GENERAL ORDER 530.01

Uniforms

BUREAU OF LOGISTICS

Issue Date: **February 09, 2006**
Revision Date: **September 05, 2019**

APPLICABILITY

All Career Personnel

POLICY

The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services (Department) shall provide all career personnel with the equipment and uniform components necessary to perform their duties. The Department uniform identifies members of the organization, ensures a measure of uniformity, and promotes professionalism. Members are responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all issued equipment and uniforms. Supervisors are responsible for inspecting members to ensure issued equipment and uniforms are kept in good working order. This General Order shall establish procedures for the issuance, replacement, maintenance, use, and composition for career uniforms.

DEFINITIONS

- None

PROCEDURES

GENERAL:
The Department's Bureau of Logistics shall be responsible for developing uniform specifications, along with the obtaining and issuing of uniforms for all personnel. Specifications for uniforms and accessories shall be approved by the Chief of the Department (Fire Chief). The Fire Chief is authorized to change the uniform standards found within this General Order whenever deemed appropriate. Such cases may include, but are not limited to: events that require Departmental participation, fiscal restrictions, safety driven, or at his/her discretion. Provisions pertaining to uniform allocations within County Policies, MOU's, collective bargaining agreements and/or the Employee Manual are considered part of this order.

Exceptions to provisions in this policy may be requested by the respective Bureau Chief subject to approval by the Fire Chief. All exceptions should be documented and submitted to the Bureau of Logistics Bureau Chief for record retention.

ISSUANCE:

Upon appointment to the Department, personnel shall receive the initial issuance as described in Attachment A.

Personnel may be issued additional items based on assignment or promotion.

UNIFORM REPLACEMENT AND ALTERATIONS:

Replacement of issued clothing and accessories will be closely monitored and made on an as needed basis. The Quartermaster will notify the Logistics Bureau Chief of any excessive uniform requests that are not supplemented with lost/damage reports that explain the increased need for issued clothing. Company Officers should monitor personnel uniform request requisitions and request to inspect uniforms prior to submission, if it is believed the request is excessive.

Appropriate cleaning and maintenance, as well as securing issued uniform items to prevent loss from damage, theft, or otherwise is the responsibility of the individual.

Personnel must complete a uniform requisition and submit it, along with the uniform item to be replaced, to their assigned company officer for a replacement evaluation. All uniform requisitions need to be evaluated and pre-approved by the individual's assigned officer and endorsed with their signature on the form. Forward the form to the Quartermaster for fulfilment.

Alterations to the Class A dress uniforms require prior approval from the respective Battalion Chief. All approved alterations shall be coordinated through the Supply Unit.

All personnel must report the loss or damage of any issued uniform items or equipment immediately to their supervisor, by completing a loss/damage report. The supervisor will be responsible to investigate the incident and forward their findings via the chain of command to their respective Bureau Chief. If the loss/damage is found to be a result of negligence, the item will be replaced at the employee's expense.

Stolen or lost badges and identification cards or items valued at $100 or more must be reported to the Howard County Police Department. An emergency request to expedite the replacement of items essential to perform job duties will be handled by the safety officer, on-duty Battalion Chief or the Medical Duty Officer (MDO).

Once the uniform item is received by the individual, the individual will sign the uniform requisition form and return it to the quartermaster, see Attachment F.

Upon graduation of the academy, personnel are issued an additional allotment of uniform supplies. If any uniform supplies are needed during the employee's probation period following graduation, the company officer must supply a memorandum to the Logistics Bureau Chief explaining why these uniform items are needed.

QUARTERMASTER WALK IN HOURS:

Other than emergent (IE: PPE failure, significant incidents, used medication replacement, etc.) or scheduled (IE: PPE measurements, Class A fittings, etc.) requests, there should not be the need for on duty companies to go to the Quartermaster. All uniform requisitions will be filled and distributed by mail. Emergency requests as above should be handled by the on-duty safety officer, Battalion Chief, or MDO.

The Quartermaster will have walk in hours the 1st Tuesday and Thursday of each month from 0730 – 1000hrs, unless otherwise communicated. Walk in hours are for off-duty personnel only. All uniform requisitions need to be evaluated and pre-approved by the individual's assigned officer, endorsed with their signature on the form and include the clean item to be replaced.

