



GENERAL ORDER

GENERAL ORDER 100.07

Personal Appearance

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Issue Date: 05/01/1996

Revision Date: 01/16/2014

1 APPLICABILITY

2 All uniformed Personnel

3 POLICY

4 Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (Department) members shall maintain a
5 professional appearance and acceptable hygiene in order to present a positive image to the public. This
6 policy establishes guidelines for uniform appearance standards and ensures members conform to
7 appropriate uniform safety considerations.

8 DEFINITIONS

10 PROCEDURES

11 GENERAL

12 The image the Department projects to the public in large part is through the appearance of its personnel.

13 The personal safety of members functioning in an emergency or training setting requires that officers
14 enforce the stated requirements.

15 All members shall comply with the requirements set forth in this policy when in uniform or representing
16 the Department in an official capacity.

17 HAIR

18 Hair must be kept clean, neatly groomed, and should be worn in a manner so as not to extend past the
19 bottom of the uniform collar. The use of a ponytail or other hair accessories such as pins, combs,
20 barrettes, and bands may be used as long as they do not interfere with safety practices or equipment.

23 The length and/or bulk of hair:

- 24 • Shall not detract or degrade from the intent of the uniform or position.
- 25 • Shall not interfere with the wearing of a helmet, protective hood, breathing apparatus, or
- 26 dress hat.
- 27 • Exaggerated styles, such as mohawks or shaved in designs, are not permitted.
- 28 • The hair shall have a natural color. Unnatural colorings or highlights such as green, blue,
- 29 pink, etc. are prohibited.

30 **MUSTACHE**

31 In accordance with this policy and the professional image DFRS is committed to maintaining, a neatly
32 trimmed mustache is permitted and:

- 33 • Must be neatly trimmed;
- 34 • Must not exceed 1" in width;
- 35 • Must not extend downward past the top of the jaw line;
- 36 • Must not be bushy or shaggy.

37 As defined in OSHA Standard 1910.134 - Respiratory Protection, Section 1910.134(g)(1)(i), an employer
38 shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have facial hair
39 that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve
40 function.

- 41 • As such, a mustache shall not extend downward past the top of the jaw line or extend
- 42 outward in any direction that would cause interference with the proper seal of the
- 43 facepiece or present a safety hazard to the individual.

44 **SIDEBURNS**

45 In accordance with this policy and the professional image the Department is committed to maintaining,
46 neatly trimmed sideburns are permitted and:

- 47 • Must be neatly trimmed and tapered in same manner as the haircut;
- 48 • Must be of consistently even width for their entire length;
- 49 • Must not exceed 1" in width;
- 50 • Must not extend past the bottom of the earlobe;
- 51 • Must end in a clean shaven line;
- 52 • Must not be bushy or shaggy.

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57 As defined in OSHA Standard 1910.134 - Respiratory Protection, Section 1910.134(g)(1)(i), an employer
58 shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have facial hair
59 that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve
60 function.

- 61 • As such, sideburns shall not extend in any direction that would violate the above OSHA
62 Standard or present a safety hazard to the individual.

63 **OTHER FACIAL HAIR**

64 A small patch of hair located below the lower lip and above the chin is often informally referred to as a
65 “soul patch” or “mouche” (“mouche” *OED Online*. June 2003. Oxford University Press). In accordance
66 with this policy and the professional image the Department is committed to maintaining, a neatly
67 trimmed “mouche” is permitted and:

- 68 • Must be neatly trimmed;
- 69 • Must not exceed 1” in width;
- 70 • Must not extend downward past the top of the jaw line;
- 71 • must not be bushy or shaggy.

72 As defined in OSHA Standard 1910.134 - Respiratory Protection, Section 1910.134(g)(1)(i), an employer
73 shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have facial hair
74 that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve
75 function.

- 76 • As such, a “mouche” shall not extend in any direction that would violate the above OSHA
77 Standard or present a safety hazard to the individual.

78 Beards, goatees, or any other variation of facial hair other than those explicitly defined in this policy are
79 prohibited.

80 **JEWELRY**

81 Wedding rings, wristwatches, Medic-Alert bracelets, Medic-Alert necklaces and religious medallions are
82 the only jewelry items permitted.

83 For safety purposes, personnel are cautioned that while the items listed above are permitted to be worn
84 on-duty, it is safer not to wear any item that could be caught in a tool or device, grabbed by other
85 individuals, conduct heat, and/or result in injury to the individual.

86 The wearing of earrings shall be limited to the stud type only. Members are prohibited from displaying
87 piercings other than those located in the ear, such as in the lip, nose, tongue, or eyebrow. Gauged and/or
88 enlarged holes in the ears are prohibited and must be covered at all times when a member is in uniform
89 or representing the Department in an official capacity.

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91 **TATTOOS**

92 The display of personal tattoos while on-duty is permitted in accordance with this policy.

93 When a member is in uniform or is representing the Department in an official capacity, members are not
94 permitted to openly display tattoos that are vulgar, indecent, racist, obscene, or gang related.

95 Questions about whether tattoos fall into one of these categories shall be referred to The Administrative
96 Services Bureau Chief, who shall, in coordination with County Human Resources and the Office of Law,
97 determine if the tattoo needs to be covered while the member is in uniform or representing the
98 Department in an official capacity.

- 99 • Examples of tattoos that are intended to be covered by this restriction include, but are not
100 limited to, swastika symbols, depiction of sexual acts, and gang symbols.

101 The intent of this policy is to restrict only those tattoos that could bring the image of the Department into
102 disrepute or are contrary to the public image the uniform represents.

103 Regardless of content, tattoos on the head, neck, face, or hands must be covered at all times a member is
104 in uniform or representing the Department in an official capacity.

105 The Department reserves the right to require the covering of any tattoo deemed to have violated this
106 policy.

107 **COSMETICS**

108 Cosmetics shall be conservatively colored and moderately applied.

109 **FINGERNAILS**

110 Fingernails must be neatly trimmed and clean. Fingernail length may not interfere with the performance
111 of one's duties.

112 **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

113 All personnel shall maintain a high standard of personal cleanliness.

114 **EXCEPTIONS**

115 At the discretion of the Chief of the Department or designee, exceptions to this policy may be made for
116 cause.

117 **REFERENCES**

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119 **SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT CHANGES**

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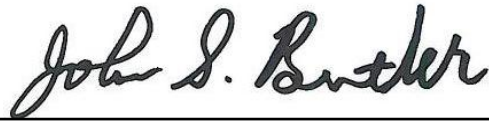
FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

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APPROVED

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Deputy Chief John S. Butler
Operations Command