is engaged in such manual work as re-organizing file cabinets, moving office furniture, or packing materials, authorize the wearing by employee(s) for that particular day of informal clothing such as clean jeans, work-style shirts and sneakers. This also includes special events.

NOTE: Nothing in this policy should be construed to discourage workers from participating in union activities, which may include wearing a union T-shirt at appropriate times.

b. Appropriate Attire.

(1) The following appropriate attire should be worn by senior and management staff (e.g. Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Chief, Directors, etc.):

- (a) Suits or sports coats/blazers with tie, dress slacks, dress shoes, dress shirts
- (b) Dresses, dress slacks, dress shoes, skirts, blouses

(2) The following should be worn by supervisors and administrative staff:

- (a) Shirts with collars, slacks/Khakis
- (b) Blouses, slacks/Khakis, skirts, dresses

c. Management Responsibilities.

(1) To ensure that employees are provided this policy and are aware of and comply with the guidelines set forth in the provisions of this policy.

(2) To enforce this policy within their area(s) of responsibility.

(3) To ensure that appropriate action is taken if an Employee comes to work dressed inappropriately,

- (a) Providing the employee with written counseling at the first violation.
- (b) Sending the employee home with instructions to change into appropriate work attire.

(c) Ensuring that employees will be charged with leave until they return to work in appropriate attire.

d. Employee Responsibilities.

- (1) To become knowledgeable with the content of this Policy.
- (2) To wear clothes appropriate to their job function and in keeping with this Policy
- (3) To wear footwear that provides protection necessary in the performance of his or her duties. Footwear should not interfere with the ability of the employee to respond to hazards and/or emergencies in the work place.

e. Violations of Policy.

- (1) This business-appropriate attire policy will be enforced in the same manner as other departmental policies, which is to say that violation of this policy may result in formal disciplinary actions.
- (2) The failure of supervisors to take appropriate corrective action when he or she observes a subordinate employee wearing inappropriate attire will be enforced in the same manner as other departmental policies, which is to say that violation of this policy may result in formal disciplinary actions.

The proponent office for this Directive is the Director, Human Resources, DMAVA. Users are invited to send comments for improvements to DMAVA, ATTN: HRD, 101 Eggert Crossing Road, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

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