INDIVIDUAL PURCHASE PROCEDURES:

Individuals wishing to purchase inventoried uniform items from the uniform catalog may do so by visiting the Quartermaster during walk in hours. Individuals shall present the appropriate requisition form, accompanied by a personal or certified check, for the exact amount to the Quartermaster. The check shall be made out to: **Director of Finance**. The check will be deposited after the order is complete.

Select items are also available for individual purchase at the below listed web address: https://www.agpestores.com/avalonindustries/groups.php.

SHOE MOBILE:

The shoe mobile will be made available quarterly on a rotational basis. Personnel must obtain a voucher for authorized safety shoes from the Fire Supply Unit before entering the shoe mobile, and have a signed uniform requisition form (Attachment E). Personnel are permitted to receive or purchase one pair of shoes per calendar year. These requests are tracked by the Bureau of Logistics, any employee found to exceed this provision will be required to reimburse the County for the cost of the safety shoes.

Safety shoes may be purchased by personnel in accordance with Howard County Policy and Procedure 200.6: Safety Footwear Program.

Personnel may be issued additional footwear based on assignment.

WEAR REQUIREMENTS:

The wearing of the appropriate class of uniform is authorized only when on actual duty, at approved Departmental functions, when attending classes, or at other times as approved by the Fire Chief. Personnel shall not wear any part of the uniform in a manner that would bring disrepute upon the Department. This includes, but is not limited to: wearing of the appropriate uniform shirt not tucked in and wearing of the baseball style hat backwards when in the public's eye, see Attachment D.

All personnel are responsible for wearing the appropriate levels of personal protective equipment on all incidents. The Company Officers, Safety Officers and Battalion Chiefs can determine the appropriate level of PPE based on the hazards and other contributing factors.

Personnel electing to wear uniform shorts shall don the appropriate Department issued PPE (turnout coat and/or pants) on incidents where the member may enter the warm and/or hot zone.

Personnel experiencing any injury/illness or situation where the skin surface is broken (i.e. poison ivy, lacerations, dermatitis, etc.) shall not wear the uniform shorts until such time that the skin is healed.

Failure to adhere to these basic safety guidelines shall result in the employees and the supervisory personnel on the incident being subject to actions outlined in the following documents: GO 100.22: Code of Conduct and GO 110.13: General Disciplinary Policy.

Uniformed employees on modified duty may wear other appropriate clothing with the approval of their modified duty assignment supervisor.

Battalion Chiefs may authorize their respective members to wear uniform articles or additional clothing items suitable for the task at hand or extreme weather conditions (i.e. live training scenarios, fire investigations, public/educational details, etc.).

TYPES OF UNIFORMS:

Class A

The Class A uniform is a full dress uniform that shall be worn when members attend Departmental funerals, awards presentations, graduation ceremonies, or special occasions authorized by the Fire Chief.

The Class A uniform may be worn by retired members of the Department. A “Retired” emblem shall be added to the uniform under the Department patch.

The Class A uniform consists of the following items:

- Navy blue uniform blouse coat.
    - The Department patch is positioned on the left sleeve at the shoulder, one State of Maryland certification patch (i.e. paramedic, etc.) may be worn on the right sleeve shoulder or;
    - A Department approved station patch may be work on the left shoulder.

- Navy blue dress trousers (females may substitute an A-line skirt).
- White or powder blue long sleeve dress uniform shirt (appropriate to rank).
    - All personnel at the rank of Lieutenant and above shall wear a white dress uniform shirt.

- Black necktie with tie tack.
- Plain white t-shirt; t-shirts where letters, silk screen, stencil, embroidery, or other markings can be seen through the outer shirt are prohibited.

- Badge, name plate, collar insignias (appropriate to rank), and lapel insignias. In all cases a nameplate shall be worn centered on the flap of the right breast pocket. The top edge on the nameplate shall be 1/8" below the bottom of the seam flap.
    - Union pin, service wreath/pin, Special Operations Pin, and/or award ribbons are optional.

