

Personal Appearance Standards

1044.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In order to project uniformity and neutrality toward the public and other members of the department, employees shall maintain their personal hygiene and appearance to project a professional image appropriate for this department and for their assignment.

1044.2 GROOMING STANDARDS

Unless otherwise stated and because deviations from these standards could present officer safety issues, the following appearance standards shall apply to all employees, except those whose current assignment would deem them not appropriate, and where the Chief of Police has granted exception.

1044.2.1 HAIR

Hairstyles of all members shall be neat in appearance. For male sworn members, hair must not extend below the top edge of the uniform collar while assuming a normal stance.

For female sworn members, hair must be no longer than the horizontal level of the bottom of the uniform patch when the employee is standing erect, worn up or in a tightly wrapped braid or ponytail.

1044.2.2 MUSTACHES

A short and neatly trimmed mustache may be worn. Mustaches shall not extend below the corners of the mouth or beyond the natural hairline of the upper lip.

1044.2.3 SIDEBURNS

Sideburns shall not extend below the bottom of the outer ear opening (the top of the earlobes) and shall be trimmed and neat.

1044.2.4 FACIAL HAIR

Facial hair other than sideburns, mustaches and eyebrows shall not be worn, unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his or her designee.

1044.2.5 FINGERNAILS

Fingernails extending beyond the tip of the finger can pose a safety hazard to officers or others. For this reason, fingernails shall be trimmed so that no point of the nail extends beyond the tip of the finger.

1044.2.6 JEWELRY

For the purpose of this policy, jewelry refers to rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, wristwatches, and tie tacks or tie bars. Jewelry shall present a professional image and may not create a safety concern for the department member or others. Jewelry that depicts racial, sexual, discriminatory, gang-related, or obscene language is not allowed.

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- (a) Necklaces shall not be visible above the shirt collar.
- (b) Earrings shall be small and worn only in or on the earlobe.
- (c) One ring or ring set may be worn on each hand of the department member. No rings should be of the type that would cut or pose an unreasonable safety risk to the member or others during a physical altercation, if the member is assigned to a position where that may occur.
- (d) One small bracelet, including a bracelet identifying a medical condition, may be worn on one arm.
- (e) Wristwatches shall be conservative and present a professional image.
- (f) Tie tacks or tie bars worn with civilian attire shall be conservative and present a professional image.

1044.3 TATTOOS

Tattoos shall be allowed to be visible while on-duty as long as they are not offensive in nature. Examples of offensive tattoos include but are not limited to those that exhibit or advocate discrimination; those that exhibit gang, supremacist, or extremist group affiliation; and those that depict or promote drug use, violence, sexually explicit acts, or other obscene material. The Chief of Police shall determine if a tattoo is considered offensive and or detrimental to the mission of the Fontana Police Department. Visible tattoos shall not be allowed to be visible while on-duty on any area of the face, neck, head, or hands, with the exception of a wedding band tattoo on the ring finger.

The department reserves the right to require employees to conceal their tattoos if deemed necessary to comport with evolving community standards, attitudes or beliefs. This policy does not grant permanent approval to display any tattoo subsequently deemed unacceptable for display and employees may be required to cover them at any time.

1044.3.1 DEFINITIONS

Tattoo - The permanent or temporary insertion of ink or other pigments on or below the surface of the skin.

Scarification - The intentional act of cutting the skin to create a design resulting from the scar of the intentionally created wound.

Branding - The intentional burning of the skin to create a design resulting from the scar of the burn.

Religion or Religious Creed - Includes any traditionally recognized religion as well as beliefs, observances, or practices which an individual sincerely holds and which occupy in his or her life a place of importance parallel to that of traditionally recognized religions.

Religious Dress Practice - Includes the wearing or carrying of religious clothing, head or face coverings, jewelry, artifacts, and any other item that is part of the observance by an individual of his or her Religion or Religious Creed.

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Religious Grooming Practice - Includes all forms of head, facial, and body hair that are part of the observance by and individual of his or her Religion or Religious Creed.

1044.4 BODY PIERCING OR ALTERATION

Body piercing or alteration to any area of the body visible in any authorized uniform or attire that is a deviation from normal anatomical features and which is not medically required is prohibited. Such body alteration includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Tongue splitting or piercing.
- (b) The complete or transdermal implantation of any material other than hair replacement.
- (c) Abnormal shaping of the ears, eyes, nose or teeth
- (d) Branding or scarification.

1044.5 EXEMPTIONS AND ACCOMODATIONS TO PERSONAL APPEARANCE STANDARDS

Employees assigned to specialized units that conduct undercover operations on a routine basis, such as the Narcotic Unit, SIU or other similar units are exempt from the requirements contained in this general order. However, in regards to tattoos and other body markings, the markings must be in good taste. In addition, the Chief of Police shall have final decision on what is, or is not appropriate exceptions to the department's personal appearance standards (§§1044.1 et seq.).

The department recognizes the importance of sincerely held religious beliefs to persons within its workforce. Should an employee's religious dress practice or religious grooming practice conflict with the provisions of the department's personal appearance standards (§§ 1044.1 et seq.), said employee should inform his or her Unit Supervisor and request an accommodation.

The department, via the Chief of Police, will reasonably accommodate said religious dress practice or religious grooming practice unless the accommodation creates an undue hardship on the operation of the department or poses a safety hazard. In determining whether an employee's request for accommodation would constitute an undue burden, the Chief of Police shall determine whether the accommodation would require significant difficulty or expense when considered in light of the nature and cost of the requested accommodation, the safety risks posed by the requested accommodation, the department's size, budget, number of employees, overall financial resources and the structure and composition of the workforce at the time the request for accommodation is made.

If the employee's accommodation request gives insufficient information, the Chief of Police shall be permitted to make a limited inquiry into whether the accommodation request reflects a religious dress practice or religious grooming practice that requires accommodation.

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1044.6 INAPPROPRIATE ATTIRE WORN TO WORK

In the event that inappropriate attire is worn to work, the employee will be asked to leave the work place and promptly return to work in the appropriate attire. The amount of time missed from work will be deducted from the Employee's personal leave or will be leave without pay.

1044.7 EXEMPTIONS

Members who seek cultural (e.g., culturally protected hairstyles) or other exemptions to this policy that are protected by law should generally be accommodated (Government Code § 12926). A member with an exemption may be ineligible for an assignment if the individual accommodation presents a security or safety risk. The Chief of Police should be advised any time a request for such an accommodation is denied or when a member with a cultural or other exemption is denied an assignment based on a safety or security risk.