- Black socks (unless white is prescribed by a physician).
- Dress hat with badge (appropriate to rank) worn at all times while outdoors.
- Black belt with silver or gold belt buckle (appropriate to rank).
- Black shoes shall have a plain toe and not have an ornamental design (ie. such as a "wing tip"). At all times, footwear is to be lace tied when worn.
- Optional all-weather raincoat/overcoat (purchased through the supply unit at employee expense) may be worn.

Class B

The Class B uniform is a semi-dress uniform that consists of a formal and working version. The formal Class B uniform shall consist of the long sleeve uniform shirt with tie. The working-class B uniform shall consist of the white or powder blue long sleeve uniform shirt without a tie and may be worn all year. The white or powder blue short sleeve uniform shirt can be worn from April 01st to October 31st.

The Class B formal uniform may be worn when directed or during events such as presentations, weddings, funerals, awards ceremonies, and other events if a Class A uniform is not otherwise specified. The Class B working uniform is worn when working administratively or working a duty shift, and/or attending daily events such as responding on incidents, field promotions, field commendations, in-service training, in-service meetings, continuing education, etc.

The Class B uniform shall consist of the following items:

- Navy blue staff trousers or navy blue long duty trousers (appropriate to assignment).
- White or powder blue long or short sleeved dress uniform shirt (appropriate to rank).
    - All personnel at the rank of Lieutenant and above shall wear a white uniform shirt.

- Department issued black necktie and tie tack to be worn with long sleeve dress uniform shirts only. Ties are not worn with the Class B working uniform.
- Plain white t-shirt; t-shirts whereas letters, silk screen, stencil, embroidery, or other markings that may be seen through the outer shirt are prohibited.
- Badge, name plate, collar insignias (appropriate to rank).
    - Union pin and/or Special operations pin are optional.

- Navy blue or black socks (unless white is prescribed by a physician).
- Black belt with silver or gold belt buckle (appropriate to rank).
- Black shoes for staff assignments or black safety shoes/boots appropriate to the job assignment.

- Personnel assigned to an acting rank by the Fire Chief may be issued (1) set of collar pins for the acting rank and (1) white shirt (if needed). The collar pins shall be returned to the Quartermaster upon completion of acting position and return to lower rank.

Personnel may wear business casual attire when their assignment does not require a Department uniform. Business casual is defined as follows:

- Women: A reasonable length skirt or trousers of a non-jeans material combined with a top (such as a dress shirt, polo, or sweater set) is considered acceptable. An informal dress with appropriate skirt length is also acceptable.
- Men: A combination of collared shirt (such as a dress shirt or polo shirt), cotton trousers (such as khakis or blue, green, brown, or black trousers) with a belt. Jeans are not acceptable business casual attire. A blazer or business jacket can optionally be added.

The Department issued Gore-Tex jacket, Hi-Visibility jacket, job shirt, sweatshirt, sweater, baseball style hat, optional all-weather raincoat/overcoat, knit cap or other bureau approved apparel are the only articles authorized to be worn as outer garments with Class B uniforms.

Class C

The Class C uniform shall be worn by all full-time career personnel and consist of the following items:

- Issued navy blue long or short duty trousers (Short duty trousers may be worn between May 01st and September 30th).
- Navy blue or white long or short sleeve duty shirt.
    - Firefighters, Lieutenants and Captains – Blue Tees.
    - Battalion Chiefs – White Tees.

- Black low-quarter safety shoes (Oxford or tennis style).
- Black boots not to exceed ten inches in height as measured from the floor.
    - Boots are not to be worn with uniform shorts.

- Navy blue or black socks (unless white is prescribed by a physician). The socks shall not extend up the leg beyond twelve inches as measured from the floor.
- Black belt with silver or gold belt buckle (appropriate to rank)
    - The Department issued Gore-Tex jacket, Hi-Visibility jacket, job shirt, sweatshirt, sweater, baseball style hat, optional all-weather raincoat/overcoat, knit cap, or other Department approved apparel are the only articles authorized to be worn as outer garments with Class C uniforms.

- Personnel assigned to an acting rank by the Fire Chief will not be issued long or short sleeve duty shirts that reflect the acting rank.

Class D

The Class D uniform is a physical training uniform that shall be worn by members during on duty physical training (PT) activities. The Class D uniform may consist of the following items:

- Navy blue sweatshirt with approved logo
- Navy blue long or short sleeve duty shirt with approved logo
- Gray physical training shirt with approved logo
- Gray physical training shorts with approved logo
- Gray sweatpants with approved logo
- Shoes suitable for physical training (provided by the employee)

Physical training apparel is only to be worn during the period designated for such activity. Members responding to emergency incidents may wear physical training apparel with the appropriate level of personal protective clothing.

ACCESSORIES:

Refer to Attachment B for proper display of insignia, accessories and awards. Only approved insignias, stripes, patches, logos and designs shall be worn with the appropriate class uniform.

Types

- Shirt/blouse badge
- Dress hat badge
- Collar insignias
- Lapel insignias
- Nameplate
- Medals, ribbons, service wreath/pin
- Tie tack
- Belt and belt buckle

Colors

- Captains and above – Gold
- All others – Silver

Collar Insignia and Badges

Collar insignias and all badges (shirt and hat) shall be as follows (Attachment D):

- Fire Chief - 5- crossed bugles
- Deputy Chief - 4- crossed bugles
- Assistant Chief - 3- crossed bugles
- Battalion Chief - 2- crossed bugles
- Captain - 2- vertical bugles
- Lieutenant -1- vertical bugle
- HVO-1 fire truck
- Firefighter - Fire Department Scramble

Shirt badges shall be worn above the left pocket on the Class A uniform blouse, dress uniform shirt, and other garments, as required.

Class A Braids

Braids (stripes) shall be sewn on the sleeves of the Class A uniform blouse. The striping shall begin 3” from the bottom of the sleeves and evenly spaced, ¼” apart. Braids identifying rank shall be as follows:

- Fire Chief - 5- ½” gold braids Fire
- Deputy Chief - 4- ½” gold braids
- Assistant Chief - 3- ½” gold braids
- Battalion Chief - 2- ½” gold braids
- Captain - 1- ½” gold braids
- Lieutenant - 1- ½” silver braid

Name Plates

Name plates shall be worn on the right side of the Class A uniform blouse, dress uniform shirts, or other garments, as required.

Ribbons

Meritorious service medals/ribbons shall be centered ½” above the name plate. (Attachment B, Figure 13).

- Multiple ribbons shall be worn in rows, with no more than three (3) ribbons per row. They shall be worn with the bottom of each row touching the top of the row beneath it.
- If the number of ribbons worn causes the ribbons to be concealed by the coat lapel, ribbons shall be placed in successively decreasing rows; e.g., 3-ribbon rows, 2-ribbon rows, single ribbon. The right (outer) edge of all decreasing rows will be in line vertically; except when the top row presents an unsatisfactory appearance when so aligned, it will be placed in the position presenting the neatest appearance (usually centered over the row immediately below it) (Attachment B, Figure 13).
- Additional single ribbons of the same award shall be exchanged for a single ribbon with a star. Each subsequent award will be exchanged for a single ribbon with an additional star. (First award: original ribbon; second award: ribbon with one (1) star; third award: ribbon with two (2) stars etc. up to four (4) stars).
- Ribbons of Valor shall always be worn above all others.
- The ribbon bar representing the highest award will be positioned to the wearer's left with subsequent ribbon bars in order of precedence from left to right. The highest ranking award should always be in the top left corner relative to the wearer.

Merit order of Departmental ribbons from highest to lowest:

- Medal of Valor – Gold
    - Red – Gold – Gold - Red ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 1)
- Medal of Valor – Silver
    - Red – Gray – Gray – Red ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 2)

- Medal of Valor – Bronze
  - Red – White – White – Red ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 3)
- Meritorious Service Ribbon
  - Green – Green – Green – Green ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 4)
- Fire Officer-of-the-Year Ribbon
  - Red – Red – White – White ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 5)
- Firefighter-of-the-Year Ribbon
  - Red – Red – Blue – Blue ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 6)
- Chief's Award Ribbon
  - Gold – White – White – Gold ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 7)
- Quality of Care Ribbon
  - Blue – Blue – Blue – Blue ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 8)
- Gift of Life Ribbon
  - Purple – White – White – Purple ribbon (Attachment, Figure 9)
- Citations of Honor Ribbon (Safety, Community Risk Reduction, Leadership, Mentoring, and Great Idea)
  - Blue – White – White – Blue ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 10)
- Special Projects Ribbon
  - Gold – Green – Green – Gold ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 11)
- Accreditation Ribbon
  - Red – White – Blue – Gold ribbon (Attachment B, Figure 12)
- All other ribbons in order of issuance.

Additional Accessories

- The most current Fire and Rescue Service wreath shall be worn 1" above the top rank stripe, centered on the left sleeve of the Class A uniform blouse, or 4 ½" from the bottom of the sleeve for uniforms without stripes (Attachment B, Figure 14).
- Non-fire Department issued insignias or pins may be worn above the pocket flap of the Class A uniform blouse or dress uniform shirt when approved by the Fire Chief.
- Department approved American Flag pins may be worn above all accessories on the right side of the uniform.
- Collar insignias shall be worn on dress uniform shirts.
  - The bottom of the collar insignias will be 1" from the tip of the collar and centered between the stitches (Attachment B, Figure 15).

- Lapel insignias shall be worn on the Class A uniform blouse.
  - On the Class A uniform blouse, the bottom of the lapel insignias shall be centered 1" from the point of the upper lapel, parallel to the ground (Attachment B, Figure 13).

- HC shall be placed on the right upper lapel.
- FD shall be placed on the left upper lapel.
- The union pin may be worn on the uniform shirt above the nameplate.
  - On the Class A uniform blouse, it shall be worn above all accessories.

The Department patch in a logo design (or other approved logo design) will be imprinted or embroidered on duty shirts, physical training apparel, sweatshirts, sweat pants, job shirts, baseball style hats, and knit caps. Location shall be above the left breast on all shirt type items and on the left upper thigh of pant-type items.

- In order to promote *esprit de corps,* individual companies/shifts/stations may develop designs/logos/patches. The designs/logos/patches shall not be discriminatory towards any individuals, groups, or particular shifts. Any such apparel, with company designs/logos/patches, will require prior written approval by the Chief of the Department. All requests shall be submitted through the proper chain of command to the Logistics Bureau Chief for review.
    - Personnel, at their own expense, may wear uniform apparel with company/shift/station/logos/patches, as long as such apparel and designs/logos/patches are the same size, color, and style as the County's standard issued items. Company patches may be worn on the right sleeve of the job shirt centered 1" below the top seam.
    - The Bureau of Logistics' Bureau Chief will maintain a record of approved designs/logos/patches by listing a name, a written description, and/or picture/drawing, and the date approval.

TRANSFERS AND SEPARATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT:

All uniform items and equipment issued to personnel shall remain the property of the Department. When transferred, the member shall move all issued uniform items to their new assignment. Upon separation, resignation, or termination, the individual shall return all required items to the Bureau of Logistics, unless otherwise authorized by the Fire Chief, in coordination with the Administrative Services Bureau.

REFERENCES

None

SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT CHANGES

Initial issuance quantity
Approved Station Patch on Class A
Officer evaluation of equipment requested for replacement
Working vs formal uniform Class B
Name plate location
Inclusion of QM hours and guidelines for visiting QM and shoe mobile

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A – Initial Issuance List
- Attachment B – Proper Display of Rank, Accessories, and Awards
- Attachment C – Rank and Badge Insignia
- Attachment D – Examples of Uniform Wear

- Attachment E – Shoe Voucher Form
- Attachment F – Uniform Requisition Form

APPROVED

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Attachment A

Uniform Item:	Quantity Issued:
Blouse Coat (After Probation)	1
Long sleeve dress shirt (color-rank dependent)	3
Trousers (After Probation)	1
Hat (Class A)	1
Hat rain cover (Class A)	1
Necktie	1
Trench/Raincoat	1- Staff and Honor Guard
Staff Pants/Duty Pants	3
Short sleeve dress shirt (color rank dependent)	3
Dress shoes (After Probation)	1
Short duty pants	2
Long sleeve duty shirt	2
Short sleeve duty shirt	3
Belt	1
Safety footwear (1 pair annually as needed)	1
Gortex Jacket (Hi-Vis or Navy Blue)	1
Job Shirt (After Probation)	1
Baseball hat	1
Short sleeve physical training shirt	2
Physical training shorts	2
Physical training sweatpants	1
Physical training sweatshirt	2
Shirt badge	2
Hat badge (Class A)	1
Collar insignias (pair)	1
Nameplate	2
Lapel insignias (pair)	1
*County volunteers may be issued a Class A uniform after five (5) years of active service. * Alternative uniforms may be distributed as necessary by authority of respective Bureau Chief (i.e., fire inspectors, Staff personnel)	

Attachment B

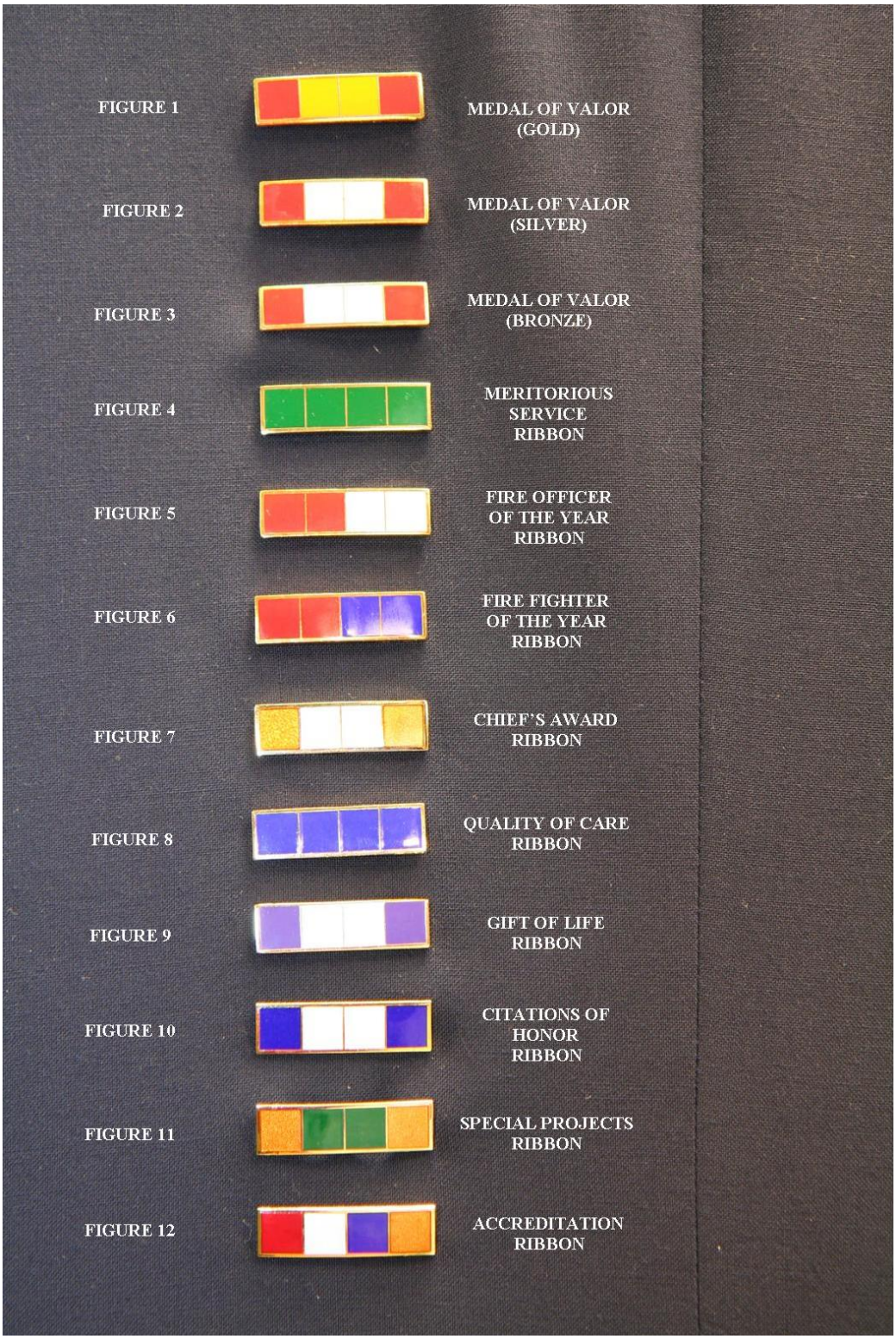

Figure 13

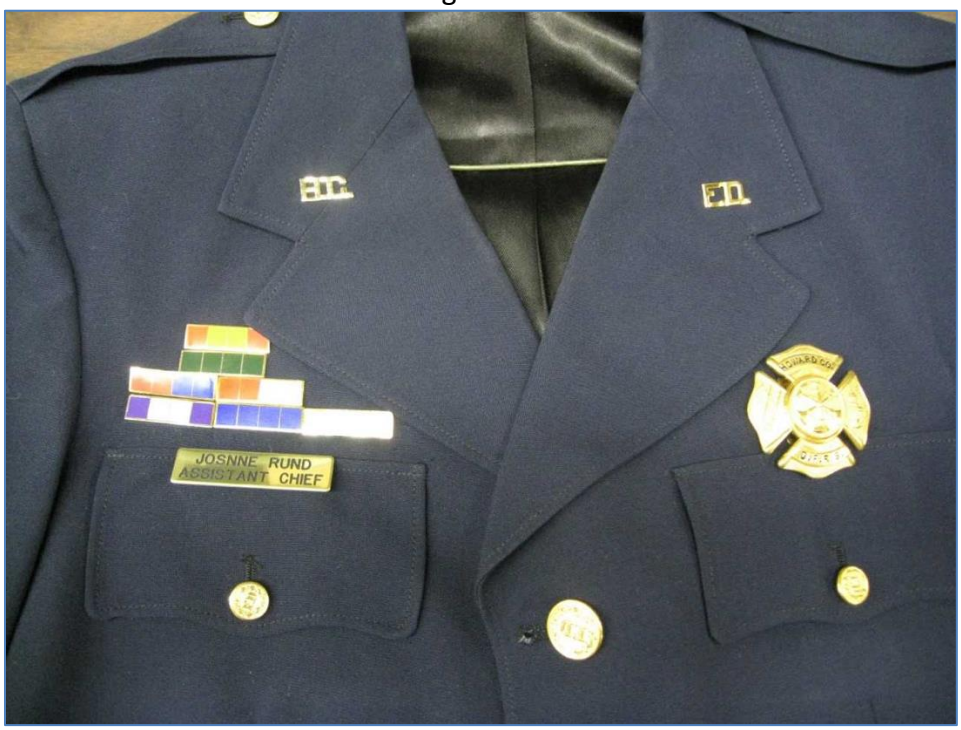

Figure 14

Figure 15

Attachment C

Rank	Badge Insignia
Firefighter Recruit Firefighter Master Firefighter	
Honor Guard	
HVO	
Lieutenant	
Captain	

Battalion Chief	
Assistant Chief	
Deputy Chief	
Chief of the Department	

Attachment D

Improper wear of the Class C Uniform - Shorts	Proper wear of the Class C Uniform - Shorts

Proper wear of the Class C Uniform – shirt tucked in, pants worn outside of the boot.	Improper wear of the Class C Uniform – Shirt not tucked in and the pants are tucked into the un-zippered boot.	Improper wear of the Class C Uniform – Pants are tucked into the un-zippered boot.

Attachment E

Shoe Mobile Authorization Form

Date _____Station/Shift_____

Name: _____EID # _____

Authorized Shoe Selection: HyTest 10800/17800_____; HyTest 11880/17880_____

Converse WGC1050/105_____; Converse WGC6750/750_____

Bates 2264_____; Bates 2263_____Bates/HiGloss E00742/E00941_____

Alternative Brand & Style #:_____

Attachment F

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT of FIRE and RESCUE SERVICES
UNIFORM-PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
REQUISITION / RECEIPT

NAME: _____ **EID#:** _____

CURRENT ASSIGNMENT: _____ **SHIFT:** **A** ☐ **B** ☐ **C** ☐

SHIFT SUPERVISOR: _____ **DATE:** _____

CAT. #	QTY	DESCRIPTION	SIZE	COLOR	COST

NOTE: This form shall be used for ONE catalog item ONLY

Date Entered: _____ **Ordered** **Issued**

Trans. No.: _____ **Credit Trans No.:** _____

Received by: **Date:**

2/5/2013

Supply Unit Walk-In Hours: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday each month; 07:30-10:00 hrs.